



Office of the City Clerk

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Legislation Text

File #: R2018-1251, **Version:** 1

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Puerto Rican Cultural Center has served the Puerto Rican/Latino community of Chicago with steadfast distinction for 45 years; and

WHEREAS, the Puerto Rican Cultural Center lives its conviction that a community must bridge self reliance and communal responsibility summed up in its motto: To live and help to live; and

WHEREAS, the Puerto Rican Cultural Center realized that vision in 1988 when it created its cherished project, Vida/SIDA, as an intentional response to the AIDS pandemic disproportionately was ravaging the Puerto Rican/Latino populations of Chicago's Latino Communities; and

WHEREAS, This esteemed body has been notified of Vida/SIDA's contributions by the Honorable Roberto Maldonado, Alderman of the 26th Ward; and

WHEREAS, Vida/SIDA has been a culturally relevant harbor for people suffering marginalization and isolation due to their HIV/AIDS status during the darkest moments of the pandemic in Chicago; and

WHEREAS, in the 1980s, several funeral homes refused to accept bodies of people who succumbed to AIDS, many landlords refused to rent to those they thought had AIDS, Vida/SIDA threw open its doors to all who were suffering and offered free, alternative health treatments, as well as a critical space where their humanity was affirmed - all in the heart of the Puerto Rican community; and

WHEREAS, Vida/SIDA successfully incorporated volunteers from among those it served, and these volunteers became crucial to the evolution and growth of Vida/SIDA; and

WHEREAS, Vida/SIDA evolved into an agency that now offers testing and counseling, preventative education, and wrap around services for those who are living or at risk for HIV; and

WHEREAS, Vida/SIDA created separate programs such as the Helen Rodriguez Trias Health Center to address substance abuse and mental wellness; TRANS Chicago, a program for the Transgender communities; El Rescate LGBTQ Transitional Housing and LGBTQ Drop in Center that serves youth ages 14-24 years old; and

WHEREAS, Vida/SIDA has cultivated indigenous Latino leadership and ambassadors to advocate for the LGBTQ Latino community; and

WHEREAS, Vida/SIDA is the longest-lived Latino HIV/AIDS institution in the Midwest; and

WHEREAS, Vida/SIDA's leadership and staff authentically reflect the demographics of the community they devotedly serve; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and the members of the Chicago City Council, assembled this 14th day of November, 2018, do hereby congratulate Vida/SIDA for its unprecedented 30 years of success offering essential, life-affirming services that have turned despair into hope, a celebration of life, and an elevation of the dignity of those who once suffered in obscurity; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That Saturday, December 1, 2018, shall be officially recognized as Vida/SIDA Day throughout the City of Chicago; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a suitable parchment copy of this resolution be presented to the Puerto Rican Cultural Center as a token of gratitude, honor and respect.