



Office of the City Clerk

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Legislation Text

File #: R2017-820, **Version:** 1

Committee on Human Relations

Chicago Water Department Resolution for Hearings on Racism and Discrimination Within the Department

WHEREAS, the Chicago Department of Water Management is responsible for delivering nearly 1 billion gallons of fresh water to the residents of Chicago and 125 suburban communities; and

WHEREAS, the Chicago Department of Water Management is responsible for removing the waste water and storm runoff from the streets of Chicago through the sewer system, and delivering effluent for treatment to the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago; and

WHEREAS, the Inspector General launched an eight-month investigation into the culture within the Water Department after allegations of racism were made; and

WHEREAS, several Water Department managers resigned after the Inspector General investigation; and

WHEREAS, a federal lawsuit was filed on behalf of seven current and former employees of the department seeking class-action status; and

WHEREAS, the employees in the federal lawsuit allege that because of their race, they were denied promotions and transfer, given less-desirable work assignments, harassed and wrongly fired in some cases; and

WHEREAS, plaintiffs claim that non-black managers and employees subject black employees to racial slurs and racially charged phrases and in some cases, were subject to undue disciplinary hearings in retaliation for speaking out; and

WHEREAS, the lawsuit alleges that the Water Department did nothing to remedy the hostile work environment; and

WHEREAS, the City of Chicago and Water Department spokesperson contend that they have no tolerance for discrimination of employees in any form,

BE IT SO RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and the members of the Chicago City Council as responsible for ensuring our departments operate with the highest level of integrity and root out racist, discriminatory and otherwise hostile practices in our department, request a full hearing to determine the scope of the alleged claims against the Water Department as well as information on efforts to remedy said claims.

Committee on Human Relations

Aid. Toni Foulkes (16th Ward)

Aid. Derrick Curtis (18th Ward)

Aid. Matt O'Shea (19th Ward)

Aid. Willie Cochran (20th Ward)

Aid. Howard Brookins Jr. (21st Ward)

Aid. Ricardo Munoz (22nd Ward)

Aid. Gregory Mitchell (7th Ward)

Aid. Michael Scott Jr. (24th Ward)

Aid. Anthony Beale (9th Ward)

Aid. Susan Sadlowski-Garza (10th Ward)

Aid. Patrick Daley Thompson (11th Ward)

Aid. George Cardenas (12th Ward)

Aid. Chris Taliaferro (29th Ward)

Aid. Ariel Reboyas (30th Ward)

Aid. Raymond Lopez (15th Ward)

Committee on Human Relations

Aid. Scott Waguespack (32nd Ward)

Aid. Harry Osterman (48th Ward)

Aid. Deborah Mell (33rd Ward)

Aid. Joseph Moore (49th Ward)

Aid. Carrie Austin (34th Ward)

Aid. Debra Silverstein (50th Ward)

Aid. Carlos Ramirez-Rosa (35th Ward)

Aid. Gilbert Villegas (36th Ward)

Aid. Emma Mitts (37th Ward)

Aid. Nicholas Sposato (38th Ward)

Aid. Margaret Laurino (39 Ward)

Aid. Patrick O'Connor (40th Ward)

Aid. Anthony Napolitano (41st Ward)

Aid. Brendan Reilly (42nd Ward)

Aid. Michele Smith (43rd Ward)

Aid. Thomas Tunney (44th Ward)

Aid. John Arena (45th Ward)

Aid. James Cappleman (46th Ward)

Aid. Ameya Pawar (47th Ward)