



# Office of the City Clerk

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## Legislation Text

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### RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Chicago Transit Authority is the nation's second largest public transportation system, providing 1.6 million transit rides daily and 516 million transit rides annually, directly servicing two major international airports; and

WHEREAS, the Chicago Transit Authority operates on the public way, pursuant to a franchise granted in 1945 by the City Council of Chicago, and receives funds from the Chicago Real Property Transfer Tax; and

WHEREAS, the Chicago Transit Authority is the sole means of reliable transportation for thousands of Chicago metropolitan area residents and a crucial component in reducing carbon emissions and urban congestion; and

WHEREAS, payment options for ridership have regularly evolved and expanded to provide convenience to the customer and to stay current with technology: entering the digital age in 1997 by replacing tokens with a magnetic strip fare card, then adding the contactless Chicago Card system, which featured an automatic payment option when linked to a credit card. Ventra, in keeping with technological advances, is intended to replace a sixteen-year-old magnetic strip card and eleven-year-old Chicago Card payment system, and;

WHEREAS, the Chicago Transit Authority entered into a ten-year contract valued at \$454 million with Cubic Transportation Systems to transition customers completely to the Ventra card system; and

WHEREAS, Ventra has been created to standardize payment options for the customers of the Chicago Transit Authority and Pace bus system, and for the convenience of both the transit system and passengers and improved and accessible customer service; and

WHEREAS, reported complaints about Ventra and its parent company, Cubic Transportations Systems, include, but are not limited to: customers experiencing prohibitively long wait times to receive or activate Ventra cards, customers charged multiple times for a single ride, inconveniently long wait times for customer service calls, customers charged for calls placed to the customer service center, excessive delivery of cards to registered addresses, and delays in overcharge complaints being reconciled; and

WHEREAS, persistent failure to resolve system-wide problems and delay in the planned transition process has caused frustration and immeasurable inconvenience to transit users of the City of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, a consistent and orderly transit system in a city as large and populous as Chicago is a component of effective infrastructure and a viable local economy; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, the Committee on Transportation and Public Way of the City of Chicago shall conduct a hearing on matters pertaining to the Ventra card transition, and shall request the appearance

knowledgeable representatives of the Chicago Transit Authority and

**Cubic Transportation System. The hearing shall address problematic issues in the Ventra system, as well as feasible and timely solutions. The hearing will also request accountability from Cubic Transportation Systems and require an update on the status of the Ventra program; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: the Committee on Transportation and Public Way shall request from the Chicago Transit Authority and Cubic Transportation Systems an updated . timeline for complete transition away from the previous fare collection system, numbers of employees assigned to Ventra customer service, current average wait times for customer service calls, details of software and system changes to eliminate multiple charges to customers who posses contactless cards, a plan of action for reimbursement to customers, and an increase in customer service staff. The Committee shall also request a copy of the budget to enact these plans, illustrating the availability and quantity of funds necessary for these improvements.**