



## 102ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### State of Illinois

### 2021 and 2022

#### SB2244

Introduced 2/26/2021, by Sen. Laura M. Murphy

#### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

35 ILCS 200/15-172  
320 ILCS 30/2

from Ch. 67 1/2, par. 452

Amends the Property Tax Code. Provides that for taxable year 2020, the maximum income limitation under the senior citizens assessment freeze homestead exemption is \$75,000 for counties with 3,000,000 or more inhabitants (currently, \$65,000). Provides that, for taxable year 2021 and thereafter, the maximum income limitation under the senior citizens assessment freeze homestead exemption is \$75,000 for all counties (currently, \$65,000). Amends the Senior Citizens Real Estate Tax Deferral Act. Provides that the income limitation is \$75,000 for tax year 2019 and thereafter. Effective immediately.

LRB102 16094 HLH 21468 b

FISCAL NOTE ACT  
MAY APPLY

HOUSING  
AFFORDABILITY  
IMPACT NOTE ACT  
MAY APPLY

1 AN ACT concerning revenue.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The Property Tax Code is amended by changing  
5 Section 15-172 as follows:

6 (35 ILCS 200/15-172)

7 Sec. 15-172. Senior Citizens Assessment Freeze Homestead  
8 Exemption.

9 (a) This Section may be cited as the Senior Citizens  
10 Assessment Freeze Homestead Exemption.

11 (b) As used in this Section:

12 "Applicant" means an individual who has filed an  
13 application under this Section.

14 "Base amount" means the base year equalized assessed value  
15 of the residence plus the first year's equalized assessed  
16 value of any added improvements which increased the assessed  
17 value of the residence after the base year.

18 "Base year" means the taxable year prior to the taxable  
19 year for which the applicant first qualifies and applies for  
20 the exemption provided that in the prior taxable year the  
21 property was improved with a permanent structure that was  
22 occupied as a residence by the applicant who was liable for  
23 paying real property taxes on the property and who was either

1 (i) an owner of record of the property or had legal or  
2 equitable interest in the property as evidenced by a written  
3 instrument or (ii) had a legal or equitable interest as a  
4 lessee in the parcel of property that was single family  
5 residence. If in any subsequent taxable year for which the  
6 applicant applies and qualifies for the exemption the  
7 equalized assessed value of the residence is less than the  
8 equalized assessed value in the existing base year (provided  
9 that such equalized assessed value is not based on an assessed  
10 value that results from a temporary irregularity in the  
11 property that reduces the assessed value for one or more  
12 taxable years), then that subsequent taxable year shall become  
13 the base year until a new base year is established under the  
14 terms of this paragraph. For taxable year 1999 only, the Chief  
15 County Assessment Officer shall review (i) all taxable years  
16 for which the applicant applied and qualified for the  
17 exemption and (ii) the existing base year. The assessment  
18 officer shall select as the new base year the year with the  
19 lowest equalized assessed value. An equalized assessed value  
20 that is based on an assessed value that results from a  
21 temporary irregularity in the property that reduces the  
22 assessed value for one or more taxable years shall not be  
23 considered the lowest equalized assessed value. The selected  
24 year shall be the base year for taxable year 1999 and  
25 thereafter until a new base year is established under the  
26 terms of this paragraph.

1 "Chief County Assessment Officer" means the County  
2 Assessor or Supervisor of Assessments of the county in which  
3 the property is located.

4 "Equalized assessed value" means the assessed value as  
5 equalized by the Illinois Department of Revenue.

6 "Household" means the applicant, the spouse of the  
7 applicant, and all persons using the residence of the  
8 applicant as their principal place of residence.

9 "Household income" means the combined income of the  
10 members of a household for the calendar year preceding the  
11 taxable year.

12 "Income" has the same meaning as provided in Section 3.07  
13 of the Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities Property  
14 Tax Relief Act, except that, beginning in assessment year  
15 2001, "income" does not include veteran's benefits.

16 "Internal Revenue Code of 1986" means the United States  
17 Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or any successor law or laws  
18 relating to federal income taxes in effect for the year  
19 preceding the taxable year.

20 "Life care facility that qualifies as a cooperative" means  
21 a facility as defined in Section 2 of the Life Care Facilities  
22 Act.

