



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

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PROPOSED RESOLUTION

HONORING THE CICELY FLEMING FOR HER SERVICE TO THE EVANSTON COMMUNITY

WHEREAS, Cicely Fleming current 9th Ward Alderwoman for the City of Evanston is stepping down from that position on January 31, 2022. Ald. Fleming was first elected to the City Council in 2017. She is the first African American alderperson to be elected from a non-majority African American ward in the City of Evanston. She was the only council person to run unopposed in the 2021 municipal election; and

WHEREAS, in her role as Alderwoman, Cicely has been a model of transparency and engagement. She has published a monthly newsletter informing residents of issues before the council and services available to residents from the City. She never took a vote, especially on controversial issues, without explaining why she was voting the way she did. Perhaps the most controversial vote during her tenure was her vote against the Evanston Reparations program, which she saw more as a housing support ordinance and not a true reparations model that respected independence of Black residents; and

WHEREAS, in addition to her role on the city council, Cicely has served residents of Evanston in many other ways. She was president of her local PTA, a member of Evanston's Mental Health Board, and a volunteer at Connections for the Homeless. When the pandemic hit in 2020, Cicely almost single-handedly formed a network of neighborhood "food boxes" where people could leave food and other necessities for people in need; and

WHEREAS, Cicely is a fourth-generation activist and influencer in Evanston. Her great-grandfather, Samuel White, Jr., was the Evanston Democratic Party Committeeman who served the 5th Ward as alderman when it was Evanston's only Democratic ward. Her great-aunt, Edna Summers, was Evanston's 5th Ward alderwoman, township supervisor, and past president of the Evanston branch of the NAACP. Her cousins, Michael Summers and Rochelle Whyte-Washington, also both served as 5th Ward aldermen and another cousin, Jerome Summers, is a former member of the Evanston/Skokie District 65 School Board; and

WHEREAS, in 2014, she joined others to form OPAL, The Organization for Positive Action and Leadership, a group committed to promoting equity in government. Their initial goals were to improve African American student achievement in Evanston/Skokie District 65 schools by electing equity-focused candidates to local school boards and achieving racial equity in local government. OPAL screened candidates for both school boards in Evanston and local government offices and gave both financial and political support to candidates they endorsed; and

WHEREAS, Cicely holds a master's degree in Public Administration from DePaul University. Her academic and personal interests include policy development and analysis, asset-based community development, voter engagement and mobilization, and racial equity in government. She worked for three years as the Deputy District Director and Chief of Staff of Cook County Commissioner Larry Suffredin. She left that position in September 2021 to become the State Director of Regional and Community Systems, a newly launched department at INCCRRA, the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. In this role Cicely leads the implementation, in partnership with the Governor's office, of statewide regional infrastructure to transform delivery of Illinois Early Learning programs & services. The goal of INCCRRA is to center parental voice and racial equity; and

WHEREAS, Cicely lives in Evanston with her husband, Andrew, and three children: Cole, a freshman at the University of Wisconsin; Genevieve a freshman at George Washington University; and Natalia, a competitive cheerleader and sophomore at Evanston Township High School.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners of Cook County, on behalf of the 5.2 million residents of Cook County, honors the work and contributions of Cicely Fleming, and herewith expresses its sincere gratitude for the invaluable contributions she 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 same be tendered to Cicely Fleming.