



Office of the City Clerk

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

Legislation Text

File #: R2022-147, Version: 1

SALUTE TO GEORGE BLAKEMORE ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 80S BIRTHDAY

WHEREAS, should you have occasion to attend a meeting of a Chicago or Cook County legislative body, there is a good chance that you have seen and, more importantly, heard the oratory of George Blakemore, an outstanding and diligently concerned citizen who has recently joined the ever-expanding ranks of this city's octogenarians; and

WHEREAS, on February 19, 1942, George started life as the second eldest of five children and only son born to George and Ellen Blakemore in Butler Place, a public housing apartment complex in Fort Worth, Texas built by the WPA during the Franklin Delano Roosevelt administration. His family moved out when he was three years old. George Blakemore Sr. worked on the railroads and later became the owner of several businesses including a pool hall, shoeshine parlor, and a gas station. His mother was also in business, owning property that she rented out in addition to her duties as a stay-at-home mom and housewife; and

WHEREAS, young George had all manner of odd jobs, from a summer of picking cotton to a being a busboy, a dishwasher, a shoeshine man, and convention circuit worker. Since George came from a long line of educators including sisters, uncles and an aunt who started a privately-owned Black elementary school in Fort Worth, it was only natural that he followed his family into the field of education. He began his teaching career as a high school political science and history teacher in Fort Worth Texas. He taught political science in a high school in Oklahoma City Oklahoma before migrating to Chicago, Illinois. George continued his teaching career as a political science teacher in the Chicago public school system; and

WHEREAS George also inherited his family's entrepreneurial spirit as a street vendor on Maxwell Street. His drive and determination took him all over the nation, selling goods and wares from coast to coast. However, for the past 30 years, George has worked as an engaged citizen watchdog monitoring Illinois state and local government bodies. Known for his outspoken knowledge on the issues and no-nonsense attitude, George Blakemore has had a tremendous impact on Illinois government. His commitment as an activist helped pave the way for the reinstatement of the public's right to speak at public meetings in city and county government. Among his many accomplishments in the political arena, George forged the way for the recognition of the late Harold Washington by spearheading the renaming of the Harold Washington Library Elevated Stop in his honor. He filed numerous lawsuits against businesses for failure to provide reasonable accommodations, fought for and got benches for the public enjoyment in Mariano Park, attended the first black national convention held in Indiana, and worked with the Jesse Jackson for President campaign; and

WHEREAS George Blakemore continues to advocate for his community. He is also a prolific artist who loves to paint and represents his art in the colorful clothing he wears. The Honorable Roderick Sawyer, Alderman of the 6th Ward, has informed this august body of this significant milestone achieved by this exceptional Chicagoan; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that we the mayor and members of the City of Chicago City Council, gathered this 23rd Day of February 2022 AD, do hereby express our heartiest congratulations to George Blakemore on the occasion of his 80th birthday and extend our very best wishes for fulfillment in all his future endeavors.