



# Office of the City Clerk

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## Legislation Text

File #: R2020-456, Version: 1

### MEMORIAL RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE OF THE HONORABLE BURTON NATARUS

WHEREAS, The Honorable Burton "Burt" Natarus, former Alderman of the 42nd Ward, recently passed away at the age of 86; and

WHEREAS, The Chicago City Council has been informed of Alderman Natarus's passing by the Honorable Brendan Reilly, Alderman of the 42nd Ward, and the Honorable Lori E. Lightfoot, Mayor of the City of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, Alderman Natarus was born and raised in Wausau, Wisconsin, and earned his undergraduate and law degrees from the University of Wisconsin, before serving in the US Army and Army Reserves as a parachutist and continuing his education by studying government at Harvard University; and

WHEREAS, Upon moving to the Near North Side in 1960, Alderman Natarus taught classes in local government at Loyola University Chicago, before diving into public life in 1971; and

WHEREAS, A protege of legendary Cook County Board President George W. Dunne, Alderman Natarus won election in 1971 to serve his first term on the Chicago City Council as Alderman of the 42nd Ward, the first of his nine consecutive election wins for the position; and

WHEREAS, Always one to be in the mix, no issue was too big or too small for Alderman Natarus, the self-proclaimed "Janitor of the Ward" - from supporting Mayor Harold Washington during the "Council Wars" and playing a key role in selecting Alderman Eugene Sawyer to serve as acting mayor following Mayor Washington's death, to the various quality of life issues he fought for on behalf of his constituents, including addressing loud motorcycles and blaring car radios; and

WHEREAS, A champion of causes from open spaces and preservation to education, Alderman Natarus was the first politician in the country to sponsor a successful plan to make driving while talking on a cellphone illegal, and was well-known for his efforts to require carriage horses in Chicago to wear diapers; and

WHEREAS, Alderman Natarus was known as an expert in parliamentary procedures, serving as Chairman of the Traffic and Safety Committee, and as a member of the Committee on Finance; the Committee on Zoning; the Committee on Committees, Rules and Ethics; the Committee on License and Consumer Protection; the Committee on Budget and Government Operations; the Committee on Housing and Real Estate; the Chicago Plan Commission; the Central Area Planning Task Force; and the Regional Transportation Task Force; and

WHEREAS, Widely recognized as a colorful alderman, Alderman Natarus' flair for the dramatic extended beyond his trademark flamboyant speeches in the Council Chambers, self-deprecation, and now-coveted bobbleheads, to dropping in for scenes with a comedy ensemble, dabbling in community theater, and even playing a Roman soldier in Chicago Shakespeare Theatre's 'Antony & Cleopatra'; and

WHEREAS, Alderman Natarus's passion for public service was seemingly inexhaustible - after collapsing of a heart attack during an impassioned speech on the Council floor railing against the continued US presence in Iraq, Alderman Natarus came to and tried to return to the fray moments after collapsing; and

WHEREAS, Even after exiting public life, Alderman Natarus remained active in a number of community groups, including the City Club of Chicago, the Streeterville Organization of Active Residents, the Central Michigan Association, the North Dearborn Association, and the River North Association; and

WHEREAS, Alderman Natarus is survived by his son, Michael; daughter, Jill; and grandchildren, Jacob and Jenna; and

WHEREAS, Whether you agreed with him or not, no one can argue that Alderman Natarus did not love downtown Chicago; now, therefore

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 extend our most heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of Alderman Burton Natarus; and

BRENDAN REILLY Alderman, 42nd Ward

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be prepared and presented to the family of Alderman Burton Natarus as a sign of our honor, and respect.