



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 14-0179, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

IN MEMORY OF THE HONORABLE JUDGE WILLIAM R. QUINLAN

WHEREAS, William R. Quinlan was a leading citizen of Cook County who raised a marvelous family here; and

WHEREAS, William R. Quinlan enjoyed a lengthy and stellar legal career of over 45 years, was a dedicated community leader and was loved by family, friends and coworkers, he passed away on Tuesday October 1, 2013; and

WHEREAS, William R. Quinlan served as Chicago's youngest corporation counsel, a Cook County circuit and state appellate judge, was a parliamentarian for the Cook County Board, Chair of the Cook County Judicial Advisory Council, and a lawyer in private practice specializing in commercial litigation; and

WHEREAS, William R. Quinlan a proud Chicago South-sider graduated from Mount Carmel High School and received an accounting degree and a law degree from Loyola University Chicago. He graduated first in his law school class in 1963. After military service he served as a law clerk for a year for Illinois Supreme Court Justice Daniel P. Ward; and

WHEREAS, After his clerkship, Quinlan worked for the city of Chicago's Law Department where he handled many cases and was head of its appeals division. He later served as first assistant corporation counsel and was tapped for the top job and served as corporation counsel from 1974 through 1980. He worked under Mayors Richard J. Daley, Michael A. Bilandic and Jane M. Byrne; and

WHEREAS, Quinlan later received a master of laws degree from the University of Virginia School of Law; and

WHEREAS, Judge Quinlan was first elected a Cook County Circuit Court judge in 1980; was appointed a state appellate justice in 1985 and later won election to the bench in 1986; and

WHEREAS, As a judge, Mr. Quinlan oversaw trials involving the 1979 roof collapse of what was then the Rosemont Horizon and also presided over the first asbestos trial in Cook County; and

WHEREAS, In 1989, Mr. Quinlan resigned from the Illinois Appellate Court to go into private practice with his brother-in-law Richard Phelan at Phelan, Pope & John; and

WHEREAS, When Richard Phelan won election as Cook County Board president in 1990, Mr. Quinlan represented him as special counsel and legal adviser, as well as the County Board's parliamentarian. He held both roles and continued to serve through the terms of Cook County Board Presidents Richard J. Phelan, John Stroger and Bobbie Steele; and

WHEREAS, William R. Quinlan as Cook County Special Counsel handled many high profile and sensitive matters including the first consent decree in the "Shakman Case"; and

WHEREAS, William R. Quinlan was a trusted lawyer and advisor to not only Cook County Board Presidents but to all the members of the Cook County Board of Commissioners; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Quinlan also formed two law firms, Quinlan & Crisham and Quinlan & Carroll. Mr. Quinlan practiced law with his son William J. Quinlan at the Quinlan Law Firm until 2011; and

WHEREAS, William R. Quinlan taught extensively, including trial practice courses at John Marshall Law School, Loyola University School of Law and Northwestern University School of Law; and

WHEREAS, As dedicated community leader, Mr. Quinlan was on the board of several nonprofit groups, including Mundelein Seminary at the University of St. Mary of the Lake, the Loyola University School of Law Board of Governors, After School Matters and the Rotary Club of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, He is survived by his wife, Colleen and children, daughters, Erin Quinlan Kraft, Kathleen and Colleen; and sons, Bill, Kevin and Matthew; and four grandchildren. His first wife Jane and son Patrick preceded him in death.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of Cook County, on behalf of the 5.2 million residents of Cook County who he served dutifully, commemorates the life of the Honorable Judge William R. Quinlan, 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 the Honorable Judge William R. Quinlan.