



# Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street  
Chicago, IL

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 15-2616, **Version:** 1

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### **PROPOSED RESOLUTION**

#### **RECOGNIZING MAY AS NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH MONTH IN COOK COUNTY**

**WHEREAS**, May is National Mental Health month, dedicated to raising awareness about mental illness and related issues in the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), nearly 60 million Americans experience a mental health condition every year; mental illness impacts the lives of at least 1 in 4 adults and 1 in 10 children across the United States, regardless of race, age, religion or economic status; and

**WHEREAS**, mental health is an essential component of overall health and well-being and is tied to the balance that exists between our emotional, physical, spiritual and mental health; and

**WHEREAS**, negative attitudes, stereotypes and misunderstandings about mental illness create tremendous barriers for people with mental illness as well as their families; and

**WHEREAS**, promotion and prevention are effective ways to reduce the burden of mental health conditions and, with effective treatment, those individuals with mental health conditions can recover and lead full, productive lives; and

**WHEREAS**, over the past decade, governments have cut billions from their mental health budgets, shuttering clinics across the country including here in Illinois and Cook County, resulting in thousands of mentally ill people funneling in and out of our jails that are ill-equipped to handle them, effectively criminalizing mental illness; and

**WHEREAS**, in Cook County, it is estimated that up to 30% of inmates being held in the county jail have a mental illness on any given day, making the jail the nation's largest mental health facility; and

**WHEREAS**, it costs \$143 per day to house an inmate at the Cook County jail but due to the costs of medication and the extra supervision and care that are required to support inmates suffering from mental illness, that number increases to upwards of \$200 per day; and

**WHEREAS**, each business, school, government agency, faith-based organization, health care provider, and citizen has a responsibility to promote mental wellness and support prevention efforts;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the President and the Cook County Board of Commissioners does hereby declare the month of May as Mental Health Month in Cook County; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Cook County Board of Commissioners urges citizens, government agencies, public and private institutions, businesses and schools in Cook County to recommit to increasing awareness and understanding of mental health, the steps our citizens can take to protect their mental health, and the need for appropriate and accessible services for all people with mental health conditions; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that a suitable copy of this resolution be spread upon the official proceedings of this Honorable Body.