

**Statement of the Chicago Republican Party on the Chick-fil-A matter
August 1, 2012**

I'm Chris Cleveland, Vice Chairman of the Chicago Republican Party.

Today we file a complaint with Attorney General Lisa Madigan and the Illinois Department of Human Rights.

The complaint asks that the Attorney General investigate Alderman Joe Moreno for abusing the power of his office and engaging in direct and overt religious discrimination against Chick fil A. It is clear that Alderman Moreno has violated provisions of the Illinois Human Rights Act.

The Chicago Democratic Machine has long abused power, using goverment funds and rule-making powers to hammer political opponents. It's illegal, but often difficult to prove.

This time, it's not so difficult, because Alderman Joe Moreno has taken it a step further. Not only has he used his power over zoning to punish someone with whom he disagrees politically. He has used government power to engage in overt religious discrimination against a person who merely expressed a sincerely held religious belief. And under the Illinois human rights law, that's illegal.

You don't have to agree with the position of Chick fil A on gay marriage to agree that this behavior threatens us all. You could easily imagine another jurisdiction in the United States where a statement in favor of gay marriage would draw a local government's wrath. The First Amendment was designed to protect speech, particularly political and religious speech, particularly if it is unpopular. Human rights statutes were designed to protect us even if who we are and what we believe is unpopular.

Apparently Alderman Moreno doesn't care.

Some may believe that Republicans are unpopular in Chicago. Maybe so, but we represent 20% of the vote here, we are the largest unrepresented political minority in the City, and we will be heard.

This is the beginning. Today's filing concerns only Alderman Moreno, and only the Chick fil A issue. Our legal counsel is studying the matter, but there is reason to believe that Mayor Emanuel has also violated the law. He has supported Alderman Moreno's actions. His administration has also threatened funding for Wrigley Field if the Ricketts family were to make certain political contributions. We are looking into potential violations of local, state, and federal law.

The time has come to say that we, the people of Chicago, will no longer tolerate this abuse. Business owners in this town are afraid to get involved in politics on the wrong side for fear that their zoning variances won't be approved, their liquor licenses pulled, their parking restricted, and their business visited by city inspectors.

Enough is enough.