23 "Maximum income limitation" means:

- 24 (1) \$35,000 prior to taxable year 1999;  
25 (2) \$40,000 in taxable years 1999 through 2003;  
26 (3) \$45,000 in taxable years 2004 through 2005;

- 1 (4) \$50,000 in taxable years 2006 and 2007;
- 2 (5) \$55,000 in taxable years 2008 through 2016;
- 3 (6) for taxable year 2017, (i) \$65,000 for qualified  
4 property located in a county with 3,000,000 or more  
5 inhabitants and (ii) \$55,000 for qualified property  
6 located in a county with fewer than 3,000,000 inhabitants;  
7 ~~and~~
- 8 (7) for taxable years 2018 and 2019 ~~thereafter~~,  
9 \$65,000 for all qualified property; ~~—~~
- 10 (8) for taxable year 2020, (i) \$75,000 for qualified  
11 property in a county with 3,000,000 or more inhabitants  
12 and (ii) \$65,000 for qualified property located in a  
13 county with fewer than 3,000,000 inhabitants; and
- 14 (9) for taxable years 2021 and thereafter, \$75,000 for  
15 all qualified property.

16 "Residence" means the principal dwelling place and  
17 appurtenant structures used for residential purposes in this  
18 State occupied on January 1 of the taxable year by a household  
19 and so much of the surrounding land, constituting the parcel  
20 upon which the dwelling place is situated, as is used for  
21 residential purposes. If the Chief County Assessment Officer  
22 has established a specific legal description for a portion of  
23 property constituting the residence, then that portion of  
24 property shall be deemed the residence for the purposes of  
25 this Section.

26 "Taxable year" means the calendar year during which ad

1 valorem property taxes payable in the next succeeding year are  
2 levied.

3 (c) Beginning in taxable year 1994, a senior citizens  
4 assessment freeze homestead exemption is granted for real  
5 property that is improved with a permanent structure that is  
6 occupied as a residence by an applicant who (i) is 65 years of  
7 age or older during the taxable year, (ii) has a household  
8 income that does not exceed the maximum income limitation,  
9 (iii) is liable for paying real property taxes on the  
10 property, and (iv) is an owner of record of the property or has  
11 a legal or equitable interest in the property as evidenced by a  
12 written instrument. This homestead exemption shall also apply  
13 to a leasehold interest in a parcel of property improved with a  
14 permanent structure that is a single family residence that is  
15 occupied as a residence by a person who (i) is 65 years of age  
16 or older during the taxable year, (ii) has a household income  
17 that does not exceed the maximum income limitation, (iii) has  
18 a legal or equitable ownership interest in the property as  
19 lessee, and (iv) is liable for the payment of real property  
20 taxes on that property.

21 In counties of 3,000,000 or more inhabitants, the amount  
22 of the exemption for all taxable years is the equalized  
23 assessed value of the residence in the taxable year for which  
24 application is made minus the base amount. In all other  
25 counties, the amount of the exemption is as follows: (i)  
26 through taxable year 2005 and for taxable year 2007 and

1 thereafter, the amount of this exemption shall be the  
2 equalized assessed value of the residence in the taxable year  
3 for which application is made minus the base amount; and (ii)  
4 for taxable year 2006, the amount of the exemption is as  
5 follows:

6 (1) For an applicant who has a household income of  
7 \$45,000 or less, the amount of the exemption is the  
8 equalized assessed value of the residence in the taxable  
9 year for which application is made minus the base amount.

10 (2) For an applicant who has a household income  
11 exceeding \$45,000 but not exceeding \$46,250, the amount of  
12 the exemption is (i) the equalized assessed value of the  
13 residence in the taxable year for which application is  
14 made minus the base amount (ii) multiplied by 0.8.

15 (3) For an applicant who has a household income  
16 exceeding \$46,250 but not exceeding \$47,500, the amount of  
17 the exemption is (i) the equalized assessed value of the  
18 residence in the taxable year for which application is  
19 made minus the base amount (ii) multiplied by 0.6.

20 (4) For an applicant who has a household income  
21 exceeding \$47,500 but not exceeding \$48,750, the amount of  
22 the exemption is (i) the equalized assessed value of the  
23 residence in the taxable year for which application is  
24 made minus the base amount (ii) multiplied by 0.4.

25 (5) For an applicant who has a household income  
26 exceeding \$48,750 but not exceeding \$50,000, the amount of

1 the exemption is (i) the equalized assessed value of the  
2 residence in the taxable year for which application is  
3 made minus the base amount (ii) multiplied by 0.2.

4 When the applicant is a surviving spouse of an applicant  
5 for a prior year for the same residence for which an exemption  
6 under this Section has been granted, the base year and base  
7 amount for that residence are the same as for the applicant for  
8 the prior year.

