

# Andrea Raila Could Be the Best Cook County Tax Assessor Candidate.....

A reformer in the field By **STEVE RHODES** Updated 8:53 AM CDT, Tue, Oct 20, 2009



The property tax game will likely go on without a reformer in office.



Getty Images

Cook County heavyweight and hack Joe Berrios is the odds-on favorite to become your next tax assessor in February. But the *Reader's* Ben Joravsky has surveyed the rest of the godawful field and found a reformer: Andrea Raila, a former aide to Pat Quinn when he was on the property tax review board in the 1980s. Raila now runs a tax-appeal consulting business.

"The woman's a true tax geek," Joravsky writes. In a better world that would matter. Cook County is not that world.

Berrios is chairman of the Cook County Democratic Party, aka The Machine (Legacy Division). He's already on the county's board of (property tax) review, and is obviously the party's slated candidate.

He's also a big-time lobbyist, having most recently spearheaded the drive to legalize video poker in the state. His clients also include Comcast, so, yes, he's evil.

There are a few other candidates too, but as Joravsky recounts, they are mostly there for convoluted political reasons.

So Raila's the one. Her business website even includes an endorsement from Studs Terkel, suggesting she become the "US Minister of Taxes." (That website is [taxestoohigh.com](http://taxestoohigh.com); the quote also appears on her campaign website.)

Raila's platform includes two political provisions that a candidate like Berrios will never consider: Trying to make the job an appointed position instead of an elected one; and as long as it is an elected position, limiting campaign contributions by tax appeal lawyers and consultants to the assessor.

Because you shouldn't take money from folks whose job is to try to win favorable decisions from you.

That makes eminent sense, and it's why she probably hasn't got a chance.

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