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BGA Expands Popular Public Payroll Database to Include Missouri and Indiana; More to Come

CHICAGO - The Better Government Association ("BGA") has again expanded its online database of public payrolls. The database, available at <http://www.bettergov.org/Research> now includes salary information from the States of Indiana and Missouri as well as updates to existing units of government.

The website, which is free and open to the public, is frequently updated. Including the latest additions, visitors can search the salaries of numerous units of government in Illinois, including:

- City of Chicago
- Cook County
- Cook County Forest Preserve District
- Metropolitan Pier & Exposition Authority
- Chicago Housing Authority
- Chicago Transit Authority
- Metropolitan Water Reclamation District
- Chicago Park District
- Chicago Public Schools
- City Colleges of Chicago
- State of Illinois

Transparency in government is among the BGA's top priorities. Because the bulk of taxpayer money goes to personnel costs, it is the right of the people to know where their dollars are being spent. All information contained within the database is public, under state Freedom of Information Acts (FOIA).

“Our elected officials in Illinois repeatedly tell us there is no more waste that can be cut,” said BGA Executive Director Jay Stewart. “Then, our taxes go up. This database allows citizens to look closer at government spending themselves to see if these offices are running as lean as their leaders proclaim.”

By facilitating transparency into the activities of public bodies, the Better Government Association aims better educate taxpayers about the use of their money. Further, these units of government have the capacity to make this information available themselves, though at this time, only the State of Missouri does so. “Until more agencies, funded with our tax dollars, facilitate easy access to this public information for citizens, the BGA will continue to do so,” said Stewart.

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Founded in 1923, the Better Government Association is an independent, non-partisan government watchdog. Our mission is to combat waste, fraud, and corruption in government by conducting investigative research and litigation to expose problems; researching policy solutions promoting transparency and accountability in government; and using internship programs to train the next generation of investigators and public interest lawyers.