9 Each year at the time the assessment books are certified  
10 to the County Clerk, the Board of Review or Board of Appeals  
11 shall give to the County Clerk a list of the assessed values of  
12 improvements on each parcel qualifying for this exemption that  
13 were added after the base year for this parcel and that  
14 increased the assessed value of the property.

15 In the case of land improved with an apartment building  
16 owned and operated as a cooperative or a building that is a  
17 life care facility that qualifies as a cooperative, the  
18 maximum reduction from the equalized assessed value of the  
19 property is limited to the sum of the reductions calculated  
20 for each unit occupied as a residence by a person or persons  
21 (i) 65 years of age or older, (ii) with a household income that  
22 does not exceed the maximum income limitation, (iii) who is  
23 liable, by contract with the owner or owners of record, for  
24 paying real property taxes on the property, and (iv) who is an  
25 owner of record of a legal or equitable interest in the  
26 cooperative apartment building, other than a leasehold



1 interest. In the instance of a cooperative where a homestead  
2 exemption has been granted under this Section, the cooperative  
3 association or its management firm shall credit the savings  
4 resulting from that exemption only to the apportioned tax  
5 liability of the owner who qualified for the exemption. Any  
6 person who willfully refuses to credit that savings to an  
7 owner who qualifies for the exemption is guilty of a Class B  
8 misdemeanor.

9 When a homestead exemption has been granted under this  
10 Section and an applicant then becomes a resident of a facility  
11 licensed under the Assisted Living and Shared Housing Act, the  
12 Nursing Home Care Act, the Specialized Mental Health  
13 Rehabilitation Act of 2013, the ID/DD Community Care Act, or  
14 the MC/DD Act, the exemption shall be granted in subsequent  
15 years so long as the residence (i) continues to be occupied by  
16 the qualified applicant's spouse or (ii) if remaining  
17 unoccupied, is still owned by the qualified applicant for the  
18 homestead exemption.

19 Beginning January 1, 1997, when an individual dies who  
20 would have qualified for an exemption under this Section, and  
21 the surviving spouse does not independently qualify for this  
22 exemption because of age, the exemption under this Section  
23 shall be granted to the surviving spouse for the taxable year  
24 preceding and the taxable year of the death, provided that,  
25 except for age, the surviving spouse meets all other  
26 qualifications for the granting of this exemption for those

1 years.

2 When married persons maintain separate residences, the  
3 exemption provided for in this Section may be claimed by only  
4 one of such persons and for only one residence.

5 For taxable year 1994 only, in counties having less than  
6 3,000,000 inhabitants, to receive the exemption, a person  
7 shall submit an application by February 15, 1995 to the Chief  
8 County Assessment Officer of the county in which the property  
9 is located. In counties having 3,000,000 or more inhabitants,  
10 for taxable year 1994 and all subsequent taxable years, to  
11 receive the exemption, a person may submit an application to  
12 the Chief County Assessment Officer of the county in which the  
13 property is located during such period as may be specified by  
14 the Chief County Assessment Officer. The Chief County  
15 Assessment Officer in counties of 3,000,000 or more  
16 inhabitants shall annually give notice of the application  
17 period by mail or by publication. In counties having less than  
18 3,000,000 inhabitants, beginning with taxable year 1995 and  
19 thereafter, to receive the exemption, a person shall submit an  
20 application by July 1 of each taxable year to the Chief County  
21 Assessment Officer of the county in which the property is  
22 located. A county may, by ordinance, establish a date for  
23 submission of applications that is different than July 1. The  
24 applicant shall submit with the application an affidavit of  
25 the applicant's total household income, age, marital status  
26 (and if married the name and address of the applicant's

1 spouse, if known), and principal dwelling place of members of  
2 the household on January 1 of the taxable year. The Department  
3 shall establish, by rule, a method for verifying the accuracy  
4 of affidavits filed by applicants under this Section, and the  
5 Chief County Assessment Officer may conduct audits of any  
6 taxpayer claiming an exemption under this Section to verify  
7 that the taxpayer is eligible to receive the exemption. Each  
8 application shall contain or be verified by a written  
9 declaration that it is made under the penalties of perjury. A  
10 taxpayer's signing a fraudulent application under this Act is  
11 perjury, as defined in Section 32-2 of the Criminal Code of  
12 2012. The applications shall be clearly marked as applications  
13 for the Senior Citizens Assessment Freeze Homestead Exemption  
14 and must contain a notice that any taxpayer who receives the  
15 exemption is subject to an audit by the Chief County  
16 Assessment Officer.

