



STATEMENT FROM ASSESSOR JOSEPH BERRIOS REGARDING VARIOUS CLAIMS ABOUT COOK COUNTY PROPERTY ASSESSMENT

Assessor addresses contentions included in Chicago Tribune stories

June 7, 2017

The Cook County Assessor's Office is again concerned about false statements, misleading claims and inaccurate information recently put forth about property assessment and taxes. Assessor Joseph Berrios has issued this statement:

“Having grown up in Cabrini Green and becoming the first minority ever to serve as Assessor, I would never allow this office to unfairly assess property and cause minorities to pay more taxes than they should.

It is important to respect all homeowners, especially those with homes at the lower end of the market. I have felt this way since I was the first Hispanic-American elected to County-wide office on the Board of Review and, before that, the first Hispanic-American to serve in the Illinois General Assembly.

The property assessment system is not ‘rigged,’ as a few have recently claimed. The appeal process is open and fair to all, contrary to the opinion of the Tribune. No one is required to use an attorney to appeal; in fact, the majority of appeals filed do not use attorneys. Still, the success rate for all appeals to my office is 50%.

We have done everything to encourage all people in Cook County to appeal their assessments. 77% of the community assessment and appeal seminars done by my office are in areas with lower-market homes.

The Tribune's sales ratio study was not conducted by certified or otherwise experienced appraisal professionals

In violation of industry standards, the Tribune included in its study countless non-fair-cash-value transactions such as estate sales, which drive down prices. But the Tribune didn't even note their inclusion.

Court rulings state that **sales ratio studies are not technical or scientific facts**, but merely studies whose methodology and results are *subject to interpretation*.

The Tribune's advocacy of the new Probit assessment model is in complete disagreement with *internationally-recognized* property assessment experts. Probit has proven highly unreliable.

This Office assesses property, not people. It does so accurately and practices equality.



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