



Office of the City Clerk

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Legislation Text

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**SALUTE TO THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST HISPANIC
GRADUATE OF JOHN MARSHALL LAW SCHOOL.**
WILLIAM E. RODRIGUEZ

WHEREAS, On November 27, 2012, The John Marshall Law School will be celebrating the 100th anniversary of its first Hispanic graduate, William E. Rodriguez.

WHEREAS, William Rodriguez was brought into this world on September 15, 1879 in Naperville, Illinois. He attended public schools and worked as a house painter; and

WHEREAS, Soon after graduating high school, Rodriguez joined the Socialist Party of America and decided to go to John Marshall Law School; and

WHEREAS, By 1911, William had married Sophia V. Levitin. In that year, he became the Socialist candidate for Mayor of Chicago. Although he was not victorious, he did not give up on running for public office; and

WHEREAS, Upon graduating from John Marshall Law School in 1912, William Rodriguez moved into the 15th Ward and became the first Hispanic to become Alderman on the Chicago City Council when he replaced the original winner, who passed away shortly after the 1914 elections, after winning the replacement election. He was reelected in 1916 but lost a subsequent reelection bid 1918 during a wave of anti-Socialist nationalism arising out of World War I; and

WHEREAS, William Rodriguez became more involved in the Labor Party of Cook County, a forerunner for the Labor Party of the United States, and subsequently left the Socialist Party of America.

WHEREAS, Eventually, William Rodriguez abandoned his political career and decided to practice law. He was one of the founders of the Chicago chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union; and

WHEREAS, William E. Rodriguez continued to practice law until his late 80s when he moved to Phoenix and passed away in 1970;

WHEREAS, The Honorable Robert W. Fioretti, Alderman of the 2nd Ward, has apprised this august body of this notable and historic occasion; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED That we, the Mayor and members of the City Council gathered here, this 15th Day of November 2012 AD, do hereby salute the John Marshall Law School on the Centennial Anniversary of its first Hispanic graduate, William E. Rodriguez, and express our sincerest hope for the continuation of this path for minorities' success as reflected through this commemoration.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That a suitable copy of this resolution be prepared and presented to The John Marshall Law School.