17 Notwithstanding any other provision to the contrary, in  
18 counties having fewer than 3,000,000 inhabitants, if an  
19 applicant fails to file the application required by this  
20 Section in a timely manner and this failure to file is due to a  
21 mental or physical condition sufficiently severe so as to  
22 render the applicant incapable of filing the application in a  
23 timely manner, the Chief County Assessment Officer may extend  
24 the filing deadline for a period of 30 days after the applicant  
25 regains the capability to file the application, but in no case  
26 may the filing deadline be extended beyond 3 months of the

1 original filing deadline. In order to receive the extension  
2 provided in this paragraph, the applicant shall provide the  
3 Chief County Assessment Officer with a signed statement from  
4 the applicant's physician, advanced practice registered nurse,  
5 or physician assistant stating the nature and extent of the  
6 condition, that, in the physician's, advanced practice  
7 registered nurse's, or physician assistant's opinion, the  
8 condition was so severe that it rendered the applicant  
9 incapable of filing the application in a timely manner, and  
10 the date on which the applicant regained the capability to  
11 file the application.

12 Beginning January 1, 1998, notwithstanding any other  
13 provision to the contrary, in counties having fewer than  
14 3,000,000 inhabitants, if an applicant fails to file the  
15 application required by this Section in a timely manner and  
16 this failure to file is due to a mental or physical condition  
17 sufficiently severe so as to render the applicant incapable of  
18 filing the application in a timely manner, the Chief County  
19 Assessment Officer may extend the filing deadline for a period  
20 of 3 months. In order to receive the extension provided in this  
21 paragraph, the applicant shall provide the Chief County  
22 Assessment Officer with a signed statement from the  
23 applicant's physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or  
24 physician assistant stating the nature and extent of the  
25 condition, and that, in the physician's, advanced practice  
26 registered nurse's, or physician assistant's opinion, the

1 condition was so severe that it rendered the applicant  
2 incapable of filing the application in a timely manner.

3 In counties having less than 3,000,000 inhabitants, if an  
4 applicant was denied an exemption in taxable year 1994 and the  
5 denial occurred due to an error on the part of an assessment  
6 official, or his or her agent or employee, then beginning in  
7 taxable year 1997 the applicant's base year, for purposes of  
8 determining the amount of the exemption, shall be 1993 rather  
9 than 1994. In addition, in taxable year 1997, the applicant's  
10 exemption shall also include an amount equal to (i) the amount  
11 of any exemption denied to the applicant in taxable year 1995  
12 as a result of using 1994, rather than 1993, as the base year,  
13 (ii) the amount of any exemption denied to the applicant in  
14 taxable year 1996 as a result of using 1994, rather than 1993,  
15 as the base year, and (iii) the amount of the exemption  
16 erroneously denied for taxable year 1994.

17 For purposes of this Section, a person who will be 65 years  
18 of age during the current taxable year shall be eligible to  
19 apply for the homestead exemption during that taxable year.  
20 Application shall be made during the application period in  
21 effect for the county of his or her residence.

22 The Chief County Assessment Officer may determine the  
23 eligibility of a life care facility that qualifies as a  
24 cooperative to receive the benefits provided by this Section  
25 by use of an affidavit, application, visual inspection,  
26 questionnaire, or other reasonable method in order to insure

1 that the tax savings resulting from the exemption are credited  
2 by the management firm to the apportioned tax liability of  
3 each qualifying resident. The Chief County Assessment Officer  
4 may request reasonable proof that the management firm has so  
5 credited that exemption.

6 Except as provided in this Section, all information  
7 received by the chief county assessment officer or the  
8 Department from applications filed under this Section, or from  
9 any investigation conducted under the provisions of this  
10 Section, shall be confidential, except for official purposes  
11 or pursuant to official procedures for collection of any State  
12 or local tax or enforcement of any civil or criminal penalty or  
13 sanction imposed by this Act or by any statute or ordinance  
14 imposing a State or local tax. Any person who divulges any such  
15 information in any manner, except in accordance with a proper  
16 judicial order, is guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

17 Nothing contained in this Section shall prevent the  
18 Director or chief county assessment officer from publishing or  
19 making available reasonable statistics concerning the  
20 operation of the exemption contained in this Section in which  
21 the contents of claims are grouped into aggregates in such a  
22 way that information contained in any individual claim shall  
23 not be disclosed.

24 Notwithstanding any other provision of law, for taxable  
25 year 2017 and thereafter, in counties of 3,000,000 or more  
26 inhabitants, the amount of the exemption shall be the greater

1 of (i) the amount of the exemption otherwise calculated under  
2 this Section or (ii) \$2,000.

