



Office of the City Clerk

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Legislation Text

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RESOLUTION URGING HEARINGS ON THE TASTE OF CHICAGO

WHEREAS, The Taste of Chicago, once the world's largest food festival, has been held annually since 1980; and

WHEREAS, A peak total of 3.6 million people visited the 2006 Taste of Chicago. Attendance for the previous record 10-day event, in 2004, was 3.59 million, with \$12.33 million in revenue; and

WHEREAS, By 2011, the Taste of Chicago drew 2.35 million visitors, down 11 percent from 2010. Participating restaurants also made less money, \$4.9 million, down 20 percent from 2010. This prompted several changes for the 2012 event from shortening the festival to 5 days to changing the dates for later in July rather than coinciding with the July 4 holiday; and

WHEREAS, The Taste of Chicago still lost money, \$1.3 million last year, \$300,000 more than it lost in 2011. In fact, the festival hasn't turned a profit since 2008; and

WHEREAS, Although the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events has done a yeoman's job of tweaking and improving the upcoming 33rd Taste with top name entertainment, the venue's participants, as a recent Chicago Tribune editorial pointed out, seem to have more a sense of nostalgia than enthusiasm for the Taste; and

WHEREAS, Additionally, perennial traffic and increasing police problems that continue to plague the Taste which prompt local resident complaints, have the members of this legislative body, whose constituents are adversely affected by this annual event, question the sagacity of continuing what is fast becoming a losing proposition; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED That we, the undersigned members of the City of Chicago City Council, gathered together this 13th Day of March, 2013 AD, do hereby urge the committee on special events, cultural affairs and recreation to expeditiously convene a hearing to take testimony from the commissioner of the department of cultural affairs and special events as well as other interested parties concerning the reconstitution or elimination of this venue.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That a suitable copy of this resolution be prepared and presented to the Honorable Walter Burnett, Jr. Chairman of the Committee on Special Events, Cultural Affairs and Recreation, and Michelle T. Boone, Commissioner of the City of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events.