



# Office of the City Clerk

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## Legislation Text

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**File #:** R2017-386, **Version:** 1

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### MEMORIAL RESOLUTION FOR MARTHA LAVEY WAY

WHEREAS, It is with great sadness that the members of this Chamber learned of the peaceful departure of Martha Lavey Way on April 25, 2017 at the age of sixty; and

WHEREAS, This esteemed body has been informed of her passing by the Honorable Michele Smith, Alderman of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Ward; and

WHEREAS, Martha was born in 1957 in Lawrence, Kansas, to a large family of six siblings and one of two daughters of Robert and Patricia Lavey; and

WHEREAS, Martha was educated at the all-girls Immaculata High School in Detroit and went on to earn her doctorate in performance studies from Northwestern University in Evanston; and

WHEREAS, Martha pursued a career as an actress, a restless creative who was known for playing eccentric characters when she joined the Steppenwolf ensemble back in 1993, such as the character she portrayed opposite John Malkovich in Stephen Jeffreys' "Lost Land" in 2005, the mother she portrayed in "Good Boys and True" (2008), and the frightening recluse she depicted in "Aunt Dan and Lemon"; and

WHEREAS, At Steppenwolf, Martha was the first woman to be honored with the top artistic position in 1995, when the founders were looking for a fresh and progressive way forward; and

WHEREAS, Under her reign as artistic director, Steppenwolf saw amazing success with Tracy Lett's Pulitzer Prize-winning "August: Osage County," a show that brought Steppenwolf back to New York's attention, and "Superior Donuts," which ultimately spurred a spin-off series; and

WHEREAS, Steppenwolf put on many more successful productions under Lavey's supervision, such as a revival of Ken Kesey's "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" in 2000, Edward Albee's "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" in 2010; and

WHEREAS, Martha was known for her impeccable ability to know and understand others, and always felt the urge to advocate for her competitors at the Chicago theatre, of which she was incredibly passionate; and

WHEREAS, Over her tenure, one of Martha's greatest accomplishments was the expansion and diversification of the Steppenwolf ensemble, and also the act of officially getting Chicago theatre on the map; and

WHEREAS, Martha is remembered by everyone she knew for her caring and generous nature; and

WHEREAS, Martha touched the lives of all who knew her through her loving and hardworking spirit. She will be deeply missed, but the memory of her character will live on in those who knew and loved her; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, assembled this Wednesday, May 24th, 2017, do hereby declare that North Halsted Street between North Avenue and Willow Street be given the honorary street name of Martha Lavey Way.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution are presented to the family of Martha Lavey as a sign of our honor, gratitude, and respect.

MICHELE SMITH  
Alderman, 43<sup>rd</sup> Ward