



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 16-6417, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE AND REMARKABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF MICHAEL IVERS

WHEREAS, Michael Ivers, passionate and tireless advocate for the poor, former Catholic priest, Chicago Housing Authority Board Commissioner and beloved community leader died at the age of sixty-nine on October 24, 2016 leaving behind countless friends, family and a community profoundly enriched for having known him; and

WHEREAS Ivers was born and grew up on the South Side of Chicago. He was a lifelong Catholic and attended Catholic grammar school and later attended what was then Quigley Preparatory Seminary South. He continued seminary studies and later earned an undergraduate degree at DePaul University in Chicago. He studied at Saint Mary of the Lake Seminary and the Institute of Black Catholic Studies at Xavier University in New Orleans; he spent over twenty seven years as a Catholic priest; and

WHEREAS, Michael Ivers served as pastor at several West Side churches during his twenty-seven years as a priest for the Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago. He spent his active ministry teaching at Quigley and in Chicago's African-American community, especially as Pastor of Saint Agatha Church in North Lawndale. He was a much loved priest and assiduous advocate for the community. He organized efforts to combat gangs and helped run the country's first scattered-site resident management organization. He fed homeless people every Sunday, lobbied in Springfield for legislation and conducted a gang intervention program causing some gang members to put a contract out to kill him; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his pastoral duties Michel Ivers also became a well-respected leader in the broader community. He chaired the advisory board of the Fantus Health Center, part of the Cook County Health and Hospitals System and was appointed by Mayor Richard M. Daley to serve as a Commissioner on the Chicago Housing Authority Board. While at the CHA he oversaw the demolition of CHA high-rises and the emergence of scattered-site housing. Later, Mayor Rahm Emanuel appointed him a commissioner of Chicago's Zoning Board of Appeals. He was tapped by Cardinal Bernadin to serve on the Archdiocesan Priest Placement Board, assisting in the placement of 750 priests with positions in parishes. With Commonwealth Edison he co-founded Look to the Future, an organization with a mission to paint the homes of the elderly and disabled in nineteen communities. He played a key role in the creation of United Power for Action and Justice, a non-partisan community organization composed of 40 religious congregations, not-for-profit groups, hospitals, health centers and civic organizations from across Cook County. He chaired the Lawndale Conservation Council and served as president of Goodcity where he focused his energy on building relationships among people, churches, organizations and civic entities to build a better Chicago; and

WHEREAS, Michael Ivers was involved for years in the annual Cusp Conferences in Chicago. Cusp Conference is an annual gathering of thinkers, innovators, creators, visionaries and explorers from the arts, sciences, technology, business and design. He was often the keynote or kickoff speaker and had the distinction of being the only presenter regularly invited back year after year; and

WHEREAS, Michael Ivers' exceptional abilities were regularly recognized and honored. He was named a Paul Harris Fellow by Rotary International in 1999 and in 2000 was named the Distinguished Fellow of Leadership Greater Chicago. He received the Award of Excellence from Cook County Treasurer Maria Pappas for being the "Prophet of Non-profits" and was the 2009 Court Appointed Special Advocates of Cook County Spirit Award recipient; and

WHEREAS, Michael Ivers decided to leave the priesthood in 2001 but never lost his connection to the church or desire to advocate for the common good. In 2002, he married Dr. Greta Ivers, his best friend and partner in social justice. The two moved to Yuma in 2011. In Arizona he served as President and CEO of the Yuma Community Food Bank and served on the Board of the Yuma Area Non-Profit Institute and on the Board of advisors of Catholic Community Services; and

WHEREAS, Greta and Michael Ivers recently moved to Hawaii to continue their journey together in medicine and social justice; and

WHEREAS, the community has lost a great friend and advocate in Michael Ivers and he will be deeply missed. His loss will be felt most acutely by his beloved wife Greta, his mother, Loretta Ivers; sisters Anne Palmisano and Ruth Parrott; brothers James and Paul; stepsons Maurice France and David Hayes; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of Cook County, on behalf of the 5.2 million residents of Cook County commemorates the extraordinary life and accomplishments of Michael Ivers, and herewith expresses its sincere gratitude for the invaluable contributions he has made to the Citizens of Cook County, Illinois; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a suitable copy of this Resolution be spread upon the official proceedings of this Honorable Body and that an official copy of the same be tendered to the family of Michael Ivers.