



Office of the City Clerk

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Legislation Text

File #: R2022-278, **Version:** 1

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Thomas Balanoff announced his retirement on March 4, 2022 as President of Local 1 of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), which represents 50,000 janitors, security officers, building service, industrial, and institutional workers; and

WHEREAS, The Chicago City Council has been informed of his departure from SEIU Local 1 by Alderman Edward M. Burke; and

WHEREAS, Tom comes from a family of labor union officials. His father, James Balanoff, Jr., was the president of the largest United Steelworkers local in the country which was Local 1010 based in East Chicago, Indiana; and

WHEREAS, Tom received his Master's Degree in Labor and Industrial Relations from the University of Illinois in 1974, and his Bachelor's Degree in History from Indiana University in 1972; and

WHEREAS, After graduation Tom went to work immediately in the labor movement, and during the early 1980s was employed by the International Association of Fire Fighters and the Allied Industrial Workers' Union with the Cement, Lime, Gypsum, and Allied Workers' Union which led to his groundbreaking work on innovative labor tactics as alternatives to the strike; and

WHEREAS, Tom's new thinking and hard work were noticed by the former President of SEIU, John Sweeney, who hired him in 1988 as Research Director for the International Union. Tom was soon promoted to SEIU's Senior Staff as the Director of SEIU's Building Service Division, where he played a crucial role in the historic Justice for Janitors campaign across the country; and

WHEREAS, In 1994, Tom came back to Chicago to become President of SEIU Local 73, where he stayed until becoming President of SEIU Local 1 in November 2000; and

WHEREAS, After 50 years of service in the labor movement, SEIU Local 1 honored his legacy and commitment to working families by conferring the honorary title to Tom of President Emeritus; and

WHEREAS, Tom and his wife, Hetty, are the proud parents of two children, Ben and Laura; and

WHEREAS, In his retirement, Tom plans to remain active on political issues. "I will be wherever my local is"; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the Mayor and the members of the Chicago City Council assembled this twenty-third day of March, 2022, do hereby congratulate Thomas Balanoff for his inspiring leadership and steadfast devotion to 50 years of service in the labor movement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be presented to Thomas Balanoff.

Edward M. Burke Alderman, 14^h
Ward