



# City of Chicago



R2017-289

Office of the City Clerk

## Document Tracking Sheet

<b>Meeting Date:</b>	4/19/2017
<b>Sponsor(s):</b>	Harris (8)
<b>Type:</b>	Resolution
<b>Title:</b>	Gratitude extended to Mayor Harold Washington's life and legacy
<b>Committee(s) Assignment:</b>	

## **RESOLUTION Honoring the Life and Legacy of Mayor Harold Washington**

**WHEREAS, It has been the long-established custom of the Chicago City Council, this august Legislative body, to honor the legacy of those distinguished individuals and leaders whose life, work and civic endeavor serve to uplift, expand and enhance the quality of life for Chicagoans; and**

**WHEREAS, the Mayor Harold Washington Legacy Committee, an Illinois 501.c.3 organization, believes that in honor of the date April 15, 2017, which would have been the 95th birthday of Mayor Washington, this is an excellent time to remember and celebrate the legacy, history, civic commitment and the achievements of our city's 1st African American Mayor; and**

**WHEREAS, 2017 also marks the 30th Anniversary of the death of the Late Mayor Harold Washington; and**

**WHEREAS, not only during the month of April 2017, but throughout the remainder of the year, it is important that we, as brethren, reach out to one another in seeking to understand the life and work of this great man in a positively proactive, educationally-significant and devoted way; and**

**WHEREAS, Chicago has proudly been called home by many influential African Americans including Olympic gold medalists Jesse Owens and Ralph Metcalfe, acclaimed writer and Poet Laureate Gwendolyn Brooks, Pulitzer and Nobel Prize winning author Toni Morrison, the nation's first African-American former President Barack Obama and many others; and**

**Whereas, Mayor Harold Washington was an exemplary public servant and dynamic leader who dedicated his life to his beloved Chicago and to equal opportunity for all of Chicago's citizens; and**

**Whereas, Harold Lee Washington was born on April 15, 1922 in Chicago; and**

**Whereas, Harold Washington, a resident of Chicago's historic south side Bronzeville community, was a graduate of DuSable High School, Roosevelt University, and the Northwestern University School of Law; and**

**Whereas, Washington served his country during World War II with the 1887th Engineer Aviation Battalion in the South Pacific, where his unit received the Meritorious Service Unit award, and he was honorably discharged after a highly decorated tour of military service; and**

**Whereas, Washington served the City of Chicago as a legislator in the Illinois House of Representatives (1965-1976), the Illinois State Senate (1976-1980), and the United States House of Representatives, representing the city's 1st Congressional District (1981-1983); and**

**Whereas, in 1983 Washington made history, and became the first African-American elected Mayor of Chicago after a developing a multi-ethnic coalition which generated record voter turnout, and after a campaign that centered around citywide reform and an end to political patronage; and**

Whereas, while Mayor of Chicago from April 29, 1983 – November 25, 1987, **Washington** achieved count-less important developments for the city of Chicago, including the creation of the city's Ethics Commission, enhanced minority and small business contracting, opening city government to various population groups, expanded freedom of information standards, and a more equitable provision of public services to all city neighborhoods among many other accomplishments, including his notable political stature on local, national and international levels; and

Whereas, after an acrimonious citywide grass-roots political re-election campaign battle, **Mayor Harold Washington** was victoriously elected to a second term as Mayor in 1987 by a multi-ethnic coalition, and armed with ambitious plans for his second term until fate intervened; and

Whereas, **Mayor Washington** unexpectedly and tragically passed away at his office desk in City Hall on November 25, 1987 and was mourned by the city of Chicago and the nation; and

Whereas, the issuance of this City Council resolution celebrates the 30 years since his second term. and establishes recognition that **Washington's** numerous contributions will broaden the civic understanding of his work for current and future generations, his undeniable historical legacy to the city of Chicago as well as the United States, and equally important, that his stature as a trailblazer and role model for Chicagoans of all racial and ethnic backgrounds will live on in perpetuity; and

**Now -- Therefore, Be It Resolved**, That we, the Mayor and the members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, gathered here in assembly this 19th day of April 2017 A.D., do hereby express our reverent honor, appreciation and respect as we celebrate the life, work and enduring legacy of the late **Mayor Harold Washington**; and

**Be It Further Resolved**, that a suitable copy of this resolution be prepared and presented to the members of the **Mayor Harold Washington Legacy Committee**.



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Michelle A. Harris-Alderman  
8th Ward, City of Chicago

5/11/17 10:30 P