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Legislation Text

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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

CITY OF CHICAGO

LORI E. LIGHTFOOT MAYOR

April 27, 2022

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

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I transmit herewith, together with Aldermen Osterman, Hopkins, Coleman, Taliaferro, Dowell, Ramirez-Rosa, Sigcho-Lopez, Sadlowski-Garza, Vasquez, Quinn, Reboyas, Hadden, King, Rodriguez, Silverstein, Cardenas, Ervin, Mitts, Hairston, Nugent and La Spata, a resolution congratulating Tom Balanoff on his retirement as President of Local 1.

Your favorable consideration of this resolution will be appreciated.

Mayor

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, In recognition of his leadership and appreciation of his tireless work improving the lives of Chicago workers through zealous advocacy and his commitment to leading a social conscious labor movement, the Members of this Chamber are pleased to congratulate Tom Balanoff, on the occasion of his retirement as President of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 1 in Chicago and the union's State Council; and

WHEREAS, Formed in Chicago in 1921, SEIU Local 1 was the first racially integrated union in America, bringing together immigrant janitors from across the globe who were fighting for better working

conditions; and

WHEREAS, As more and more Americans left the factory and found new opportunities in airports, hospitals, nursing homes, offices, and coffee shops, Mr. Balanoff discovered his life's mission: defending the rights of the service workers who make our economy thrive; and

WHEREAS, To become an even stronger advocate for economic and labor justice, Mr. Balanoff earned a master's degree in labor and industrial relations from the University of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, A dedicated labor leader for decades, Mr. Balanoff was there whenever his skills were needed to protect the rights of workers. He worked for the International Association of Fire Fighters in Washington, D.C, for the Allied Industrial Workers in Chicago, and for the Cement Lime and Gypsum Workers in Kansas City, before then-SEIU president John Sweeney spotted Mr. Balanoff's exceptional abilities and brought him to work for SEIU in Washington D.C; and

WHEREAS, After a successful tenure as Trustee of John Sweeney's old SEIU local, Local 32BJ, in New York City, Mr. Balanoff returned to Chicago, first as SEIU Local 73 Trustee and eventually as President of both SEIU Local 1 and the Illinois State Council; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Balanoff has dedicated his life to enhancing the freedom of others. He has helped immigrant workers find their voice in the workplace; he has stood in solidarity with Black workers protesting against racial injustice; and he has worked to protect our communities and our children by demanding climate justice; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Balanoff retired as President of SEIU Local 1 in March, 2022, after leading the labor movement for over 50 years; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, assembled this twenty-seventh day of April, 2022, do hereby congratulate Tom Balanoff on the occasion of his retirement; express to him our heartfelt gratitude for his exemplary service to the residents of our great City and the State of Illinois; and extend to him our best wishes for continued health, happiness, prosperity, and success; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be presented to Tom Balanoff as a sign of our appreciation and esteem.