3 (c-5) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, each  
4 chief county assessment officer may approve this exemption for  
5 the 2020 taxable year, without application, for any property  
6 that was approved for this exemption for the 2019 taxable  
7 year, provided that:

8 (1) the county board has declared a local disaster as  
9 provided in the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act  
10 related to the COVID-19 public health emergency;

11 (2) the owner of record of the property as of January  
12 1, 2020 is the same as the owner of record of the property  
13 as of January 1, 2019;

14 (3) the exemption for the 2019 taxable year has not  
15 been determined to be an erroneous exemption as defined by  
16 this Code; and

17 (4) the applicant for the 2019 taxable year has not  
18 asked for the exemption to be removed for the 2019 or 2020  
19 taxable years.

20 Nothing in this subsection shall preclude or impair the  
21 authority of a chief county assessment officer to conduct  
22 audits of any taxpayer claiming an exemption under this  
23 Section to verify that the taxpayer is eligible to receive the  
24 exemption as provided elsewhere in this Section.

25 (d) Each Chief County Assessment Officer shall annually  
26 publish a notice of availability of the exemption provided

1 under this Section. The notice shall be published at least 60  
2 days but no more than 75 days prior to the date on which the  
3 application must be submitted to the Chief County Assessment  
4 Officer of the county in which the property is located. The  
5 notice shall appear in a newspaper of general circulation in  
6 the county.

7 Notwithstanding Sections 6 and 8 of the State Mandates  
8 Act, no reimbursement by the State is required for the  
9 implementation of any mandate created by this Section.

10 (Source: P.A. 100-401, eff. 8-25-17; 100-513, eff. 1-1-18;  
11 100-863, eff. 8-14-18; 101-635, eff. 6-5-20.)

12 Section 10. The Senior Citizens Real Estate Tax Deferral  
13 Act is amended by changing Section 2 as follows:

14 (320 ILCS 30/2) (from Ch. 67 1/2, par. 452)

15 Sec. 2. Definitions. As used in this Act:

16 (a) "Taxpayer" means an individual whose household income  
17 for the year is no greater than: (i) \$40,000 through tax year  
18 2005; (ii) \$50,000 for tax years 2006 through 2011; ~~and~~ (iii)  
19 \$55,000 for tax years year 2012 through 2018; and (iv) \$75,000  
20 for tax year 2019 and thereafter.

21 (b) "Tax deferred property" means the property upon which  
22 real estate taxes are deferred under this Act.

23 (c) "Homestead" means the land and buildings thereon,  
24 including a condominium or a dwelling unit in a multidwelling



1 building that is owned and operated as a cooperative, occupied  
2 by the taxpayer as his residence or which are temporarily  
3 unoccupied by the taxpayer because such taxpayer is  
4 temporarily residing, for not more than 1 year, in a licensed  
5 facility as defined in Section 1-113 of the Nursing Home Care  
6 Act.

7 (d) "Real estate taxes" or "taxes" means the taxes on real  
8 property for which the taxpayer would be liable under the  
9 Property Tax Code, including special service area taxes, and  
10 special assessments on benefited real property for which the  
11 taxpayer would be liable to a unit of local government.

12 (e) "Department" means the Department of Revenue.

13 (f) "Qualifying property" means a homestead which (a) the  
14 taxpayer or the taxpayer and his spouse own in fee simple or  
15 are purchasing in fee simple under a recorded instrument of  
16 sale, (b) is not income-producing property, (c) is not subject  
17 to a lien for unpaid real estate taxes when a claim under this  
18 Act is filed, and (d) is not held in trust, other than an  
19 Illinois land trust with the taxpayer identified as the sole  
20 beneficiary, if the taxpayer is filing for the program for the  
21 first time effective as of the January 1, 2011 assessment year  
22 or tax year 2012 and thereafter.

23 (g) "Equity interest" means the current assessed valuation  
24 of the qualified property times the fraction necessary to  
25 convert that figure to full market value minus any outstanding  
26 debts or liens on that property. In the case of qualifying

1 property not having a separate assessed valuation, the  
2 appraised value as determined by a qualified real estate  
3 appraiser shall be used instead of the current assessed  
4 valuation.

5 (h) "Household income" has the meaning ascribed to that  
6 term in the Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities  
7 Property Tax Relief Act.

8 (i) "Collector" means the county collector or, if the  
9 taxes to be deferred are special assessments, an official  
10 designated by a unit of local government to collect special  
11 assessments.

12 (Source: P.A. 99-143, eff. 7-27-15.)

13 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon  
14 becoming law.