

For Immediate Release

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CITY CLERK ANNOUNCES BIGGEST STEP FORWARD EVER IN CHICAGO GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY WITH LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION CENTER

***Able to Now Easily Track Legislation from Beginning to End, Receive
Automatic E-mail Alerts to Follow Legislation that Matters to You***

Chicago, IL (February 1, 2011) – Chicago City Clerk Miguel del Valle announces the most significant step toward transparency in Chicago city government. Today the City Clerk’s office launched a new Legislative Information Center designed to make legislative tracking easier than ever before and further help Chicagoans actively participate in their government.

“Throughout my career I have fought tirelessly for an open and transparent government. We’ve made great strides in this by broadcasting Council meetings online and posting full Council Journals of Proceedings,” said del Valle.

“Our new information center gives everyone easy access to track the legislation that matters to them and impacts their community. E-mail alerts and RSS feeds bring our website and the legislative process to you. A participatory government is the cornerstone of our great democracy and for too long it has been difficult and cumbersome to navigate and find legislative information on our City Council. That all changes today.”

The new system can be found at www.ChiCityClerk.com by selecting the Legislative Information Center under the City Council drop down menu. Currently users can access legislation since December 2010 in the new system, with older legislation since 1981 being migrated from the existing website into the new system through the next few months. The site also includes all Aldermen and Committee contact information and Committee Meeting dates and details since December 2010.

New Legislative Information Center Features

- **RSS and Alert Feed:** Users can create an account to set customized news and RSS feeds that are sent directly to their e-mail accounts. For example, a user can set up an alert for all legislation sponsored by his or her Alderman, by a specific topic like Tax Increment Financing, by a specific City Council Committee or legislative introduction or passage date.
- **Social Media:** After conducting a legislation search, a user can instantly post the results to Facebook, Twitter, Yammer or any one of more than 300 social media websites and tools.
- **Legislative Searching:** The new system allows for more advanced and detailed searching than ever before. Now users can find legislation using any combination of keyword, topic, introduced or passed status, Committee, or Sponsor. This allows for a much more accurate search than the previous system.

New Legislative Information Center Features

- **Aldermen and Committee Contact Information:** Now, when a user wants to find an Alderman's contact information, they can also quickly see the Alderman's Committee memberships as well as details about all the legislation the Alderman has sponsored since December 2010.
- **Single Numbering for all Legislation:** In the past, each piece of legislation had an introduced and passed number and a person needed to know both to determine if the legislation had passed. Starting in October 2010, legislation began receiving a single, unique identifying number that it keeps throughout the entire legislative process.
- **Faster Posting of Legislation:** Legislation introduced at a Council meeting will be posted and available for searching by the end of the day a Council meeting is held. In addition, legislation will be updated with its passed status within two weeks of the Council meeting, with the goal of real-time updates posting during Council Meetings later this spring. In the past, key legislation would be posted within three days of a meeting, while all other legislation was not available until the Journal of Proceedings was posted online one month after Council meetings.
- **Council Meeting Agendas:** For the first time ever, detailed City Council meeting agendas will be available online. These agendas will include a listing of every piece of legislation passed out of a City Council Committees that was referred back to the City Council for passage and link directly to that legislation's text.
- **Video:** While Council meetings have been broadcast on the City Clerk's website for three years, and archived for the past year, in the coming months a new feature will link legislation to archived video of that item being debated, introduced or passed on the floor of the Council. Until this feature is fully functional, Council meeting videos will continue to be broadcast live and archived on the City Clerk's website.

"Our old system, while organized and readily available to the public, was unwieldy and could be difficult to navigate," said City Clerk Deputy Director Monica Carranza. "The new system will save our staff countless hours of overtime and is much more user-friendly."

About City Clerk del Valle

Miguel del Valle was elected as Clerk of the City of Chicago in 2007. City Clerk del Valle's office is responsible for maintaining official city government records, distributing approximately 1.3 million vehicle stickers and residential parking permits, and issuing city business licenses. City Clerk del Valle is bringing more efficiency and visibility to City Clerk services by providing greater access to public records, including web casting of City Council meetings, expanding community outreach programs, modernizing operations to expedite the sale of dog registrations, city stickers and residential parking. www.ChiCityClerk.com.

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Editor's Note: Please call 312-744-2507 for interviews with City Clerk Miguel del Valle.

UIC Professor and Chicago political expert Dick Simpson is available for interviews about the new Legislative Information Center. Please call 312-413-3780.

