



# City of Chicago



R2020-163

Office of the City Clerk

## Document Tracking Sheet

<b>Meeting Date:</b>	2/19/2020
<b>Sponsor(s):</b>	Taliaferro (29) Lopez (15)
<b>Type:</b>	Resolution
<b>Title:</b>	Call for hearing(s) on suicide prevention strategies in Chicago Police Department
<b>Committee(s) Assignment:</b>	Committee on Public Safety

**RESOLUTION CALLING FOR A HEARING ON THE RISE IN POLICE DEATHS BY SUICIDE**

**WHEREAS**, Police deaths by suicide have become more frequent and widespread, with the number on the rise in Chicago and police departments around the country; and

**WHEREAS**, Instances of Chicago police officers taking their own lives have increased in the past four years, and, in 2017, the suicide rate among Chicago police officers was 60% higher than the national law enforcement average; and

**WHEREAS**, The single greatest cause of death for law enforcement officers is suicide, which means that more police officers die by suicide than in the line-of-duty; and

**WHEREAS**, There were a record 228 police deaths by suicide in the United States in 2019, up from 172 the previous year; and

**WHEREAS**, Police officers are at a higher risk of suicide than any other profession, which researchers attribute to a combination of easy access to deadly weapons, intense stress, and the harrowing events that police officers are often exposed to; and

**WHEREAS**, Police officers, especially those in large cities like Chicago, face a great deal of trauma on a day-to-day basis and are often first on the scene to some of the most dangerous and demanding situations imaginable; and

**WHEREAS**, The exposure to life-threatening situations and the physical strain of working long hours can have a serious impact on the mental health of police officers; and

**WHEREAS**, The rates of PTSD and depression among police officers is five times higher than that of the civilian population; and

**WHEREAS**, Comparatively, the Behavior Science Services Unit of the Los Angeles Police Department has seen tremendous success in reducing police officer suicides in the past several years;

2015: 1  
2016: 2  
2017: 1  
2018: 0  
2019: 1; and

**WHEREAS**, Increased mental health outreach, education on emotional well-being, and training on suicide prevention can all work to reduce the number of police officers who die by suicide; now, therefore

**BE IT RESOLVED**, That we, the Mayor and Members of the City Council of Chicago assembled this nineteenth day of February, 2020, do hereby call upon the Committee on Public Safety to hold a hearing to discuss the rise in police suicides in the Chicago Police Department in the past four years and strategies for suicide prevention; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That we call upon Chicago Police Interim Superintendent Charlie Beck or his designee, Commissioner of Public Health Allison Arwady, The Director of the Behavior Science Services Unit of the Los Angeles Police Department and any organizations focused on mental health and suicide prevention to be present at the hearing; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** We encourage anyone who is or knows someone who may be considering suicide to contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 (En Español: 1-888-628-9454; Deaf and Hard of Hearing: 1-800-799-4889) or the Crisis Text Line by texting 741741.

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Christopher Taliaferro. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end. Below the main signature, there is a smaller, circular stamp or mark containing the number '15'.A smaller, handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Clt Taliaferro'.

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CHRISTOPHER TALIAFERRO  
Alderman, 29th Ward