



Office of the City Clerk

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Legislation Text

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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

CITY OF CHICAGO

RAHM EMANUEL
MAYOR

November 5, 2014

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

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I transmit herewith, together with Alderman Burke and others, a resolution regarding unauthorized and improper automated telephone calls made to election judges in conjunction with the November 4, 2014 election.

Your favorable consideration of this resolution will be appreciated.

Mayor

Very truly yours,

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, President Thomas Jefferson once observed that: "The elective franchise, if guarded as the ark of our safety, will peaceably dissipate all combinations to subvert a Constitution, dictated by the wisdom, and resting on the will of the people;" and

WHEREAS, Maintaining the integrity of the electoral process is key to any well-functioning

democracy;

WHEREAS, Yesterday, the Chicago Board of Elections announced that many Chicago area voters were not able to cast ballots Tuesday morning due to polling places opening late; and

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WHEREAS, Chicago Board of Election Commissioners Chairman Langdon Neal indicated that the problem was due to a lack of election judges. The board had planned for Tuesday's election, and an unprecedented number of 10,000 election judges to be assigned for those judges did not show up; and

WHEREAS, The failure of 2,000 election judges to report to duty is believed to have been the result of malicious robocalls made to election judges over the weekend, falsely informing them that they had to report for training, or they would not be able to serve on Election Day; and

WHEREAS, In other cases, dozens of judges reported receiving calls demanding that they vote in a certain way in order to serve as an election judge. Some judges quit after receiving this misinformation; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Neal indicated that at least one precinct in all 50 wards experienced a problem with election judges not showing up, with the result that some voters, who did not have the luxury of waiting to vote until standby judges arrived at their polling place, were either unable to vote or were discouraged from voting; and

WHEREAS, It is clear that the bogus automated telephone calls that were made over the weekend were intended to disrupt the election and to keep vote totals down in Chicago; and

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WHEREAS, While the Board of Elections acted as quickly as it could to take steps to redress this grievous wrong by asking a court to extend voting at six Chicago polling stations, the fact remains that people's right to vote was negatively affected in yesterday's election and, in some cases, outright denied; and

WHEREAS, While the City of Chicago has asked law enforcement authorities to investigate this matter, it is also critical that the public be fully informed of what actions took place, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That We, the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, assembled this fifth day of November, 2014, do hereby direct the Committee on

Committees, Rules and Ethics to hold a hearing on the matter described herein, with a view toward determining who was responsible for placing these automated calls; who paid for the calls to be made; and how and by whom the names and telephone numbers of the election judges were obtained; and, to call upon appropriate persons to testify relative to this matter.

