



# Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street  
Chicago, IL

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 24-1736, **Version:** 1

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### **PROPOSED RESOLUTION**

#### **SUPPORTING CIVIL RIGHTS AND VOTING RIGHTS FOR PEOPLE COMING OUT OF SLAVERY IN MAURITANIA, WEST AFRICA**

**WHEREAS**, Cook County human rights advocates, including members of the Chicago-based Abolition Institute, have over the past decade developed strong relationships with communities, human rights organizations, slavery survivors and anti-slavery leaders in the West African nation of Mauritania; and

**WHEREAS**, Mauritania was ranked by the Global Slavery Index in 2023 as the nation with the third largest percentage of its own people enslaved; and

**WHEREAS**, slavery in Mauritania is race and descent-based, similar in key respects to what African-American slaves experienced in the United States prior to Abolition; and

**WHEREAS**, numerous Cook County elected officials including State Representative Sonya Harper, State Representative La Shawn Ford, Cook County Commissioner Monica Gordon, 46<sup>th</sup> Ward Committeeperson Sean Tenner, Forest Park Mayor Rory Hoskins, Maywood Mayor Nathaniel Booker, Judge (Ret.) Anthony Simpkins travelled to Mauritania in 2023 to learn about modern slavery and provide assistance and support to slavery survivors and anti-slavery organizations; and

**WHEREAS**, it was broadly recognized by stakeholders that access to civil registration and identification, along with the corresponding ability to vote, is essential for marginalized Mauritians to overcome slavery and its legacy; and

**WHEREAS**, thousands of Chicagoans of all backgrounds were involved in efforts throughout history to secure full civil rights and voting rights for African-Americans and overcome our own country's legacy of slavery, racism and discrimination; and

**WHEREAS**, the quest for freedom and justice is universal and efforts in both countries are intertwined.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the President and members of the Cook County Board of Commissioners offers its strong and unwavering support for full civil rights, including access to civil registration and identification, for people coming out of slavery in Mauritania and commends the Abolition Institute for its work on this critical global human rights issue.