



# Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street  
Chicago, IL

## Legislation Text

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### PROPOSED RESOLUTION

#### **REQUESTING A PUBLIC HEARING OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS AND RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE PUBLIC SAFETY AND PUBLIC HEALTH COUNTY STAKEHOLDERS ON THE INVESTIGATIONS OF MISSING AND MURDERED BLACK WOMEN AND GIRLS IN THE CHICAGOLAND AREA**

**WHEREAS**, Black women and girls in the U.S. are disproportionately at risk for abuse, exploitation and homicide. In the Chicago area, an alarming number of Black women have been killed and their murders remain unsolved; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2020, 268,884 women were reported missing in the U.S., nearly 100,000 were Black women and girls. Black women account for less than 15% of the U.S. population, but more than one-third of all missing women; and

**WHEREAS**, there are significant gaps in national law enforcement data about the murders of Black women; for nearly half of the killings of Black women and girls in 2020, the FBI's supplementary homicide report lists the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator as "unknown"; and

**WHEREAS**, Chicago based organizations and leaders have been actively seeking answers to the murders and disappearance of Black women and girls in the Chicagoland area for over two decades, marching on the streets pushing for urgency and more attention to the lives of Black women who have gone missing or been killed; and

**WHEREAS**, an analysis by the Invisible Institute, a nonprofit journalism organization on the South Side, found that more than 8,400 people were reported missing to the Chicago Police Department in 2021; almost 70% of those cases were of Black people and more than 3,000 of them were Black women; and

**WHEREAS**, on September 1, 2021, Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart announced the formation of the Missing Persons Project, an initiative that assigned a new team of detectives to work on longtime missing persons cases; and

**WHEREAS**, many advocates agree that violence against Black women and girls demands a broad social response, not only confined to law enforcement, with the goal of creating and implementing local, state and federal level policies to make people safer; and

**WHEREAS**, community violence prevention typically focuses on Black men and boys, who face the highest risk of being killed, and researchers report that domestic violence advocacy is most often shaped by the experiences of white women, creating a vacuum of solutions tailored to the unique ways in which Black women and girls are vulnerable to violence; and

**WHEREAS**, the disproportionate rate of violence against Black women and girls should be considered a public health crisis and therefore prevention should be a high priority for all Public Safety and Public Health stakeholders; and

**WHEREAS**, because of their roles as breadwinners and caretakers, Black women who are killed leave deep voids across entire communities.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Cook County Board of Commissioners does hereby request a public hearing of the Criminal Justice Committee to discuss and receive an update from the Public Safety and Public

Health County stakeholders on the investigations of missing and murdered Black women and girls in the Chicagoland area; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that representatives from the Cook County Department of Public Health, the Cook County Sheriff's Department, and the Cook County State's Attorney's Department shall appear before the Criminal Justice Committee and be prepared to give an overview and answer questions related to the investigations of homicides and disappearances of Black women and girls, and possible ways to prevent further violence against Black women and girls; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that stakeholders be prepared to provide recommendations for solutions tailored to the unique ways that Black women and girls are vulnerable to violence with the goal of preventing and safeguarding them from violence.