



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 22-1271, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION REMEMBERING THE PACIFICATION OF WUJEK

WHEREAS, the Polish community in Cook County makes up one of the largest ethnic group in the County; and

WHEREAS, the culture and history of the Polish people is important to the residents of Cook County and; and

WHEREAS, the Pacification of Wujek occurred on December 16, 1981 and 2021 marked the 40th anniversary of this event; and

WHEREAS, Solidarity, a trade union, was founded in 1980 stemming from government crackdowns of dissent and anti-worker actions from the authoritarian government; and

WHEREAS, Solidarity was led by Lech Walesa, who later was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his work, and others that were forming a broad anti-Soviet social movement; and

WHEREAS, the Polish government instituted martial law on December 13, 1981 in an attempt to counter political opposition in particular, the trade union movement started by Solidarity; and

WHEREAS, miners who were members of Solidarity at the Wujek Coal Mine in Katowice, Poland started a strike to oppose the institution of martial law; and

WHEREAS, three days after martial law started, on December 16th, Polish government troops of army and police were sent to shut down the strike with the force of military weapons and tanks; and

WHEREAS, there was a commando platoon, ZOMO, that were given "shoot to kill" orders resulting in the death of nine striking miners: Jan Stawisiński, Joachim Gnida, Józef Czekalski, Krzysztof Giza, Ryszard Gzik, Bogusław Kopczak, Andrzej Pełka, Zbigniew Wilk and Zenon Zając. 21 other people were wounded; and

WHEREAS, although the strike was shut down, this event has been be viewed as a turning point in the fall of the Polish authoritarian government and the end of the Eastern Bloc, at large; and

WHEREAS, some members of the Polish Solidarity movement came as refugees to Cook County, and have played a crucial part in our civic, cultural, and economic life ever since,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cook County Board of Commissioners remember these important events that are an important part of Polish history and of the Polish residents that reside in Cook County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that suitable copies of this resolution be given to Polish organizations in the area including but not limited to the Polish American Congress- Illinois Division, the Coalition of Polish Americans, the Illinois Labor History Society, and the Polish Museum of America..