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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

RAHM EMANUEL
MAYOR

May 28, 2014

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

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I transmit herewith, together with Aldermen Fioretti, Hairston, Sawyer, Holmes, Burke, Thomas and Brookins, a congratulatory resolution concerning the Cook County Bar Association.

Your favorable consideration of this resolution will be appreciated.

Mayor

Very truly yours,

Resolution

*adopted by the City Council of
the City of Chicago, Illinois*

ALDERMEN BOB FIORETTI, LESLIE HAIRSTON, RODERICK T. SAWYER, NATASHIA HOLMES, EDWARD M. BURKE, LATASHA THOMAS, HOWARD B. BROOKINS

presented by Mayor Rahm Emanuel

On

May 28, 2014

Beginning in 1869, Lloyd G. Wheeler became the first Black man licensed to practice law in the State of Illinois, and, in 1894, Ida Piatt became the first Black woman attorney licensed in Illinois. By 1896, 32 African Americans had been admitted to the Illinois bar, and they began meeting informally to devise a legal strategy to protest against discrimination in hotels, theaters, restaurants, schools and the judiciary; and

WHEREAS, This informal collaboration among African American attorneys lasted until 1914, when a younger generation of Black lawyers decided to form the Cook County Bar Association ("CCBA") to improve, protect, and defend the lives and rights of all citizens in the Greater Chicago area. The CCBA is the oldest association of Black lawyers in the country; and

WHEREAS, Since the CCBA's inception, its members have served as advocates, judges and legal educators, and as elected and appointed representatives, participating at every level of government to fight injustice, to advocate on behalf of underserved communities, and to promote the interests of African American lawyers and judges; and

WHEREAS, Throughout its distinguished history, the CCBA has provided leadership, service and advocacy for African-American attorneys and to people residing in underserved communities; and

WHEREAS, The CCBA's myriad accomplishments include the work of its outstanding members, such as C. Francis Stradford, who co-founded the National Bar Association in 1925; Earl B. Dickerson, who represented the plaintiffs in *Hansberry v. Lee*, the seminal 1940 case protesting restrictive covenants in Chicago's housing markets; and William R. Ming, who served on the NAACP team litigating *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954; and

WHEREAS, Since its founding, the CCBA has celebrated many firsts with its members, including Jewel Stradford LaFontant's appointment as the first Black female Deputy Solicitor General; Edith Sampson's election as Illinois' first Black female Municipal Court Judge; James Parson's appointment to the U. S. District Court; John Stroger's election as Cook County Board President; and Harold Washington's election as Mayor of the City of Chicago. The CCBA's membership roster includes many members of the judiciary; members of the Chicago City Council, both past and present; and President Barack Obama, to name just a few; and

WHEREAS, The CCBA continues its tradition of service by providing a variety of legal programs to advance the legal profession and its members, such as sponsoring the largest job fair for law students in the Midwest, a Law Day for high school students, a free monthly legal clinic for Chicago residents, scholarships and awards, an expanded In Court Bar Program for CCBA members, various neighborhood legal forums, and Call A Lawyer Day. The CCBA has also worked to develop an organized system for fair and impartial evaluations of judicial candidates, an effort which has led to a joint alliance with other minority bar associations; and

WHEREAS, The CCBA celebrates its centennial anniversary in 2014 with a vision for the future that honors its storied past, celebrates its present successes, and eagerly invites innovations that a rapidly-changing society and the legal community require; and

WHEREAS, It is in keeping with this spirit that the Cook County Bar Association has adopted "CCBA TOO: Service-Struggle-Success" as the theme for its Centennial Celebration; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, assembled this twenty-eighth day of May, 2014, do hereby commend the Cook County Bar Association for its unsurpassed contributions to the legal profession, for its sustained efforts to advance the cause of racial equality, and for its decades of service to the residents of Cook County, Illinois; and do hereby extend to the Cook County Bar Association our best wishes for continued success on this special occasion of its 100th anniversary; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be presented to the Board of Directors of the Cook County Bar Association as a token of our appreciation and esteem.

