



Office of the Chicago City
Clerk



R2011-819

Office of the City Clerk

Tracking Sheet

Meeting Date:	7/6/2011
Sponsor(s):	Burke, Edward M. (14)
Type:	Resolution
Title:	Chicago City Council Urges President Barack Obama to posthumously pardon Jack Johnson
Committee(s) Assignment:	

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, United States Senator John McCain and Representative Peter King have reintroduced a resolution on Capitol Hill urging President Barack Obama to posthumously pardon Jack Johnson, the first African-American heavyweight boxing champion of the world; and

WHEREAS, The Chicago City Council has been informed of this fact by Alderman Edward M. Burke; and

WHEREAS, Jack Johnson was convicted on a disputed morals charge ninety-eight years ago in Chicago and after fleeing to Europe returned to face jail time for violation of the Mann Act; and

WHEREAS, In 2009 both the Senate and the House unanimously passed a resolution urging then-President George Bush to pardon Jack Johnson over the “racially motivated conviction” but the request was not granted; and

WHEREAS, Considered one of the nation’s first celebrity athletes, Jack Johnson fought 104 fights over the course of his career, winning 73 bouts, forty of them by knockout; and

WHEREAS, Jack Johnson was posthumously inducted into the Boxing Hall of Fame in 1954; and

WHEREAS, According to Senator McCain, “A full pardon would not only shed light on the achievements of an athlete who was forced into the shadows of bigotry and prejudice, but also allow future generations to grasp fully what Johnson accomplished against great odds”; and

WHEREAS, Jack Johnson passed away in 1946 and is buried in Chicago; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and the members of the Chicago City Council, assembled this sixth day of July, 2011, do hereby call upon President Barack Obama to address this injustice by posthumously pardoning Jack Johnson; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be presented to President Barack Obama.

Alderman – 14th Ward