



# Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street  
Chicago, IL

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 23-4958, **Version:** 1

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### **PROPOSED RESOLUTION**

#### **HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF RIGOBERTO “RIGO” PADILLA PÉREZ**

**WHEREAS**, Rigoberto “Rigo” Padilla Pérez lived a beautiful life filled with friends and family. Unfortunately, he lost his fight against brain cancer on August 20, 2023; and

**WHEREAS**, Rigo was born on February 11, 1988, in Jalisco, Mexico to Rigoberto Padilla Moreno and Juana Perez Muñoz; and

**WHEREAS**, Rigo grew up in West Town and Gage Park where much of his adolescence was spent at the Erie Neighborhood House which is a local center located in the neighborhood; and

**WHEREAS**, since 2009, Rigo had been directly involved in the support of undocumented communities; and

**WHEREAS**, Rigo attended Noble Street Charter High School where he played soccer, rugby, and cross country; and

**WHEREAS**, upon graduating, he attended Harold Washington College and the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) where he would eventually become one of the most prominent leaders of the immigrant rights movement in Chicago and across the country; and

**WHEREAS**, Rigo received both a Master of Art and a Bachelor's Degree in Latin America and Latino Studies (LALS) from UIC; and

**WHEREAS**, the once shy and introverted young man continued to find his voice at Radio Arte where he became part of a tight-knit community; and

**WHEREAS**, Rigo was stopped by an officer for a traffic violation and was turned over to Homeland Security; and

**WHEREAS**, Rigo would eventually face his own threat of deportation and fully establish himself as a force in the movement fighting not only for himself but for others facing similar cases across the country; and

**WHEREAS**, a founding member of the Immigration Youth Justice League (IYJL) ( now known as Organized Communities Against Deportations - OCAD) he helped organize against the oppression and marginalization of immigrants and people of color; and

**WHEREAS**, Rigo was also a national leader for the DREAM Act, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), and the expansion of protections and immigration relief for all; and

**WHEREAS**, Rigo, alongside others inspired an era of students who were undocumented, unapologetic and unaframed; and

**WHEREAS**, these efforts would also motivate him as a founding member of the Illinois Dream Fund, which provided

scholarships and resources to undocumented students striving for higher education; and

**WHEREAS**, the culmination of Rigo's organizing would eventually land him at Eric Solorio Academy High School where he served as a College and Career Coach and Undocumented Student Support Specialist for 9 years; and

**WHEREAS**, at Solorio High School, Rigo founded the Dream Team and Solorio Dream Scholarship where one of the most powerful annual events is "Coming Out of the Shadows Day," where undocumented students share their personal stories; and

**WHEREAS**, Rigo's new mission became to ensure that students of color would obtain access to high-quality opportunities regardless of their socioeconomic and legal status; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2021 he was named a Surge Fellow by the Surge Institute, which recognizes young leaders of color.

**WHEREAS**, Rigo was a revolutionary, and an inspiration, as well as a hero for not only Chicago but for everyone across the country; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Cook County Board of Commissioners do hereby hold in reverence in honor of the historic legacy of Rigoberto "Rigo" Padilla Pérez, as we offer our deepest condolences to his friends, family, and communities; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that a suitable copy of this resolution be presented to the family of Rigoberto "Rigo" Padilla Pérez as an honorable expression of appreciation for his life and work.