



# Office of the City Clerk

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## Legislation Text

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conjunction with Bureau of Forestry authorized and directed to expend funds in development and implementation of treatment for tree infestation Committee on Finance

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### ORDINANCE

WHEREAS, The 91,000 ash trees that line parkways across this city are presently under attack by the emerald ash borer; and

WHEREAS, 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 all of 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; now

therefore

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF CHICAGO CITY COUNCIL:

SECTION 1. Funding for the identification and treatment of all ash trees infested with the Emerald Ash Borer larvae shall be expended from the Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District in which the affected trees are located or are within a radius of 2.5 miles outside its boundaries (unless that area is included in an adjacent TIF district).

SECTION 2. The commissioner of the department of streets & sanitation in conjunction with the bureau of forestry is hereby authorized and directed to expend said funds in the immediate development and implementation of a treatment to address this critical infestation.

SECTION 3. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect upon its passage.