



# Office of the City Clerk

City Hall  
121 N. LaSalle St.  
Room 107  
Chicago, IL 60602  
www.chicityclerk.com

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** R2017-390, **Version:** 1

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sJOAw/^Committee on Human Relations

### RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the City of Chicago is a home rule unit of government pursuant to the 1970 Illinois Constitution, Article VII, Section 6(a); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to its home rule power, the City of Chicago may exercise any power and perform any function relating to its government and affairs including the power to regulate for the protection of the public health, safety, morals and welfare; and

WHEREAS, homelessness affected more than half a million people in the United States in 2016 alone based on an article in Forbes; and

WHEREAS, Chicago has 5,889 homeless individuals according to the 2016 Chicago Homeless Count and Survey, which counts individuals in shelters as well as those living on the streets of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has championed multiple efforts to combat homelessness, including implementing a four percent (4%) surcharge on the house sharing industry; and

WHEREAS, with this initiative, Chicago was among the first municipalities to leverage a dedicated funding source to reduce homelessness; and

WHEREAS, other City measures include the expansion of Day for Change, a program that provides day labor opportunities for homeless individuals allowing them to earn up to \$600 annually and receive meals, transportation, behavioral health services, job preparedness training, healthcare screenings, hygiene care, and interim housing; and

WHEREAS, Chicago's participation in the national Ending Veterans Homelessness Initiative (EVH1) campaign has allowed the City to house more than 3,000 homeless veterans to date; and

WHEREAS, the Citywide Task Force to Reduce Homelessness is also charged with addressing chronic homelessness citywide; and

WHEREAS, Chicago Emergency Homeless Assessment and Response Center (EHARC), the City's first rapid response center, is a partnership with the Salvation Army, and will specialize in triage services for families experiencing homelessness and will be built on the City's west side at 910 N. Christiana Avenue; and

WHEREAS, a partnership with the Chicago Planning Council on Homelessness, the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, the Chicago Alliance, and the City of Chicago led to the creation of Chicago's Plan 2.0, a seven step plan focused on developing new strategies to prevent homelessness, rapidly rehouse individuals, and provide

wrap-around services to promote housing stability and self-sufficiency; and

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WHEREAS, Chicago's Plan 2.0 came about as a second phase to the Getting Housed, Staying Housed ten year plan originally introduced in 2002 by then-mayor Richard M. Daley; and

WHEREAS, Getting Housed, Staying Housed reduced the number of people in emergency housing from 5,811 in 2002 to 1,329 in 2012 and increased the amount of people in permanent supportive housing from 3,372 in 2002 to 6,513 in 2012; and

WHEREAS, as evidenced by these and its many other efforts and resource allocations to help combat the issue over the years, eliminating homelessness is a top priority for the City of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, the Members of this City Council share a responsibility to consistently seek new strategies to combat homelessness and pursue initiatives proven to work in other municipalities of comparable size; and

WHEREAS, Portland, Oregon, Seattle-King County, Washington and Berkeley, California have approved pilot programs to create "tiny houses;" and

WHEREAS, these "tiny houses" are 320 square foot homes that are a low-cost and quick way to provide a home for homeless individuals; and

WHEREAS, these homes are typically insulated and provide coverage from wind and other weather elements, and will eventually have running water and electricity; and

WHEREAS, the Low Income Housing Institute based out of Seattle builds these homes for as little as \$2,200, afforded through public or non-profit funds, and they are built by volunteers; and

WHEREAS, in existing programs, the "tiny houses" are free of cost to its residents but they are asked to help with chores in and around the unit and to adhere to a code of conduct; and

WHEREAS, this initiative helps restore dignity to its participants by giving them a private space they can call their own, it provides a safe community space where residents can foster friendships, and offers the added safety and ability to sleep soundly knowing they are behind locked doors; and

WHEREAS, the City's legislative and executive branches as well as its citizenry have a clearly demonstrated dedication to addressing homelessness, the vastness of which certainly could accommodate innovative efforts like "tiny house" programs; now, therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO:**

That representatives of the Citywide Task Force to Reduce Homelessness appear before the City Council Committee on Human Relations to discuss the feasibility of incorporating the Tiny House project into

Chicago's Plan 2.0 and address the advantages and disadvantages of such a program in the City; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the Task Force update Committee members on the progress of its efforts to reduce homelessness in the City of Chicago and provide a comprehensive review of the support services it facilitates, its budget, and partnerships in order to help the City Council determine which areas may need additional support; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the Department of Finance appear before the Committee with an update on house sharing surcharge revenue collection efforts, amounts collected, and how these have been allocated since the surcharge's inception.

Edward m. Burke Alderman, 14<sup>th</sup> Ward