



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 24-1200, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF CARLOS TORTOLERO AS THE FOUNDER OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF MEXICAN ART

WHEREAS, born in Nuevo Laredo, México, Carlos Tortolero moved with his family to Chicago, on Taylor Street, when he was a toddler; and

WHEREAS, Carlos Tortolero is a recipient of an Honorary Degree from Columbia College (Chicago) and an Honorary Degree from the University of Illinois (Chicago); and

WHEREAS, Carlos Tortolero graduated from UIC, he became a history teacher at Bowen High School in South Chicago, where he noticed there was a lack of Mexican and Mexican American history; and

WHEREAS, from 1975-1987, Carlos Tortolero worked as a teacher, counselor, and administrator in the Chicago Public School (CPS) System; and

WHEREAS, in 1982, he and five others, mostly Bowen colleagues, pooled \$900 to start what was then called the Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum located at 1852 W 19th Street; and

WHEREAS, Carlos Tortolero's main priority when opening the National Museum of Mexican Art was to have free admissions because everyone in the community deserves access to free art; and

WHEREAS, the goal was to establish an arts and cultural organization committed to accessibility, education and social justice as well as provided a positive influence for the local Mexican community, especially since many other art institutions did not address Mexican art; and

WHEREAS, the National Museum of Mexican Art serves as a community hub in the Pilsen neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, the National Museum of Mexican Art has presented over 150 exhibitions, provides arts education to 52,000 students each year, and serves over 150,000 annual visitors from 60 countries; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, Carlos Tortolero won the Ohtli Award, which means "path" in Nahuatl, where the Mexican government presents the honor to "individuals who have distinguished themselves in the service of the Mexican community outside of Mexico." which is considered the highest honor; and

WHEREAS, that same year, the City of Chicago honored him with its highest award in arts, the Fifth Star Award. One year later, the Sun-Times listed him among the top 200 Illinoisans in 200 years of history; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, the Chicago History Museum presented him with the Harold Washington Making History Award for Distinction in Public Service.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Cook County Board President and the Cook County Board of Commissioners do hereby congratulate Carlos Tortolero for his retirement from the National Museum of Mexican Art; 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 Carlos Tortolero for his outstanding achievements and work.