



Office of the City Clerk

City Hall
121 N. LaSalle St.
Room 107
Chicago, IL 60602
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Legislation Text

File #: R2021-991, **Version:** 1

CITY OF CHICAGO

MICHELLE A. HARRIS, ALDERMAN, 8TH WARD CHAIRMAN- COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES AND
RULES CITY HALL, UM-200, OFFICE *A • 121 NORTH LASALLE STREE I. CHIC ACO IL.
PHONE. 312-744-3075 • FAX 312-744-5007

City Council Meeting September 20, 2021

To the President and Members of the City Council:

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Your Committee on Committees and Rules, considered all the following Ordinances and Resolution which met September 17, 2021:

Your Committee on Committee and Rules, recommends "re-referral" of the following items:

Recommendation to refer proposed items 1-2 to the Committee on Public Safety:

1. (02021-4130) Amendment of Municipal Code Title 8 by creating new Chapter 8-6 titled "Victims' Justice Ordinance" to create a civil remedy against street gang predatory and profit-driven practices.
2. (02021-3215) Amendment of Municipal Code Chapters 8-4 and 8-20 by modifying various sections and adding new sections regarding looting, mob actions, vandalism and unlawful possession of firearms or firearm ammunition.

Recommendation to refer proposed item 3 to the Joint Committee on Budget & Government Operations and Public Safety:

(R2021-991) Subject matter hearing on two recent reports by the Office of the Inspector General and the MacArthur Justice Center on the reliability of ShotSpotter technology.

This recommendation of each item was concurred in by the Committee on Committees and Rules.

Sincerely,

**Michelle Harris, Chairman Committee on
Committees and Rules**

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The City of Chicago entered into a \$33 million dollar contract with ShotSpotter, Inc. on August 20, 2018 for an "area acoustic gunshot surveillance system;" and

WHEREAS, The City of Chicago's contract with ShotSpotter, Inc. for "area acoustic gunshot surveillance system" was set to expire on August 19, 2021 but was extended by the City of Chicago - it appears that the contract was extended through 2023 without review from the Chicago City Council; and

WHEREAS, ShotSpotter blankets neighborhoods with microphones in order to attempt to detect and locate the source of gunfire and sends alerts of supposed gunfire immediately to local police; and

WHEREAS, ShotSpotter claims to be 97% accurate, but has not released any peer-reviewed nor scientifically-valid study to substantiate that figure; and

WHEREAS, There are also no studies testing whether ShotSpotter can reliably tell the difference between the sound of gunshots and other noises like fireworks, backfiring cars, construction noises, helicopters, and other loud, impulsive sounds; and

WHEREAS, A study released by the MacArthur Justice Center at Northwestern Pritzker School of Law on May 3, 2021 found that "the vast majority of alerts generated by [ShotSpotter] turn up no evidence of gunfire or any gun-related crime. Instead, the ShotSpotter system sends police on thousands of unfounded and high-intensity deployments, which are focused almost exclusively in Black and Latinx communities;" and

WHEREAS, The MacArthur Justice Center's study also found that "89% of ShotSpotter deployments in Chicago turned up no gun-related crime, 86% led to no report of any crime at all, and during the 21.5 months [studied], there were more than 40,000 dead-end ShotSpotter deployments, and on an average day in Chicago, there are more than 61 ShotSpotter-initiated police deployments that turn up no evidence of any crime, let alone gun crime;" and

WHEREAS, A July 26, 2021 article in VICE News titled "Police Are Telling ShotSpotter to Alter Evidence From Gunshot-Detecting AI" reported that ShotSpotter's reports could be easily altered, and that ShotSpotter evidence had to be withdrawn from a recent criminal case in Cook County; and

WHEREAS, On August 24, 2021 the City of Chicago's Inspector General issued a report that found that "ShotSpotter alerts rarely lead to evidence of a gun-related crime and that presence of the technology changes police behavior;" and

WHEREAS, The Inspector General's report found that from January 1, 2020 to May 31, 2021, only 9.1% of ShotSpotter alerts led to evidence of a gun-related criminal offense having been committed, confirming the findings of the earlier MacArthur Justice Center's study; and

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Joint Committee on Budget and Public Safety

WHEREAS, the Inspector General's report "further revealed that the presence of [ShotSpotter] is changing police behavior. Specifically, OIG reviewed instances in which CPD members rely, at least in part, on a perceived aggregate frequency of ShotSpotter alerts in an area to form the basis for an investigatory stop or as part of the rationale for a pat down once a stop has been initiated;" and

WHEREAS, A ShotSpotter alert led to the police-shooting death of 13-year-old Adam Toledo, a police shooting where suit has now been filed against the City of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, The City of Chicago can terminate its contract with ShotSpotter at any time, with no penalties or fees; and

WHEREAS, our Chicago City Council has a responsibility to assess the effectiveness and efficacy of contracts entered into by the City of Chicago; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the members of the Chicago City Council, do hereby call upon the Joint Committee on Budget and Government Operation and Committee on Public Safety to hold a subject matter hearing in the fall of 2021, before a final vote is taken on the FY2022 city budget, to assess the reliability of ShotSpotter and assess whether the City of Chicago should extend, amend, or discontinue its contractual relationship with ShotSpotter, Inc.; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the MacArthur Justice Center, Chicago Police Department, Office of Inspector General, and other subject matter experts be invited to provide testimony at the aforementioned subject matter hearing.

**Carlos Ramirez-Rosa (35) Rossana
Rodriguez (33) Maria Hadden (49)**

Daniel La Spata (1) David Moore (17)
Jeanette Taylor (20) Michael Rodriguez
(22) Byron Sigcho (25) Roberto
Maldonado (26) Andre Vasquez (40) Matt
Martin (47)

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Call for Subject Matter Hearing on ShotSpotter Resolution

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