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R2011-1042

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City Council Document Tracking Sheet

Meeting Date: 9/8/2011
Sponsor(s): Fioretti, Bob (2)
Type: Resolution
Title: Congratulations extended to Chicago Theatre
Committee(s) Assignment:

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHICAGO THEATRE

WHEREAS, The Loop's historic Chicago Theatre on North State Street, first opened its doors 90 years ago on October 26, 1921, and will celebrate this anniversary with a performance by famed comedian and native Chicagoan Bob Newhart on October 22, 2011; and

WHEREAS, The Chicago Theatre is a City of Chicago Landmark and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The 3,553-seat theatre elevated the motion picture experience beyond the ordinary and continues to be a remarkable venue for many of the world's greatest performers; and

WHEREAS, The Balaban and the Katz families from this city's West Side, built a national entertainment empire with their unique presentations, continuous performances and brand marketing, with the Chicago Theatre as their hometown flagship theatre, wherein a B&K crest can still be seen in the original stained glass window above the vestibule, marquee and grand lobby; and

WHEREAS, A tradition was begun by the American singer and actor Frank Sinatra, who signed his name on the backstage wall and, since then, thousands of performers and crew members have also left their mark, as well; and

WHEREAS, The original Chicago Theatre "Wurlitzer" pipe organ is still played, just as Jesse Crawford, the "Poet of the Organ", did on opening night. The Chicago Theatre marquee and six-story vertical sign have kept State Street lit for 90 years, using 8,915 light bulbs and more than 127,000 watts of power to operate them; and

WHEREAS, Chicago architects Cornelius W. and George L. Rapp created spectacular interiors based on escapist, musical and mythological themes. The Chicago Theatre was built in the style of French Baroque and includes the *Arc de Triomphe* in the façade over the State Street marquee; and

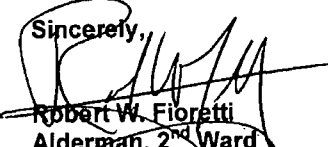
WHEREAS, We honor the citizenry who worked to save the Chicago Theatre in 1983, when developers sought to wreck it for the construction of a modern office building. Today, the Madison Square Garden Company, its employees and countless fans of the theatre support it so future generations may enjoy it; and

WHEREAS, The Chicago Theatre's history is illustrated in multiple displays within its lobbies and a special anniversary exhibit is mounted in the Theatre Historical Society of America museum in Elmhurst, Illinois, a national organization concerned with theatre design history and possessing a collection of architectural photographs, drawings and artifacts; and

WHEREAS, The Honorable Robert W. Fioretti, Alderman of the 2nd Ward, has apprised this august body of this important milestone for the landmark Chicago Theatre; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and members of the City of Chicago City Council, assembled this 8th day of September, 2011 A.D., do hereby commend the owners and staff of the Chicago Theatre for their efforts to preserve this important cultural landmark that has been enjoyed by millions of people for the past nine decades.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be prepared and presented for the archives of the Chicago Theatre.

Sincerely,

Robert W. Fioretti
Alderman, 2nd Ward

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