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Legislation Text

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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

CITY OF CHICAGO

LORI E. LIGHTFOOT
MAYOR

June 17, 2020

TO THE HONORABLE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
CHICAGO

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I transmit herewith, together with Aldermen Harris and Hairston, a resolution honoring the life and memory of Conrad Worrill.

Your favorable consideration of this resolution will be appreciated.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The Members of this Chamber were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Conrad Worrill, an African American writer, educator, and political activist, on June 3, 2020 at the age of 78; and

WHEREAS, Conrad Worrill was born in Pasadena, California in 1941, and his family moved to Chicago when he was nine years old; and

WHEREAS, Growing up, Conrad Worrill was involved in a variety of sports, including swimming and track and field; and

WHEREAS, In 1962, Conrad Worrill was drafted into the United States Army and served his Country

with honor and distinction in Okinawa, Japan, a time in which he read deeply about African American history, culture, and politics; and

WHEREAS, Conrad Worrill graduated from George Williams College with a Bachelor's degree in 1968, at which time he became active in the Black Power Movement; and

WHEREAS, Conrad Worrill began studying how to teach students about interactions between institutions and power, earning a Master of Arts in Social Service Administration from the University of Chicago in 1971, and a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1973; and '

WHEREAS, Conrad Worrill went on to help create the Jacob H. Carruthers Center for Inner City Studies at Northeastern Illinois University, where he was a professor for over forty years; and

WHEREAS, For decades, Conrad Worrill authored a weekly column called "Worrill's World" for the Chicago Defender, writing on African American politics and issues such as reparations; and

WHEREAS, In the 1980s, Conrad Worrill led a voter registration campaign in the Black community that helped convince Harold Washington to run for office as Mayor. That same voter registration effort then helped to elect him as the first African American Mayor of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, Conrad Worrill was a leading light in political activism: he was a founding member and national chairman of the National Black United Front, elected the economic development commissioner of the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (N'COBRA), and was a special consultant for the 1995 Million Man March; and

WHEREAS, In 1997, Conrad Worrill travelled to Geneva to formally charge the United States government with genocide and human rights violations against the African American population of the United States; and

WHEREAS, Furthering a lifelong passion; for track and field, Mr. Worrill worked with Elzie Higginbottom and Alderman Michelle Harris to bring a state-of-the-art indoor track and field facility to the South Side; and

WHEREAS, Alderman Leslie Hairston, who was christened in a gown gifted to her by Mr. Worrill, considered him to be a dear family member. Her mother, Reva, was one of his mentors; and

WHEREAS, Conrad Worrill dedicated his life to increasing the political power and improving the lives of African Americans, and his' legacy of hope and courage live on in the many people who have benefited from his noble, tireless efforts; and

WHEREAS, Conrad Worrill is survived by his wife, Talibah, his daughters, Femi Skanes, Michelle Lanier, Sobenna Worrill and Kimberly King, his brother, Oscar, seven grandchildren and also by countless friends and admirers; nowj therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, assembled this seventeenth day of June, 2020, do hereby honor the life and memory of Conrad Worrill; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be presented to the family of

Conrad Worrill as a token of our honor, gratitude, and utmost respect.