



League of Women Voters of Chicago

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July 14, 2022

To: Chair Michele Smith and Members of the Committee on Ethics and Government Oversight via CommitteeonEthicsandGovernmentOversight@cityofchicago.org

re: An amendment of Municipal Code Chapter 2-156 by modifying various sections and adding new Section 2-156-301 regarding governmental ethics (Direct Introduction) – agenda item 2 from the Corrected Agenda for the July 13 meeting of the Committee on Ethics and Government Oversight

Dear Chair Smith and Committee Members:

The League of Women Voters of Chicago certainly supports efforts to improve the City's ethics ordinance.

However, the League has great concerns about the process being used in this case which involves the use of "direct introduction" under the Council's Rule 41, as set forth in the corrected agenda of the meeting of the Committee for July 13. This meeting has been recessed until 3 pm on Friday, July 15.

"Direct introduction" items are not listed with an item number and the texts of the items are not posted on Legistar for the public to see. As a result, the Alders are not given the benefit of hearing from the public on matters before they are asked to vote on them. Moreover, often the items are still not listed on the City Council agendas with numbers so that the public can view the text prior to the entire Council voting on the items, most of which become law.

This lack of transparency is not good government.

If there is a true need for the use of "direct introduction" in this case, the League urges Chair Smith and the Committee (1) to issue a second corrected agenda for this meeting which provides an item number for the amendment and (2) to ensure the text of the amendment is posted on Legistar for the public to see. If this is not done prior to Friday's meeting, the League urges that the Summary of the meeting include the item number and that the text be posted promptly on Legistar so the public can access it prior to the City Council meeting on July 20.

Otherwise, how ironic would it be that a proposal to strengthen the ethics ordinance is enacted without the public knowing what the proposal says?

Thank you for considering these comments.

Yours truly,

Jane Ruby, President