



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 21-1694, Version: 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

HONORING COOK COUNTY AND ILLINOIS AFRICAN-AMERICAN TRAIL BLAZERS IN THE UNITED STATES SENATE DURING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

WHEREAS, in a times of strife and uncertainty, our great country continues to move forward and overcome the challenges placed before it, evidenced by the United States Congress achieving a new milestone in diversity this year with its highest-ever number of women and racial minority members, including sixty Black lawmakers; and

WHEREAS, the majority of said members were elected to the House of Representatives, which has historically provided a more straightforward path to Congress in part due to voters in urban congressional districts, which tend to be more diverse and politically progressive; and

WHEREAS, ascending to the Senate has been more challenging as a result of political conservatism in White majority regions of the U.S., in fact newly elected Senator Raphael Warnock is only the 11th Black U.S. Senator since the Senate convened for the first time in 1789 and only two have been women; and

WHEREAS, while we celebrate the Honorable Kamala Harris becoming the 1st woman, the 1st African-American, the 1st Asian-American, the 1st graduate of a historically Black college or university to be sworn in as Vice President of the United States of America, the Senate is now left without a Black female Senator and only 3 Black male Senators; and

WHEREAS, Illinois and Cook County has played an especially important role in making history in the U.S. Senate with 3 out of the 11 Senators having hailed from Illinois and Cook County including: the Honorable Carol Moseley Braun, who became the 1st Black female U.S. Senator, the Honorable Kamala Harris being the 2nd and only other; the Honorable Barack Obama, who was the 5th Black U.S. Senator and only the third one elected by voters and proceeded to become the 1st Black President of the United States; and the Honorable Roland Burris, who was appointed in 2008 to fill President Obama's vacated seat in the U.S. Senate; and

WHEREAS, it's important to celebrate the progress African-Americans have made, it's equally important to remember the long struggle to overcome the barriers put in place to prevent such progress, from slavery and Jim Crow laws to suppression of minority voters, Black political candidates have long faced obstacles to representation in Congress; and

WHEREAS, as recent events have shown, we must remain vigilant in order to protect our democracy and our rights as citizens and strive to work together rather than work against each other to ensure it will continue to endure and progress towards a more perfect union, as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, "If you can't fly then run,

if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward.”; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that Reverend Warnock is a senior pastor at Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church, where Martin Luther King Jr. served as co-pastor, and where Black voters in Atlanta and its suburbs turned out in big numbers to help him win; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of Black History Month, this Honorable Body wishes to especially honor our Cook County and Illinois African-American trailblazers in the U.S. Senate;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Members of the Cook County Board of Commissioners proudly honor the legacy of our very own trailblazers in the United States Senate and the historical contributions they have made to our Country; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this text be spread upon the official proceedings of this Honorable Body and a suitable copy be presented to Senator Carol Moseley Braun, Senator Roland Burris and President Barack Obama as a symbol of our respect and esteem.