



Office of the Chicago City  
Clerk



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City Council Document Tracking Sheet

<b>Meeting Date:</b>	11/2/2011
<b>Sponsor(s):</b>	Moore, Joseph A. (49)
<b>Type:</b>	Resolution
<b>Title:</b>	Proclaiming City of Chicago a torture free zone and observance of December 10th as International Human Rights Day
<b>Committee(s) Assignment:</b>	Committee on Human Relations

**RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING CHICAGO TO BE A TORTURE FREE ZONE**

**WHEREAS**, the United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Convention) defines torture as:

Any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity."; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States signed the Convention in 1988 and the United States Congress ratified the Convention in 1994, thereby making it a law; and

**WHEREAS**, torture violates our nation's and our city's most cherished ideals and violates the rights of all individuals, in contravention of the Convention and provisions of the United States Constitution, including the Fifth Amendment ban on self-incrimination, the Eighth Amendment ban on cruel and unusual punishment, and the Fourteenth Amendment guarantee of equal protection under the law; and

**WHEREAS**, incidents of torture and degrading practices perpetrated by agents of or on behalf of the United States government have been documented in Abu Ghraib, Bagram, Guantanamo Bay and elsewhere abroad since the signing of the Convention; and

**WHEREAS**, many Chicagoans are being held in prolonged solitary confinement in Illinois prisons in conditions which often lead to physical and psychological breakdown and are a form of torture; and

**WHEREAS**, former Chicago Police Commander Jon Burge and Chicago police officers under his command tortured scores of African-American men, which resulted in false confessions leading to wrongful convictions and imprisonment; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Chicago and its taxpayers have paid and continue to pay millions of dollars to defend lawsuits arising from those torturous acts; and

**WHEREAS**, torture survivors require comprehensive care and assistance, such as that provided by the Heartland Alliance Marjorie Kovler Center; and

**WHEREAS**, torture degrades everyone involved---perpetrators, survivors of torture, their families and communities, and officials and the public which turn a blind eye to such practices; and

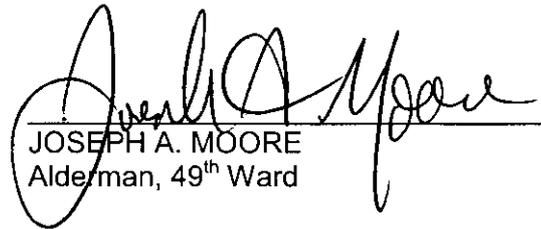
**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of Chicago in 2002 declared June 26th a day of support for torture survivors in accordance with the United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture; now, therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Chicago stand firm against all forms of torture and inhuman treatment, and hereby proclaim Chicago to be a torture free zone; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Chicago voice their strong and unwavering support for all survivors of torture, and will hold all perpetrators accountable for their actions; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Chicago supports and will take all necessary steps to enact the following:

1. The City of Chicago declares that it will not tolerate, support or allow torture to be practiced by its employees or residents.
2. The City of Chicago affirms that all prisoners under city, state or federal governmental control are entitled to have their human rights respected, including their right to be free from torture.
3. The City of Chicago supports the observance of December 10<sup>th</sup>, International Human Rights Day, as a day to reaffirm that the human rights of all people must be respected and to publicly denounce the practice of torture, wherever it occurs.

  
JOSEPH A. MOORE  
Alderman, 49<sup>th</sup> Ward