



OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY  
MADISON COUNTY, ILLINOIS

**Thomas D. Gibbons**  
State's Attorney

157 North Main Street  
Suite 402  
Edwardsville, Illinois 62025

Voice: 618 692-6280  
Facsimile: 618 296-7001  
[www.madco-sa.org](http://www.madco-sa.org)

Contact: Stephanie Smith  
618/692-6280; @MadisonCoSAO

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## PRESS RELEASE

### **State's Attorney Board of Review opinion upheld by IL Attorney General** *Appointment approved by unanimous, bipartisan vote of Madison County Board*

**Edwardsville**— Madison County State's Attorney Tom Gibbons presented an opinion from Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan's office supporting his interpretation of a state law governing appointments to vacated County positions at this past Wednesday's County Board meeting.

The Attorney General's office upheld Gibbons' opinion that the County Board acted appropriately in its appointment of Diane Semanisin, a Democrat, to a new two-year term on the Board of Review. Republican Party Chairman Chris Slusser objected to the appointment, arguing that a Republican appointee should have been selected to fill the two-year term instead.

"The language of the statute was pretty clear and we made the right call," Gibbons said. "This was not a tough call to make, but Slusser got it wrong by trying to play politics."

Semanisin's appointment was previously approved by a unanimous vote during the April County Board meeting, along with the appointment of Republican Bessie Powers to a two-year term.

In the Attorney General opinion, Senior Assistant Attorney General Lynn Patton said the highest vote-getter in the most recent election was a Democrat, therefore establishing that the Board of Review seat in question should also be held by a Democrat.

According to the opinion: "The political composition of a board of review under section 6-15 of the Property Tax Code is to be determined based on the political affiliation of the candidate for election to a county office who received the highest total number of votes at the most recent general election, regardless of whether the election for office was contested or uncontested. The unopposed candidate for county sheriff, who was a member of the Democrat party, received the greatest number of votes for any Madison County office at the November 2014 general election. Consequently, two seats on the Madison County Board of Review are to be held by persons affiliated with the Democrat party."

"My office takes its responsibility to uphold the law very seriously," Gibbons said. "This was an important, legal matter. I am hopeful that, in the future, people will not play politics with important public decisions and will instead check their politics at the door."

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