

The Village of Addison and “The Rule of Three”

Addison Village’s Decision to Place Three Referenda on the Ballot is to Circumvent Citizen Access to the Ballot.

In Illinois, “The Rule of 3,” is a law which states that no public body may have more than three referenda on the ballot at the same time. It also gives public bodies the ability to make a preemptive strike against citizen initiated referenda from being placed on the ballot. Simply put, if a public body is threatened by potential citizen referenda, it can place three questions on the ballot first and block the citizen referenda. This is exactly what happened in Addison.

Addison citizens organized to place a term limit and repeal of home rule referenda on the November ballot. These are binding referenda that if passed, would have forced the Village’s hand to do something it was vehemently opposed to. The citizen’s efforts were not successful, however, those involved vowed to try again in the spring.

The Village of Addison is a poster child for why “The Rule of 3” needs to be changed. Rather than let the democratic process move forward and allow their citizens to determine whether term limits should be implemented or if home rule should be repealed, the Village’s heavy hand intentionally shut down and shut out the people’s voice. If the Village was really interested, as they claim, in making sure they are on the same page as residents, it would have placed the term limit and repeal home rule referenda on the spring ballot and let the real issues play out rather than random advisory referenda decided upon at the last minute.