



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

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PROPOSED RESOLUTION

DECLARING INDOOR AIR AND INDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

WHEREAS, Public health awareness raises collective consciousness of the relationship between the health of individuals and the impacts of indoor and outdoor air and environmental pollution within buildings in Cook County communities; and

WHEREAS, Cook County, Illinois was the first government in Illinois to pass a green building ordinance in 2002; Illinois now has approximately 91 LEED-certified green buildings totaling over 44.5 million square feet ranking Illinois second in the U.S. for LEED-certified public and private buildings, during the crisis period of the pandemic, numerous LEED-certified buildings failed to keep us safe while providing limited to no benefit in disadvantaged communities; and

WHEREAS, As of September 14, 2023, The City of Chicago and Cook County have experienced 8,166 and 15,442 totaling 23,608 Covid-19 related deaths respectively, it has been verified that the air filtration and ventilation systems in buildings and homes we expected to protect us failed to keep us safe, and in numerous instances may have served as the delivery system causing spread of airborne biological contaminants.

WHEREAS, childhood asthma surveillance reports in Chicago Public Schools document a 25% child age asthma rate representing a 45% increase as compared to asthma rates among children of 11% across the State of Illinois; as we actively work towards reducing Cook County Health System's proportional share of the national outlay of \$81.9 billion spent annually on asthma and other respiratory related illnesses; and

WHEREAS, Long Covid cases continue to rise and where the prevalence of long COVID was 34% in one cohort after a median of 255 days where 80% of these patients admitted for COVID-19 were Black or Hispanic residing in disadvantaged communities that are eligible for Federal Environmental Justice 40 funding that can assist with implementing energy-efficient HVAC infection control improvements for climate adaptation with an emphasis on prevention is of great benefit to all citizens of Cook County and can no longer be ignored; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Cook County Bureau of Asset Management shall perform an assessment of current industry best practices as they relate to indoor air quality improvements in public settings. The assessment shall be inclusive of, but not limited to, solutions improving indoor air quality in Cook County facilities. The Bureau of Asset Management, in collaboration with Cook County Department of Public Health, will provide a report of the findings to the Cook County Board, including an action plan for the implementation of any appropriate improvements or operational changes shown to support the improvement of indoor air quality. Such report shall include funding opportunities for potential improvements, including Capital Improvement Plan funds and any potential grant opportunities such as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law opportunities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County Board hereby supports the efforts to address public health disparities and impacts due to the potential for underperforming indoor air and indoor environmental quality levels within buildings negatively impacted by outdoor air pollution and the use of other harmful substances contained in building materials, such as, cleaning agents, paints, adhesives, and other chemicals in buildings located in Cook County. The Bureau of Asset Management in collaboration with the Cook County Department of Public Health, shall report to the Board any all policies, design standards, and current operating practices supporting this commitment