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Cook County Assessor Fritz Kaegi Applauds Illinois Legislature for Auto-Renewal of Property Tax Exemptions and Expansion of Affordable Housing Incentives

New laws will reduce property taxes for County's most vulnerable

Chicago – This week, Cook County Assessor Fritz Kaegi pledged to implement two significant changes to the tax code which will extend auto-renewals of property tax exemptions for seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities, as well as expand incentives for affordable housing providers.

“Cook County’s property tax system needs to be more accessible and fair for everyone,” said Assessor Kaegi. “I applaud legislators for passing these bills. They will allow my office to make it easier for homeowners to access the property tax exemptions to which they are entitled and encourage housing providers to expand the number of units of affordable housing.”

As a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, [HB 3289](#) extends the renewal of property tax exemptions for low-income seniors (commonly referred to as the “senior freeze” exemption), persons with disabilities, and veterans with disabilities. This extension will cover the 2021 Tax Year. In prior years, homeowners had to file forms online or through the mail to receive these exemptions, which appear on the second installment of their property tax bills in the summer.

“I’m pleased that the legislature extended auto-renewals for communities that are still at risk due to COVID-19,” said Assessor Kaegi. “Using this process last year we renewed exemptions for 154,000 low-income seniors, veterans, and persons with disabilities. Extending the law for another year will give us the flexibility to ensure that those who continue to feel the effects of the pandemic most will still receive the benefits they deserve.”

[HB 2621](#) creates new incentives for affordable housing, which can reduce property tax bills for those property owners. Assessor Kaegi and members of the Assessor’s Office policy team assisted affordable housing advocates and legislators in revising tax code provisions to expand housing options for low-income households by reducing the tax liability for those who provide affordable housing.

“Advocates for affordable housing deserve praise for their tireless work to craft these new and innovative proposals to deliver more housing options in Cook County,” said Assessor Kaegi. “This bill will encourage the development of more housing for low and moderate-income families and individuals, and will ensure that my office gets the information we need to value these properties accurately.”

HB 3289 and HB 2621 passed both houses of the Illinois General Assembly during its recent spring session. The two bills now await Governor J.B. Pritzker’s signature before becoming law.



These recent changes to the law are in line with Assessor Kaegi's efforts to modernize the Assessor's Office and deliver more fairness within the property tax system.

Over the past two years, the Assessor's Office has expanded the ability of property owners to file for exemptions and appeals online; publicly posted the data, code, and standards used to calculate assessments; worked with legislators to make senior exemptions renew automatically; and improved the accuracy of assessments so no property owner pays more than his or her share of property taxes.