

From: [Tiffany Chan](#)
To: [Melva Brownlee \(Board of Commissioners\)](#); [Timothy Casey \(Secretary to the Board\)](#)
Cc: [Lynne Turner \(Secretary to the Board\)](#); [Brandee Smith \(Secretary to the Board\)](#); [Dennis Deer \(Board of Commissioners\)](#); [T"challa Ross \(Board of Commissioners\)](#); [Elizabeth Dunn](#)
Subject: RE: Health and Hospitals Committee Meeting 11.15.2023- remote participation speaker
Date: Wednesday, November 15, 2023 11:37:43 AM

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Good morning Secretary to the Board team,

Thank you for this information and for the opportunity to speak at the Health and Hospitals meeting. Unfortunately I must hop off of the meeting call before the Health and Hospitals meeting has convened.

I would like to submit the written statement below, to be shared with the Commissioners for review or read by proxy during the meeting, in favor of the Food is Medicine resolution.

Please continue to reach out with future opportunities to speak in favor of this resolution or to support the work in any way.

Sincerely,
Tiffany

Statement in support of Food is Medicine Resolution
Health and Hospitals Committee Meeting, Cook County Board of Commissioners
November 15, 2023
Submitted by Tiffany Simons Chan, Ph.D., Interim AVP Community Engagement & Data Strategist,
Chicago Botanic Garden

Good morning. My name is Tiffany Simons Chan and I oversee the Chicago Botanic Garden's urban agriculture division Windy City Harvest, which celebrated its 20th anniversary this year. At the Chicago Botanic Garden, we cultivate the power of plants to sustain and enrich life, and we believe that when we connect people to plants, then people and planet will thrive. I'm here today to speak in support of the Food is Medicine resolution, because my team is made of plant experts, and we know first-hand that the plants you can eat – nutritious fruits and vegetables – are crucial for health, wellness, and thriving.

The Windy City Harvest teams grow 100,000 pounds of produce a year across 13 farm sites on the South and West sides of Chicago and we prioritize distributing that food through sales and donations in the communities where it was grown. With community health center partners such as Lawndale Christian Health Center, PCC Austin, and PCC Salud, we run VeggieRx, a produce prescription

program that brings free vegetables, paired with nutrition and cooking education, to qualified patients from our health care partners.

To date, we have distributed over 62,000 boxes of produce to over 7,200 unique participants. We have seen Food is Medicine at work – we have seen the difference it has made for our participants and our community – and the demand has only grown since the pandemic.

VeggieRx, as well as other community health and food access programs like it, does more than distribute food. It provides access to the food, education, and community of support that empowers individuals to change the trajectory of their own lives, and to impact the health of their families. Here are the words of one VeggieRx participant:

“Even though I’m an active person, my doctor was saying I needed to eat more fruits and vegetables, like colorful foods, because I was diagnosed with prediabetes. She put me on medication for it but I didn’t want to be on it. She said for now you need to be on this but also work on your diet. I now crave fruits and vegetables. Which I never thought would happen because growing up I ate a lot of fast food and Mexican foods. My appetite towards vegetables has totally changed. With VeggieRx I was able to get off the pre-diabetes medicine, which wasn’t overnight but happened over time. I have also learned how to cook vegetables in new ways. Videos were really helpful during the pandemic. I have lost weight too.”

We are proud of the impact of our VeggieRx program and others like it, and there is so much more work to be done. Today, I represent the Chicago Botanic Garden in support of Commissioner Deer’s Food is Medicine resolution. We as an institution pledge to work with other community health partners and leaders in Chicago to transform people’s lives using the power of food.

Tiffany Simons Chan, Ph.D.
Interim AVP Community Engagement & Data Strategist
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Pronouns: she/her/hers ([What’s this?](#))

chicagobotanic.org
We cultivate the power of plants to sustain and enrich life.

[Book time with me](#)

From: Melva Brownlee (Board of Commissioners) <melva.brownlee@cookcountyil.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, November 14, 2023 1:55 PM

To: Timothy Casey (Secretary to the Board) <timothy.casey@cookcountyil.gov>

Cc: Lynne Turner (Secretary to the Board) <Lynne.Turner@cookcountyil.gov>; Brandee Smith (Secretary to the Board) <Brandee.Smith2@cookcountyil.gov>; Tiffany Chan <tchan@chicagobotanic.org>; Dennis Deer (Board of Commissioners) <Dennis.Deer@cookcountyil.gov>; T'challa Ross (Board of Commissioners) <T'challa.Ross@cookcountyil.gov>

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[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Good afternoon, Secretary to the Board team

Msl Tiffany Chan- from Chicago Botanic garden e-mail address is listed below. She would like to provide some comments and speak in favor of the Food is medicine resolution that will appear on the Health and Hospitals Committee meeting agenda for tomorrow. She is also included on this e-mail.

Can you please send her the remote participation speakers link for the Health and Hospitals meeting on tomorrow at 10:45a.m.

tchan@chicagobotanic.org>

Best regards,

Melva L. Brownlee

Chief of Staff

Hon. Dennis Deer-2nd District.

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