



# Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street  
Chicago, IL

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 14-0935, **Version:** 1

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### **PROPOSED RESOLUTION**

#### **HONORING THE LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF MABLE LOUISE BLACKWELL**

**WHEREAS**, Almighty God, in His infinite wisdom, has called a highly distinguished woman who possessed a beautiful spirit of service, Mable Louise Blackwell, from our midst; and

**WHEREAS**, born on February 15, 1947 in Decatur, Georgia, Mrs. Blackwell grew up in Springfield, Illinois and graduated from Champaign Senior High School in 1965; and

**WHEREAS**, Mrs. Blackwell took college classes at Southern Illinois University, where she was inducted into the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Epsilon Xi Chapter, in 1968; she continued her college studies at Chicago State University, earning a bachelor's degree in biology in 1972. Mrs. Blackwell then earned a master's degree in biology from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1974, and an M.D. in pediatrics in 1978 from the University of Illinois at Chicago, as well as a master's degree in public health, also from the University of Illinois at Chicago, in 1986; and

**WHEREAS**, for over 30 years, Mrs. Blackwell led an exceedingly successful professional life, serving as a practicing physician, a medical administrator and an academician; and

**WHEREAS**, Mrs. Blackwell served as the Regional Medical Director for the Chicago Department of Public Health; she also served as the Medical Director for the Illinois Department of Human Services, as the Chief Medical Officer/Medical Director for the Health Department of Will County, and held positions at Mercy Hospital and Cook County Hospital; and

**WHEREAS**, Mrs. Blackwell served for almost ten years as a College of Medicine Clinical Associate Professor in the Department of Pediatrics, and as the Director of the Office of Public Health Practice, both at the University of Illinois at Chicago; and

**WHEREAS**, while a professor and administrator at the University of Illinois at Chicago, Mrs. Blackwell served as a consultant to the Illinois Office of Inspector General's Division of Medical Integrity; she was responsible for reviewing medical practices and serving on hearing committees; and

**WHEREAS**, while a visiting professor at Chicago State University, Mrs. Blackwell developed a clinical research structure for interdisciplinary and interagency study; and

**WHEREAS**, Mrs. Blackwell's service extended into the national and international realms as well; she was a Professional Peer Reviewer for the Public Health Service Health Resource and Service Administration, the National Institute of Health, the National Cancer Institute Office of Cancer Program Support, as well as at the U.S. Department of Education Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education; and

**WHEREAS**, Mrs. Blackwell sojourned to numerous countries to examine health delivery practices, access and barriers, including countries throughout West Africa, Japan, China, Thailand, Mexico and South Africa; this work included serving as an invited planning meeting participant on the Establishing a Post-Apartheid Health System for South Africa conference sponsored by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation at the University of Illinois at Chicago; and

**WHEREAS**, Mrs. Blackwell founded the Herman T. and Ruth K. Blackwell Foundation, a non-profit public charity

established to support and encourage communities to improve their quality of life and that of future generations; proceeds from the Foundation now fund an endowed scholarship by the same name at Morehouse College; and

**WHEREAS**, Mrs. Blackwell utilized her medical knowledge to fight for the underserved and poor; as a fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine, Mrs. Blackwell was awarded several research grants for her work in minority and adolescent medicine; and

**WHEREAS**, as much as she was devoted to her professional life, Mrs. Blackwell was deeply committed to her family and friends; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1995, Mrs. Blackwell joined Trinity United Church of Christ and quickly became an active member; she was inspired by its African-centered philosophy and by the opportunity to uplift others who were poor and disenfranchised; she was particularly involved with the Project Jeremiah and the Yoga ministries; and

**WHEREAS**, Mrs. Blackwell was preceded in death by her parents, Herman T. and Ruth K. Blackwell, brothers, Duane W. Blackwell and William N. Blackwell, and sister, Diana D. Polk. She leaves to mourn her daughter, Samantha S. Fields, and son, Ryan E. Fields, sisters, Dorothy R. Coleman (Dejustice), Doris K. Butts (Stanley), Wilma J. Conwell, Clara Johnson (Samuel), Ave M. Blackwell Alvarado, brothers, Robert T. Blackwell (Carolyn), Victor E. Blackwell (Kimberly), and a host of nephews, nieces, cousins and friends.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that Mable Louise Blackwell's memory shall be cherished in all of the hearts of the people whom she touched and loved.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that I, Toni Preckwinkle, President of the Cook County Board of Commissioners and on behalf of the residents of Cook County, do hereby express my deepest condolences and most heartfelt sympathy to the family as well as to the many friends and loved ones of Mable Louise Blackwell, and may a suitable copy of this Resolution be tendered to the family of Mable Louise Blackwell so that her rich legacy may be so honored and ever cherished.