



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 20-2851, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION IN MEMORY OF LARRY KRAMER

WHEREAS, Larry Kramer passed away on May 27, 2020 at the age of 84; and

WHEREAS, Larry Kramer was one of the first and most vocal activists against government apathy during the AIDS crisis of the 1980s; and

WHEREAS, in 1982, Kramer and several friends started the Gay Men's Health Crisis to help provide services to those who were sick early on in the AIDS crisis that were not able to get help anywhere else; and

WHEREAS, the GMHC provided, for many years, the most amount of support for those dying from AIDS as the government and medical community ignored or shunned those people; and

WHEREAS, he was also an accomplished screenwriter, playwright, and novelist; and

WHEREAS, Kramer wrote the play, *The Normal Heart*, inspired by his own experience in the fight against AIDS, starting GMHC, and his frustration with his own organization for not doing enough. The play's legacy is still felt today as a seminal piece of LGBTQ art; and

WHEREAS, upon being ousted from GMHC for his confrontational style, Kramer helped found ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power), a direct action protest organization; and

WHEREAS, ACT UP focused on large scale civil disobedience with a focus on government agencies and corporations who Kramer explained were largely ignoring the AIDS crisis and were letting LGBTQ Americans die; and

WHEREAS, Kramer's activism to fight on behalf of LGBTQ people continued until his death; and

WHEREAS, Larry Kramer gave voice to the anger and despair of so many LGBTQ people during a time when they felt ignored, unheard, and left to die; and

WHEREAS, Kramer's legacy of activism and direct action is an inspiration; and

WHEREAS, Larry Kramer's fearlessness and persistence in fighting the powers that tried to ignore him, saved thousands of lives by making sure the U.S. government paid attention to those dying from AIDS; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the Cook County Board of Commissioners do hereby honor Larry Kramer for his endless contributions to the fight for LGBTQ rights; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a suitable copy of this resolution be sent to ACT UP NY to be able to offer our condolences to a group Larry Kramer founded and loved.