



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 14-4896, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

COMMEMORATING THE EXTRAORDINARY LIFE AND MEMORY OF BROOKE WHITTED

WHEREAS, Brooke Whitted, a man of exceptional compassion who worked on behalf of children with special needs for more than four decades, first as a probation officer, later as a lawyer and always as a tireless advocate, died July 27, leaving behind family, countless friends, co-workers and a community profoundly enriched for having known him; and

WHEREAS, Brooke Whitted was one of the legal community's greatest ambassadors of good-will and staunch champion of compassionate and forward thinking juvenile policies; and

WHEREAS, as a child Brooke Whitted moved from California to Illinois and later graduated from Evanston Township High School in 1964; and

WHEREAS, after college, Brooke Whitted became a Field Probation Officer for the Cook County Juvenile Court. The job had a major formative impact on him. It was as a probation officer that Whitted realized the link between delinquency and mental health and found his calling. While a probation officer, Whitted began attending law school at night at John Marshall Law School in Chicago; and

WHEREAS, after graduation, Brooke Whitted combined his background as a probation officer with his law degree and focused his legal practice on education, disability and child advocacy. Countless children with special needs have benefited from Whitted's efforts; and

WHEREAS, Brooke Whitted was a partner in the law firm of Whitted, Takiff & Hansen, LLC. In addition to assisting his clients Brooke Whitted helped school districts develop and implement child-focused educational practices. Those policies have helped multitudes and will continue to help children and their families far into the future; and

WHEREAS, Brooke Whitted created educational non-profits and made policy and that will positively impact others for generations. He was the President of the Leslie Shankman School Corporation, which operates several schools for disabled students; and

WHEREAS, as a direct result of his experiences as a probation officer, Brooke Whitted helped co-found and chaired the Harold and Rosemarie Marx Memorial Fund which was established to provide cultural, social, recreational and educational activities to the children of Cook County Juvenile Court for almost 25 years. The Marx Fund bridges the gap between what children need and what their families, schools, and neighborhoods can provide. Children and their probation officers share Marx Fund activities together, strengthening the bond between them; and

WHEREAS Brooke Whitted was a former member of the board of directors of the National Runaway Switchboard, Heartspring/Wichita, Glenview Youth Services and a founding board member of Shelter, Inc. He was a faculty member of the UIC Medical School Department of Psychiatry and a member of the Illinois Association of Private Schools for Exceptional Children; and

WHEREAS, Brooke Whitted's expertise and judgment brought him to the attention of state leaders; he was the gubernatorial appointee to the Illinois Community and Residential Services Authority, a unique small state agency helping Illinois children with complex emotional challenges locate the services they need. He was appointed by the State

Superintendent of Education to serve on an Anti-Bullying/Harassment Task Force and was also appointed by the Speaker of the Illinois House to membership on the Task Force on Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children; and

WHEREAS, Brooke Whitted represented child, family, mental health and educational agencies in the Chicago metropolitan area, among his clients were the National Runaway Switchboard and Jewish Child and Family Services, as well as many nonpublic schools for disabled children. He has also represented many professional associations including the Illinois Psychological Association; and

WHEREAS, Brooke Whitted's expertise was recognized by the media, he was published or interviewed on a variety of topics related to education, child welfare, juvenile law, and mental health. Most recently, he was featured on Chicago Public radio to discuss the shortage of services in Illinois for mentally ill children; and

WHEREAS, was the devoted husband of Linda and the dotting father of Layne and Ross. He will be sorely missed; and

WHEREAS, Brooke Whitted's compassion, positive energy and good judgment was what set him apart; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of Cook County, on behalf of the 5.2 million residents of Cook County commemorates the extraordinary life of Brooke Whitted, and herewith expresses its sincere gratitude for the invaluable contributions he has made to the Citizens of Cook County, Illinois; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a suitable copy of this Resolution be spread upon the official proceedings of this Honorable Body and that an official copy of the same be tendered to the family of Brooke Whitted.