



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 24-2748, Version: 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

CELEBRATING THE 105TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

WHEREAS, the American Legion was chartered by Congress in 1919 as a Patriotic veterans organization; and

WHEREAS, the American Legion is built on a promise from men and women who swore with their lives to defend and protect the United States through military service; and

WHEREAS, the promise begins at enlistment, grows through training and discipline in the U.S. Armed Forces, and continues after discharge as veterans in service to community, state, and nation; and

WHEREAS, focusing on service to veterans, service members, and communities, the Legion evolved from a group of war-weary veterans of World War I into one of the most influential nonprofit groups in the United States; and

WHEREAS, there are about 55 departments: one each for the 50 states, along with the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, France, México, and the Philippines; and

WHEREAS, on June 23, 1935, Legionnaires Harold Card and Hayes Kennedy organized the first American Legion Boys State at the Illinois State Fairgrounds in Springfield, which offer more than 350 young men who attend a session annually an opportunity to learn first-hand the inner workings of a political party and to apply this knowledge in actual practice; and

WHEREAS, the American Legion, for decades, has advocated for change and opportunities for those in the military service; and

WHEREAS, Harry W. Colmery, a former national commander of the American Legion is credited with drawing up the first draft of the GI Bill, which was introduced in the House on Jan. 10, 1944, and in the Senate the following day; and

WHEREAS, the GI Bill has helped qualifying Veterans and their family members receive funds to cover all or some of the costs for school or training; and

WHEREAS, on August 10, 1955, President Eisenhower signed into law the Reserve Forces Act of 1955, essentially the outcome of nearly 40 years of American Legion lobbying for compulsory Universal Military Training (UMT); and

WHEREAS, this required all those who entered the armed forces after 9 August 1955 to participate in reserve training following completion of active service and authorized specific sanctions for those who failed to participate; and

WHEREAS, over the years, the American Legion has influenced considerable social change in America, fought for and secured hundreds of benefits for veterans and produced many important programs for children and youth; and

WHEREAS, today, membership stands at nearly 2 million in more than 13,000 posts worldwide.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cook County Board of Commissioners does hereby recognize and honor the 105th Anniversary of the American Legion; 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 is presented to the American Legion in honor of its outstanding work and its 105th anniversary.