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MIKE QUIGLEY
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Cook County Board of Commissioners

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**BIRDS TO FLY A LITTLE EASIER: COOK COUNTY BOARD
UNANIMOUSLY APPROVES COMMISSIONER MIKE QUIGLEY'S
LEGISLATION TO PROTECT MIGRATORY BIRDS**

(Chicago) Cook County will be a national leader in protecting migratory birds from unnecessary death and injury caused by collisions with buildings under legislation sponsored by Cook County Commissioner Mike Quigley (D-10) and unanimously approved by the Board of Commissioners on July 22, 2008.

Birds cannot distinguish between actual objects and their reflected image on glass. Similarly, light sources inside buildings confuse birds into thinking open air lies ahead. As a result, as many as one billion birds die annually in the United States after colliding with buildings. However, low- or no-cost techniques can be used in new construction projects, as well as existing buildings, to mitigate bird collisions and deaths.

Cook County lies along the Mississippi Flyway, through which millions of birds comprising more than 300 different species pass during seasons of migration.

Quigley's Bird-Safe Buildings Ordinance requires all new County buildings and major renovation projects to incorporate bird-safe measures; existing buildings would need to be made bird-safe when modifications are feasible and cost-effective.

"I'm thrilled that Cook County will be showing other governments and building owners across the country that simple, inexpensive steps can have a big impact on the natural world," Quigley stated.

In new construction or renovation projects, bird-safe design frequently makes use of non-reflective glass, fritted glass, and awnings. Existing buildings may be made less hazardous by turning off interior lights (particularly during migration periods), moving indoor plants away from windows, applying patterns and films to window panes, and lowering blinds.

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“The bird conservation community applauds the historic action taken by the Cook County Board to make the County’s buildings bird-safe,” stated Randi Doeker, founding director of the Birds and Buildings Forum, a non-profit organization headquartered in Chicago. “The passage of the Bird-Safe Buildings Ordinance sends a message to government agencies nationwide that making buildings safe for birds is not only the right thing to do for the environment but also something that is easily and inexpensively achieved.”

“Commissioner Quigley’s legislation is an excellent example of our region’s leadership on green issues,” noted Dr. Donna Robertson, dean of the College of Architecture of the Illinois Institute of Technology. “These measures are among the most forward-thinking, positive actions taken by government to protect our environment.”

Quigley expects that similar legislation he is sponsoring at the Forest Preserve District, Cook County’s sister government, will be approved early this autumn.

Birds occupy important roles in many ecosystems, including eating insects and rodents, pollinating plants, and dispersing seeds. In the United States, 64 million people a year participate in bird watching, generating an estimated \$40 billion a year in economic activity.

Commissioner Mike Quigley, “arguably the greenest elected official in Chicago,” according to the *Chicago Reader*, was first elected to the Cook County Board in 1998. He is currently in his third term as Commissioner of the 10th District, representing the Old Town, Near North Side, Lincoln Park, Lakeview, Uptown, Edgewater, West Ridge, North Park, Rogers Park, and Sauganash neighborhoods of Chicago. More information about Quigley and the 10th District can be found on the Internet at <http://www.CommissionerQuigley.com>.

Cook County is an urban county in the northeastern section of the State of Illinois. With a population of approximately 5.3 million, it is the second most populous county in the nation and Cook County government is one of the largest units of local government in the United States (2005 census statistics). The Forest Preserve District of Cook County, governed by the President and Board of Commissioners but legally separate from the County, is one of the natural jewels of the Chicago region, with land holdings now exceeding 67,000 acres. The Forest Preserves serve as a home to many of the hundreds of species of birds which live in or migrate through the region.

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