



Better Government Association Statement: Madigan Sentencing Brings Justice; Highlights Need for Ethics Reform

Description

A federal judge today sentenced former Illinois Speaker of the House Michael Madigan to 7- $\frac{1}{2}$ years in prison and three years' probation, as well as a fine of \$2.5 million. Madigan was convicted in February on 10 of 23 charges, including conspiracy, bribery and other charges in relation to a jobs-for-votes scheme and additional abuses of public office.

In response to today's sentencing, Better Government Association President David Greising stated, "For years, Michael Madigan was the most powerful political figure in Illinois. He used that power to enrich himself and cronies, betraying the public trust and escalating our state's legacy of corruption. Today's sentence brings justice, and should be cautionary to any person in government or the private sector that corruption has consequences."

Greising said of Madigan's sentence by U.S. District Court Judge John Robert Blakey: "Judges and juries are starting to confront what our state legislature has largely refused to: Crimes committed in office are uniquely corrosive and undermine trust in our system of government."

The legislature has not passed a major ethics bill in more than four years since a wide-ranging corruption investigation first referenced Madigan as "Public Official A" in a 2020 indictment of four Commonwealth Edison executives and associates.

"It is high time that the legislature take a lesson from what juries, judges and the people are telling us and pass comprehensive ethics reform," Greising said.

A watered-down ethics bill passed in 2021 was so weak that the then-Inspector General for the state legislature resigned, stating her role would be a "paper tiger" and saying lawmakers had "demonstrated true ethics reform is not a priority."

The Better Government Association is a 101-year-old civic watchdog that seeks better government through investigative journalism, policy reforms and civic engagement efforts that lead to more open, equitable and accountable government. The policy team and investigative unit operate independently of one another, while both seek to advance the cause of better government in Chicago and across Illinois.