



# Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street  
Chicago, IL

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 13-1812, **Version:** 1

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### **PROPOSED RESOLUTION**

#### **HONORING THE 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF LOYOLA UNIVERSITY'S MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM WINNING THE NCAA DIVISION 1 CHAMPIONSHIP**

**WHEREAS**, Loyola University's Men's Basketball Team, led by Head Coach George Ireland, won the NCAA Division 1 Championship in 1963 and, as of this date, is the only Illinois school to do so; and

**WHEREAS**, on November 14, 2013, the 1963 team will be inducted into the National Collegiate Basketball Hall of Fame, becoming the first team ever to be so enshrined; and

**WHEREAS**, the starting five of John Egan, Jerry Harkness, Les Hunter, Ron Miller and Vic Rouse were known as the "Iron Five" and played the entire 45 minutes of the NCAA title game against two-time defending champions, University of Cincinnati, without substitutions; and

**WHEREAS**, the "Iron Five" earned a combined 11 academic degrees; and

**WHEREAS**, more importantly than a winning season and a national championship, the team, along with the team of Mississippi State, will always be remembered for playing each other in what is now known as the "Game of Change" in East Lansing, Michigan on March 15, 1963; and

**WHEREAS**, of the starting five on Loyola's team, four were African American and an unwritten state law in Mississippi banned schools from playing integrated teams. With the consent of Mississippi State's president and the backing of its coach, the Mississippi team snuck out of town at night, before an injunction preventing them from leaving the state could be served. Prior to tip-off, team captains Jerry Harkness, an African American from Loyola and Joe Dan Gold, a Caucasian from Mississippi shook hands at half court and the game of college basketball was forever changed; and

**WHEREAS**, Coach George Ireland showed moral strength and character by insisting on starting four African American players during the very early stages of the civil rights movement and outstanding coaching skills by producing a record breaking season and championship title. The entire team exemplified sportsmanship and team spirit by showing that talent, hard work and determination make a winning team and that these qualities have no color barrier.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the President and Board of Commissioners do commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of not only a outstanding and memorable season for the 1963 Loyola University's Men's Basketball Team, but also for the team's resolve in taking the first steps in achieving equality in the arena of college sports.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a suitable copy of this resolution be prepared as evidence of the high esteem in which this team and its coaches are held by the residents of Cook County fifty years after these inspiring events.