



Office of the City Clerk

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Legislation Text

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RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, women across the nation have united through a social media campaign sharing their stories of sexual harassment and assault and using the hashtag #metoo; and

WHEREAS, the #metoo movement has spread into courts, workplaces, legislative bodies, and universities bringing the topic and its severity to the forefront of American conversations; and

WHEREAS, the New York Times recently published an article stating that Ford's Chicago Assembly Plant and the Chicago Stamping Plant in Chicago Heights had a \$22 million settlement in the 1990's that included three years of monitoring that ended in 2003; and

WHEREAS, in 2003 the monitors issued a final report warning of "significant risks that need attention, including staffers inexperienced in investigating complaints, the lack of a policy against fraternization and the practice of promoting people widely perceived to be harassers;" and

WHEREAS, in 2010, recovering from economically turbulent times, the Chicago Assembly Plant rushed to hire additional employees allegedly without taking time for proper sexual and racial harassment training; and

WHEREAS, today Ford employs approximately 5,700 workers at the Chicago Assembly and the Chicago Stamping Plant; and

WHEREAS, complaints of sexual and racial harassment increased significantly in 2010; and

WHEREAS, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) opened an investigation into Ford in 2014 and multiple women filed lawsuits alleging sexual and racial harassment, including retaliation; and

WHEREAS, by 2015, according to Ford, senior leaders were replaced and additional harassment training was required for all employees, including a policy change that required all salaried employees to disclose any family or romantic relationships with subordinates; and

WHEREAS, by August 2017, the EEOC and Ford Motor Company reached a \$10 million settlement that required the managers to be more accountable and to be monitored for the next five years; and

WHEREAS, during and after the settlement, Ford has disciplined 27 Chicago workers for sexual harassment and terminated 5 managers; and

WHEREAS, according to the New York Times article dated December 19, 2017, even with the

settlement, Ford is "struggling to win workers' trust" and in fact, "Ford officials said they noticed a small uptick in complaints and sent reinforcement to Chicago;" and

WHEREAS, currently, there are numerous lawsuits pending against Ford in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, Tonya Exum, a plaintiff in a lawsuit against Ford, alleged that the worst sexual harassment perpetrator was a union representative and believed that the United Auto Workers Union (UAW) was standing between her and the accountability she sought; and

WHEREAS, on January 4, 2018 on Chicago Tonight, Suzette Wright, a plaintiff in the 1990's lawsuit against Ford, said, "you can have policy but if you don't enforce it, it doesn't work" and that the policy should apply not only to hourly but salaried employees as well; and

WHEREAS, on the same above mentioned program, Gwajuana Gray, a plaintiff in the 1990's lawsuit against Ford and the most recent lawsuit, said she recently faced retaliation by a supervisor for reporting harassment, described the work place as a "boy's network," and stated that the supervisors were untouchable; and

WHEREAS, on November 8, 2017, to combat sexual harassment and bullying, the City Council passed ordinance SO2017-8242 (Harassment and Bullying Ordinance), permitting individuals to hold aggressors accountable for their behaviors; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the above ordinance, the City Council passed ordinance SO2017-3260 (Hotel Workers Panic Button Ordinance) on October 11, 2017 that required all hotels in the city to provide a panic button system and to adopt an anti-sexual harassment policy; and

WHEREAS, in Chicago, these ordinances are paired with a longstanding Chicago Human Rights Ordinance prohibition on sexual harassment and more recent measures to hold elected officials accountable and to require anti-harassment training for all city employees; and

WHEREAS, according to a survey conducted by Unite Here, a hospitality union, with roughly 500 of its Chicago area members who work in hotels and casinos as housekeepers and servers found that:

- 58% of hotel workers and 77% of casino workers said they had been sexually harassed by a guest;
- 49% of hotel workers said they had experienced a guest answering the door naked or otherwise exposing himself;
- 56% of hotel workers who had reported harassment said they didn't feel safe on the job afterward;
- 65% of casino cocktail servers said a guest had touched or tried to touch them without permission;
- nearly 40% of casino workers said they had been pressured for a date or a sexual favor;

and

WHEREAS, it appears that even with all the media attention on the #metoo campaign and legislative efforts, harassment in hotels, casinos, and the Ford Chicago Assembly and Chicago Stamping Plant demonstrates that more public discourse and attention is needed to help eradicate these practices; and

WHEREAS, the work to combat sexual harassment and bullying that permeate throughout our society is far from done; now, therefore

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

That the Corporation Counsel appear before the Committee on Finance to address the applicability of the city's anti-harassment legislative frame work to situations such as those presented at Ford's Chicago Assembly Plant and hospitality businesses;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council invites affected workers to testify before the Committee on Finance so the Council can better understand the culture of sexual harassment in order to assist their efforts to combat sexual harassment and bullying; and
Edward M. Alderman, 1Uth Ward

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Executives at Ford and UAW are asked to appear before the Committee on Finance to discuss what efforts OFord and UAW are making to safeguard