

ADVERTISEMENT

POLITICS

# Plan to bar Chicago alderman from lobbying, other new limits advances in City Council

By John Byrne  
Chicago Tribune • Dec 04, 2019 at 6:30 pm

Expand



Mayor Lori Lightfoot talks with Ald. Matt O'Shea, 19th, during a news conference at Morgan Park High School on Aug. 8, 2019. (Abel Uribe/Chicago Tribune)



Loading your audio article



FEEDBACK



Listen to this article

With federal investigators probing lobbying activities at the state level, the Chicago City Council on Wednesday moved a step closer to banning aldermen from acting as lobbyists and stopping other elected officials from lobbying them.

Under the new rules proposed by Ald. Matt O'Shea, 19th, and Ald. Michele Smith, 43rd, aldermen wouldn't be allowed to lobby the City Council, the county, the state or any other local government unit, nor would any other elected officials in the state be able to lobby the City Council or other units of city government.

ADVERTISEMENT

O'Shea said when they introduced the ordinance last month that they wanted to make sure aldermen were looking out for the residents who elected them. "I think it's important that people in this body be representing the people of their communities and not special interests, and I don't think that people who are elected officials in other bodies should be lobbying us," he said then.

A handful of aldermen voiced concerns about the ordinance Wednesday, citing examples of registered lobbyists who might serve on low-paid suburban bodies like library boards and would need to give up those posts to keep lobbying Chicago government.

[Sign up for The Spin to get the top stories in politics delivered to your inbox weekday afternoons.](#)

Amid the questions, O'Shea forcefully defended the measure. "This legislation is common sense," he said. "When it's said, 'the thought of impropriety,' we are surrounded by impropriety at the state level, at the county level and in this body. The feds are all around us. We need to send a message that this B.S. is over with. If we need to come back in three months or six months and

alter it, then we'll work with (the Law Department).

"We need to send the message to the people that we represent in our communities that the buck stops here and the bulls--- is going to stop," he added.

The change comes as a federal investigation reaches into the murky world of Springfield lobbying. State Rep. Luis Arroyo resigned last month after he was arrested on a federal bribery charge accusing him of paying a bribe to a state senator in exchange for support of a gambling bill that would have benefited a lobbying client of Arroyo's.

The Chicago ordinance contains language designed to allow aldermen who are attorneys to keep representing clients in other cities, as long as the legal work doesn't run afoul of prior City Council rules designed to stop them from leveraging their positions in cases where their clients are opposing the city of Chicago.

Smith said if the measure passes the full council next week, the city will be "leading the state in these kinds of ethical reforms, which is a different look for Chicago."

[jebyrne@chicagotribune.com](mailto:jebyrne@chicagotribune.com)

Twitter [@\\_johnbyrne](https://twitter.com/_johnbyrne)

---

×

ADVERTISEMENT

**Talk of the County reader opinion: The GOP is 'being run by religious zealots who want to remove all our rights'**

Talk of the County

Chicago Tribune

**Daywatch: Abortion politics and suburban women | Violence downtown reflects troubles in Chicago's neighborhoods | 'Every year is a bad tick year'**

Good morning, Chicago. Here are some of the top stories you need to know to start your day.

Chicago Tribune

---

# ASICS

\$64.99

DSW |

SHOP

Sponsore

## Got student loans? We have good news for you.

NerdWallet |

Sponsore

## A Pre-approved Loan is a Must for First-time Home Buyers

NerdWallet NMLS ID# 1617539 |

Learn More

Sponsore

## Steve Millar's Daily Southtown baseball rankings and player of the week for Tuesday, May 10, 2022

Chicago Tribune

## Tony Baranek's Daily Southtown softball rankings and player of the week for Tuesday, May 10, 2022

Chicago Tribune

## Excellent Personal Loans That Offer Up to \$10K

NerdWallet |

Learn More

Sponsore



Copyright © 2021, Chicago Tribune

