



Office of the City Clerk



R2012-1126

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City Council Document Tracking Sheet

Meeting Date: 12/12/2012
Sponsor(s): Balcer, James (11)
Type: Resolution
Title: Call on Illinois General Assembly
Committee(s) Assignment:

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calendar*

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The Members of this Chamber wish for the Illinois General Assembly to take notice of a growing fraudulent activity known as "phone cramming" affecting cell phone users in Illinois; and

WHEREAS, "Phone cramming" involves the placement of fees on phone bills of cell phone users by third parties for services not provided. Thus, third parties pocket the money without providing any services in return. The Citizens Utility Board (CUB) estimates that fifty-one percent of Illinoisans' cell phone bills contain at least one item of cramming, and further estimates that cramming has doubled over the past year; and

WHEREAS, Cell phone users find it difficult to detect these erroneous charges because they are listed under benign names such as "premium texting" or "download charge"; and

WHEREAS, These phone crammers, as they are called, gain access to phone bills through such ploys as text messages and websites promising prizes, coupons or sweepstakes or through ringtone downloads; and

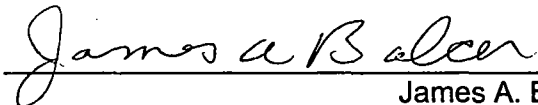
WHEREAS, It has been estimated that the average cramming charge in Illinois is \$3.76 a month. These are re-occurring charges which remain on a cell phone user's bill until the user affirmatively takes steps to remove the bogus charges. The Federal Communications Commission estimates that 95 percent of cramming victims never know about these charges; and

WHEREAS, The Federal Communications Commission is considering tougher laws at the urging of the Illinois Attorney General, Lisa Madigan; and

WHEREAS, Earlier this year, the Illinois General Assembly passed anti-cramming legislation, but it does not apply to cell phones. As a result, crammers are now focusing their efforts on defrauding cell phone users; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, assembled this twelfth day of December, 2012, do hereby call upon the Illinois General Assembly to pass legislation addressing this serious issue of cell phone cramming in order to better protect the people of the State of Illinois from fraudulent conduct; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be delivered to the Governor of the State of Illinois, the President of the Illinois Senate, the Minority Leader of the Illinois Senate, the Speaker of the Illinois House of Representatives, and the Minority Leader of the Illinois House of Representatives.



James A. Balcer
Alderman, 11th Ward