



# Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street  
Chicago, IL

## Legislation Text

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**File #: 16-1589, Version: 1**

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### **PROPOSED RESOLUTION**

#### **HONORING THE LIFE OF OTIS CLAY, MUSIC LEGEND OF GOSPEL AND BLUES**

**WHEREAS**, Almighty God, in His infinite wisdom, has called Otis Clay from our midst; and

**WHEREAS**, Otis Clay was born February 11, 1942 in Waxhaw, Mississippi; and;

**WHEREAS**, As a child he began to imitate what he heard and saw, church was an essential part of Otis Clay life and that is where the singing began; and

**WHEREAS**, in the 1950's Otis Clay relocated to Chicago, IL in which Gospel would remain his primary focus. He joined several groups which included: Golden Jubilees, Charles Bridges Famous Blue Jay Singers in 1960, the Holy Wonders, Pilgrim Harmonizers, the Gospel Songbirds, and the Sensational Nightingales; and

**WHEREAS**, Even as Otis Clay sang spirituals, he cut an unissued R & B session for Columbia Records with producer Carl Davis .His first hit came in 1967 with "That's How It is (When You're in Love)", which reached # 34 on the US Billboard R & B chart, followed by "A Lasting Love" # 48 on the R & B chart.; and

**WHEREAS** In 1968 Otis Clay contract was bought by Atlantic Records who's subsidiary label Cotillion Records released, "She's About A Mover", which was produced at the FAME Studios in Muscle Shoals; and

**WHEREAS** Otis Clay moved to Mitchell's Hi Records in 1971 and made many of his best known soul blues records for the label including "Trying to Live My Life without You, "If I Could Reach Out". He moved on to Kayvette Records where he had his national hit single in 1977 "All Because of Your Love" He also recorded for Elka and Rounder labels as well as his own record company Echo Records for whom he recorded the gospel album "Walk A Mile in My Shoes" and

**WHEREAS**, Otis Clay was inducted into the Blues Hall of Fame in 2013; and

**WHEREAS**, Otis Clay was an active intractable person in the community, having served as Chairman of the Board of the non-profit Tobacco Road, Inc. He was extensively involved in the development, planning and fundraising of the The Harold Washington Cultural Center at 47<sup>th</sup> and Kind Drive for the revitalization and redevelopment of the historic Bronzeville neighborhood. In addition as long time resident of the Chicago's West-side he also was a businessman/ enterpretuer of K-Town Cleaners a boutique store and Echo recording studio in the North Lawndale Community; and

**WHEREAS**, Otis Clay was a member of North Star Lodge No.1, Talma Chapter No. 2 Order of the Eastern Star, Prince Hall, F and AM, State of Illinois; and

**WHEREAS** the community has lost s great friend in Otis Clay. He will be sorely missed by his family, friends, neighbors, and fellow musicians.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the President of the Cook County Board along with the Cook County Board of Commissioners, and on behalf of the 5.2 million residents of Cook County, commemorates the extraordinary life of Mr. Otis Clay and herewith express its sincere gratitude for the invaluable contributions he has made to the Citizens of Cook County, Illinois.

**NOW, THEREFORE, 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 Mr. Otis Clay.