



Considerations for Responsible, Thoughtful Consolidation

1) Public Safety

Road Districts prioritize maintenance, repairs, and snow removal for over 50% of roads in Illinois. That responsibility is placed into the hands of an elected Highway Commissioner. Consolidation or elimination of Road Districts can not only remove the accountability of an elected Highway Commissioner, but more importantly, can lead to current “main” or “priority” routes being lower priorities as part of a larger area, which can directly impact public safety.

2) Tax Rates

A popular argument in favor of consolidation and/or elimination of Road Districts is that tax rates will go down. Under Public Acts 100-106 and 100-107, there are numerous examples of where the authority taking control of any consolidated or discontinued Road District assumes the taxing authority. Therefore, no tax rates will go down unless the public body taking control determines that it will lower the (former) Road District rates.

3) Proposed Consolidations or Dissolutions Should Be Studied

If a proposal appears on the ballot for consolidation or elimination, there is no requirement to demonstrate that consolidation or elimination is in the best interests of the taxpayers. The Board of Directors of the Township Highway Commissioners of Illinois (THCOI) supports an amendment to Public Acts 100-106 and 100-107 calling for an independent entity, with experience in local government and economics, to provide a cost study before any vote. The goal of such a study is to demonstrate the consolidation or elimination at issue is cost-efficient and will not impact the level of service(s) currently provided.

4) The Board of THCOI Is Not Opposed to All Consolidation or Elimination

Consolidation or elimination can be done, but it must be for the right reasons and responsibly, without the elimination or reduction of necessary priorities and services to the people currently served by those Road Districts. By supporting additional legislation outlined above, both the governing bodies and the people voting on the consolidation or elimination can be fully informed before voting.