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R2012-362

Office of the City Clerk

City Council Document Tracking Sheet

Meeting Date:	4/24/2012
Sponsor(s):	Mell, Richard F. (33)
Type:	Resolution
Title:	Commemoration of Arbor Day 2012 and call for hearing(s) on funding increase for inoculation of ash trees
Committee(s) Assignment:	Committee on Finance

A SPECIAL COMMEMORATION OF ARBOR DAY 2012
BY A CALL FOR ACTION CONCERNING THE EMERALD ASH BORER INFESTATION

WHEREAS, April 27, 2012 will be the 140th annual observance of Arbor Day in this nation. Founded in Nebraska City, Nebraska and established as a holiday where individuals and groups are encouraged to plant and care for trees, the first Arbor Day was held on April 10, 1872. On that day, an estimated 1,000,000 million trees were planted; and

WHEREAS, Chicago's 91,000 ash trees that line parkways across this city are presently under attack by the emerald ash borer. Time is of the essence as the initial emerald ash borer infestation was discovered in August of 2008. There is only a span a seven or eight years from the time this condition is diagnosed until most trees are dead; and

WHEREAS, This city initiated the fight against the emerald ash borer infestation in 2009 with a treatment plan that involves a low dose, highly effective insecticide injected directly into the tree, with the treatment being repeated every third year at an average cost of \$60 per tree; and

WHEREAS, When the treatment began in 2009, 100 Bureau of Forestry employees were trained to treat the 73,000-parkway ash trees that are managed by the Department of Streets and Sanitation. However, in subsequent years due to budget cuts, the now underfunded Bureau of Forestry was unable to treat all the ash trees under its jurisdiction. To this date, only 18,400 trees have been treated. Meanwhile, the emerald ash borer has proliferated and spread, putting Chicago's parkway trees at significant risk; and

WHEREAS, If funding is not increased, 55,000 trees that were to be treated originally will die, becoming a hazard to residents and visitors unless cut down and removed. This city's citizens depend on ash trees for shade and aesthetic value. Cooling costs will escalate, property values drop and rainwater held by these trees will tax the already overburdened storm water systems; and

WHEREAS, It is paramount to increase the funding for emerald ash borer elimination to a level of \$1.4 million annually for the next three years to treat an additional 17,000 trees, thereby protecting these valuable ash trees and significantly reducing expenditures the city would inevitably have to make for removing dead and dying ash trees. The Bureau of Forestry estimates that the costs of removal, stump grinding and replacement planting is approximately \$1,050 per tree, amounting to \$58 million the city will be forced to spend over the next decade if these ash trees are not protected now, and at a significantly lesser cost; and

WHEREAS, In light of the upcoming Arbor Day, it is incumbent upon this legislative body to commemorate its 140th anniversary by acting expeditiously to preserve our magnificent and stately ash trees; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED That we, the Mayor and members of the City Council gathered together this 18th Day of April, 2012 AD, do hereby commemorate Arbor Day 2012 by calling upon the Committee on Finance to convene hearings in order to take testimony from experts and the public on the urgency of increasing the funding for the continuation of the successful inoculation of all ash trees against the fatal infestation of the emerald ash borer insect as well as inviting officials from the Chicago Park District and the Forest Preserve District of Cook County to testify concerning any actions they have taken regarding the emerald ash borer menace.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That a suitable copy of this resolution be prepared and given to the Honorable Edward M. Burke, Chairman of the Finance Committee, Michael P. Kelley, General Superintendent & Chief Executive Officer of the Chicago Park District and Arnold Randall, General Superintendent of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County.



RICHARD F. MELL
Alderman – 33rd Ward

Rebel Mele 33

St. Wagapade 32

James Cooper 46

Niddis Gato 36th

J.S. 45th

Louise Lane 18th

Emma Miller 37th

Daniel G. G.

Richard P. G.

Joseph A. G.

Robert G. G. 50

Rebel Mele - 23

Matthew J. G. 19

Robert G. 22

John G. 15.

Water G. 2

John T. Pope 10th

Margaret Lawrence

Isaac B. B. 4

Amey B. 47

H. B.

Math G.

Robert B.