



Office of the City Clerk

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

Legislation Text

File #: R2020-452, Version: 1

City Council 6.17.20

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Urban heat islands are urban zones that are 2-20 degrees Fahrenheit warmer than that of the outlying areas and occur when natural, sustainable landscapes are replaced with unsustainable, dark pavement and buildings that absorb heat; and

WHEREAS, This effect, when combined with rising temperatures caused by heat-trapping greenhouse gases, has serious health effects, with heat as one of the leading weather-related causes of death; and

WHEREAS, The urban heat island effect impacting Chicago contributes to higher energy bills, and lower air quality, resulting in adverse health problems such as higher morbidity, higher mortality; and according to The National Bureau of Economic Research, higher rates of overall crime and violent crime occur on hot summer days; and

WHEREAS, Residents living in Environmental Justice communities and communities of color are more likely to experience disproportionately lower quality of life in part due to proximity and exposure to industrial pollutants, access to quality foods and healthcare, and existing mental and physical health conditions like cardiovascular and respiratory issues, asthma, obesity, worsened by climate change; and

WHEREAS, Ozone pollution created by fossil fuel combustion causes lung inflammation and difficulty breathing; especially for individuals with existing heart and respiratory conditions, ozone pollution is a major health threat, as it causes serious respiratory harm, potentially resulting in cardiovascular damage, harm to the central nervous system, reproductive harm, developmental harm, and even early death; and

WHEREAS, In 1999, The United States Environmental Protection Agency, in partnership with Northwestern University, hosted an Urban Heat Island Pilot Project in Chicago to test "green" roof solutions; at the time, Chicago was classified as a severe nonattainment area for ozone or smog, meaning the air quality did not meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards defined by the Clean Air Act; and

WHEREAS, In its 2019 State of the Air report, the American Lung Association graded Chicago an "F" for ozone pollution; and

WHEREAS, Ozone pollution in concert with greenhouse gases exacerbates health concerns with a disproportionate emphasis on residents in environmental justice communities because of the high concentrations of industrial pollutants and fossil fuel emissions from transportation; the equitable management of urban heat island effect through planning will lead communities to become resilient to climate change; and

WHEREAS, Cities like Chicago can reduce the urban heat island effect by instating sustainable solutions to create resilient neighborhoods, including using cooler paving materials on streets and parking lots, increasing tree cover, promoting vegetated or cool green space and roofs, and solar capture for energy, and light, reflective surfaces; and

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, gathered here this seventeenth day of June, 2020, do hereby call for the Committee on Environmental Protection and Energy to convene a hearing concerning solutions to combat the urban heat island effect, including response

programs and ways to reduce energy demands; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we call upon the Commissioner of the Department of Buildings, the Commissioner of the Department of Planning and Development, the Commissioner of the Department of Housing, and the Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Streets and Sanitation Bureau of Forestry, or their respective designees, to testify at the hearing.

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GEORGE CARDENAS
Alderman, 12th Ward

CITY- OF CHICAGO

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK ANNA M. VALENCIA

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R2020-452

Call-for hearing(s) on solutions to combat urban heatislandl effect, including response programs and ways to reduce energy demands

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