



BGA Supports Cook County Mosquito Abatement Evaluation

Description

Last week, the Better Government Association spoke in front of the Cook County Board of Commissioners and supported a resolution that calls for evaluation of countywide mosquito abatement practices and governance.

As outlined in the recitals of the resolution, mosquito management in Cook County currently falls under a patchwork of government agencies, including the Cook County Department of Public Health, the Chicago Department of Public Health, and four Mosquito Abatement Districts that are their own independent taxing bodies, as well as municipal and township governments.

These bodies vary dramatically in geographic area and population, and do not practice uniform mosquito abatement strategies. Density and intensity of abatement measures varies widely across the county, as does per capita funding for the responsible public bodies.

Cook County's fragmented mosquito abatement bodies occur in the larger context of Illinois as the state with the most units of local government in the nation, the majority of which are special-purpose districts rather than general-purpose bodies such as municipalities and counties. Independent taxing authority and governance should not be assumed to be a necessity for very specific government services such as mosquito abatement, which are far more commonly handled by operating departments within a general-purpose administration.

The Better Government Association commends the Board's intent to evaluate the efficiency and equality of mosquito-related services in Cook County, and commends the board for passing this resolution.

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.

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