



Madison County Chairman Prenzler Announces Bid For Re-Election

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE - Madison County Chairman Kurt Prenzler formally announced today that he is running for re-election as Chairman. Prenzler made his decision based upon the urging of many citizens and his belief that he must continue his advocacy for the working families of Madison County.

"I must continue to fight against "higher taxes, government interference, corruption, and erosion of our values," he said.



“As an elected official, I have consistently fought against higher taxes,” Prenzler said, “This has been good for both families and businesses, and taxpayers know we must continue this fight.”

Prenzler was elected treasurer in 2010, and kept his campaign promises by reforming the tax sale process and reducing his budget by 30 percent.

He also reformed the investments, after finding the county was purchasing all bonds through only one bond salesman, with no bidding, and investing outside the county policy. The county made a claim, resulting in a \$340,000 settlement, without an admission of wrongdoing.

Three times Prenzler led the fight to stop a county-wide 1 percent sales tax that was on the ballot in 2011, 2017 and 2018. Had this increase passed, sales taxes today would exceed 10 percent in parts of the county.

In 2013, the Democrat-dominated county board used the backdoor referendum loophole to borrow \$18.8 million – without voter approval. Prenzler led a citizen group which collected 23,600 signatures to put that on the ballot, where it was rejected by the voters. Today, the county remains debt free.

Prenzler was re-elected treasurer in 2014, and in 2016 became the first Republican to be elected Chairman by the voters.

In 2016, Prenzler led an effort to collect 10,000 signatures to put a tax cut on the ballot, to reduce the county maximum general fund tax rate from \$.25 to \$.20. It passed 4 to 1 and led to the county reducing its levy from \$32.6 to \$30.8 million, where it has remained for the past 6 years.

“The county government tax rate has fallen from \$.733 in 2015 to \$.481 today, a 34 percent reduction,” Prenzler said. “To use a home in Edwardsville as an example, 10.1% of the tax bill in 2015 went to county government. Now it’s 6.6%.”

“Whereas, during my time as Chairman, county government has limited taxes, there’s one more thing the county board can do for taxpayers, and that’s putting PTELL on the ballot for voters to decide.”

Four times (2018, 2020, 2022, 2023) Prenzler has asked the county board to put PTELL (Property Tax Extension Limitation Law) on the ballot for voters to decide, but although some county board members agreed, a majority refused to put this issue on the ballot.

“If approved by voters, PTELL would limit property tax levy increases to the lesser of 5 percent or the rate of inflation,” Prenzler said. “It would also get rid of the backdoor referendum trick, which allows districts to raise taxes without voter approval.”

Prenzler has advocated for changing outside auditors every six years to ensure that the auditors are independent. However, the county board has voted to continue with a firm that has audited the county for 23 years.

In June of 2022, the libraries in Collinsville and Glen Carbon promoted and hosted drag queen story times for children. Prenzler actively opposed these events, and led an effort to, by petition, put an advisory question of public policy on the Nov. 2022 ballot, asking voters whether it was appropriate for tax-supported libraries and schools to promote drag queen events to children.

“Seventy percent of Glen Carbon voters said no, and I believe that opinion would be even higher in other parts of the county,” Prenzler said. “These drag queen events are aimed at children, and protecting our children should be our first priority.”

Regarding Covid, Prenzler disagreed with Illinois’ one-size-fits-all business lockdown policy, and in May 2020, asked the county board to pass a county re-open resolution, which the board approved 26 to 2.

During the past three years, Prenzler has written numerous letters to the editor opposing mandatory Covid shots and reminding citizens of their right to informed consent to medical treatment.

“In recent years, we have seen government wanting more control, for example Dr. Fauci and Covid policy, and of course more spending and taxes,” Prenzler said. “That’s uppermost of my decision to run again. At the county level, we need to protect our rights and resist unnecessary tax increases.”