



Office of the City Clerk

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Legislation Text

File #: R2020-807, **Version:** 1

LORI E. LIGHTFOOT
MAYOR

October 7, 2020

TO THE HONORABLE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY
OF CHICAGO

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I transmit herewith, together with the members of the City Council, a resolution honoring the life and memory of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

Your favorable consideration of this resolution will be appreciated.

Very truly yours.

Mayor

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The Members of this Body were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, on September 18, 2020; and

WHEREAS, Serving on the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit for 13 years, followed by 27 years on the United States Supreme Court, Justice Ginsburg left a monumental legacy. She was a singular and powerful inspiration to lawyers, judges, elected leaders, and people everywhere, as evidenced by the universal recognition of her initials, "RBG"; and

WHEREAS, Born Joan Ruth Bader in Brooklyn, New York, the second daughter of Nathan and Celia Bader, Justice Ginsburg grew up in a working-class neighborhood in Brooklyn. Her mother, who died the day

before Ginsburg's high school graduation, was a major influence in her life, instilling in her the value of independence and a good education; and

WHEREAS, Ruth Bader Ginsburg graduated from Cornell University in 1954 with a bachelor's degree in government. That same year she married Martin Ginsburg, and the devoted couple raised two children, Jane and James. Despite their demanding dual careers, Marty and Ruth fostered a loving home, with music always playing in the background, family dinners, and weekends on the golf course. Ruth played, but sat in the back of the golf cart between shots to read briefs on her cases; and

WHEREAS, Ruth Bader Ginsburg went to law school at Harvard, then transferred to Columbia, graduating at the top of her class. She consistently confronted and overcame sexism as she built her career, first serving as a judicial clerk for the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, then in academia. She went on to accept a position as a professor at Rutgers Law School and then at Columbia Law School, where she became the first female professor to earn tenure; and

WHEREAS, Ruth Bader Ginsburg was a pioneering leader for women, and her work throughout her career helped further gender equality in America across all fields and social strata. She co-founded the influential Women's Rights Project at the American Civil Liberties Union and served as the organization's General Counsel; and

WHEREAS, While at the ACLU, she led the fight against gender discrimination and argued six landmark cases before the U.S. Supreme Court, winning five. Ginsburg fought not just for the women left behind, but for the men who were discriminated against as well; and

WHEREAS, Justice Ginsburg's style on the bench and in her opinions showed technical mastery, precision, steadiness, and careful calculation. While her writing reflected the view that significant social change should come from the legislature, she did not shy away from giving pointed guidance when she felt it necessary; and

WHEREAS, Admired by each Justice with whom she served, Ruth Bader Ginsburg set an example for all people by showing that possessing strong views and deep commitments can comfortably co-exist with collegiality and even close friendship with others who hold different views; and

WHEREAS, Justice Ginsburg's powerful intellect was matched by her discipline. Until her death, she worked with a personal trainer in the Supreme Court's exercise room, and for many years could lift more than some of her younger colleagues. Until the 2018 term, she had not missed a single day of oral arguments, not even when undergoing chemotherapy or following surgery for bouts with cancer, or the day after her cherished husband passed away in 2010; and

WHEREAS, Justice Ginsburg's powerful legacy as a champion for marginalized groups across identities of race, gender, economic status, sexual orientation, disability status, and religion will long endure; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago,

assembled this seventh day of October, 2020, do hereby extend our most heartfelt condolences to Ruth Bader Ginsburg's children. Jane and James, and to all of her family and friends; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be prepared and presented to the family of Ruth Bader Ginsburg as a sign of our great honor and respect.