



Office of the City Clerk

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Legislation Text

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ORDINANCE

REPARATIONS FOR THE CHICAGO POLICE TORTURE SURVIVORS

WHEREAS, the City of Chicago acknowledges that former Chicago Police Commander Jon Burge and detectives under his command systematically engaged in acts of torture, physical abuse and coercion of African American men and women at Area 2 and 3 Police Headquarters from 1972 through 1991; and

WHEREAS, the acts of torture committed by Burge and detectives under his command included electrically shocking individuals on their genitals, backs and ears with an electric shock box or cat prod; suffocating individuals with plastic bags; subjecting individuals to mock execution with guns; physical beatings with telephone books and rubber hoses; and other forms of physical and psychological abuse; and

WHEREAS, Burge and his men committed these acts of torture and abuse to extract confessions from the victims which were subsequently admitted against them in their criminal prosecutions resulting in their wrongful convictions; and

WHEREAS, these acts of torture, physical abuse and coercion violate state, federal and international law and such acts are universally condemned worldwide; and

WHEREAS, the trauma and damage caused by these heinous acts continue to detrimentally affect the torture survivors, their family members, African American communities and the City of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, the trauma and damage caused by these heinous acts will continue to cause egregious harm to those affected unless the City of Chicago and other municipal bodies enact reparations to mitigate the harm; and

WHEREAS, the City of Chicago has been complicit in the torture practices and tacitly supported those acts by expending more than \$20 million of taxpayers funds to defend Burge and other implicated detectives implicated in civil litigation brought by the torture survivors, and

WHEREAS, Mayor Emanuel has recently acknowledged that the torture scandal was a dark chapter in the history of the City of Chicago that stained its reputation and that he was sorry for it;

WHEREAS, the City of Chicago must officially acknowledge the torture that occurred in the City and resolve to never allow such acts to go undeterred and unpunished ever again, now therefore,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF CHICAGO AND THE MAYOR OF CHICAGO:

- § Hereby issues a formal apology to the torture survivors, their family members, and other affected individuals and communities on behalf of the City of Chicago for the violations and harm incurred by these torture practices.
- § Hereby creates a Chicago Police Torture Reparations Commission that is responsible for administering financial reparations to the torture survivors to compensate them for the torture they endured.
- § Hereby creates a center on the south side of Chicago that will provide psychological counseling, health care services and vocational training to the torture survivors, their family members and others affected by law enforcement torture and abuse.
- § Hereby provides that all torture survivors and their family members be allowed to enroll in City Colleges and receive their education and degree for free.
- § Hereby calls on the Chicago Public School system to incorporate into its curriculum a history lesson about the Chicago Police torture cases and the struggles to hold those accountable and to seek reparations for the survivors and affected family members.
- § Hereby calls on local law enforcement officials to provide evidentiary hearings to the torture survivors who remain behind bars who had their coerced confessions used against in their criminal proceedings resulting in their wrongful convictions, and moreover, supports the torture survivors' rights to have a full and fair opportunity to present evidence that demonstrates they were physically coerced into giving a confession.
- § Hereby commits to supporting the creation of public memorials that memorialize the Chicago Police Torture survivors and the struggle for justice on their behalf.
- § Hereby provides a minimum of \$20 million to finance the Chicago Police Torture Reparations Commission, the center on the Southside Center, the creation of a curriculum and to fund the creation of public memorials set forth herein.

PROCO JOE MORENO Alderman, 1st Ward

§ Hereby directs the Corporation Counsel to take whatever legal steps are available to support the sapping of Jon Burge's pension.

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