



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Details

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Title:	PROPOSED RESOLUTION				

HONORING THE 50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE KENWOOD-OAKLAND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

WHEREAS, the Kenwood-Oakland Community Organization, commonly known as KOCO, was founded by community and religious leaders in 1965 and celebrates its 50th year of existence this year; and

WHEREAS, KOCO was incorporated 2 years later in 1967 and had as its first executive director, Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Sr.; and

WHEREAS, KOCO members organized to get the Martin Luther King, Jr. High School built in 1971 to replace the overcrowded Forrestville High School because Black students were unable to enroll in Kenwood High School at the time; and

WHEREAS, KOCO members organized to get the Kenwood-Oakland Medical (KOMED) health clinic opened in 1975, which later merged with the Holman Health Clinic in 1997, to provide quality health care to low-income and working families in the north Kenwood-Oakland community; and

WHEREAS, KOCO members organized to erect the Woodlake Village Townhomes in 1988 to provide affordable housing for more than 70 families on a parcel of land that had become an unsanctioned waste dump in the middle of the community; and

WHEREAS, the first Black Mayor of Chicago, Harold Washington, broke ground at the site of what would become the Woodlake Village Townhomes in 1987 the morning of the day he died in office; and

WHEREAS, in the mid 1980's, KOCO members organized to create another 300 units of affordable housing in the north Kenwood-Oakland community to provide safe, decent, quality housing for families in need; and

WHEREAS, KOCO members led the call for balanced community development in north Kenwood-Oakland leading to the creation of a shopping center and the designation of north Kenwood-Oakland as a community conservation area; and

WHEREAS, Jhatayn "Jay" Travis served as KOCO's fourth executive director from 2000-2012, and ushered in a renaissance of its community organizing activities - challenging slum lords and school closing advocates, and refocusing its attention on grassroots leadership development; and

WHEREAS, KOCO members organized to get a signed community benefits agreement to protect community residents from being displaced if Chicago won its bid for the 2016 Summer Olympic Games; and

WHEREAS, KOCO members have traveled to South America and South Africa to address issues of racism and education, receiving international recognition for its service to the ideals of social justice; and

WHEREAS, KOCO has provided a litany of unnamed benefits and protection to some of the most vulnerable populations in the city of Chicago, Cook County, the state of Illinois and beyond; and

WHEREAS, KOCO is currently led by its fifth executive director, J. Brian Malone, and has maintained its use of community organizing as its primary methodology to create change for low-income and working families in the north Kenwood-Oakland community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cook County Board of Commissioners does hereby recognize and honor the 50th Anniversary of the Kenwood-Oakland Community Organization and their distinguished record of service to low-income and working families throughout Cook County; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this text be spread upon the proceedings of this Honorable Body and that a suitable copy of this resolution be presented to the Kenwood-Oakland Community Organization in honor of this auspicious occasion.

Sponsors: JESÚS G. GARCÍA, JERRY BUTLER

Indexes:

Code sections:

Attachments:

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
5/20/2015	1	Board of Commissioners	approve	Pass