



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 22-2788, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

REQUESTING A HEARING IN THE COOK COUNTY HUMAN RELATIONS COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS VIOLENCE AND SYSTEMIC BARRIERS AGAINST COOK COUNTY TRANSGENDER RESIDENTS

WHEREAS, transgender residents in Cook County are vital members of our communities; and

WHEREAS, transgender residents and trans-led organizations in Cook County contribute in numerous ways to enrich the quality of life in Cook County; and

WHEREAS, transgender people in our lives should be embraced and celebrated for the wonderful people they are and talents they bring to our communities; and

WHEREAS, these residents face systemic barriers and epidemic levels of violence leading to lack of access, for some, of basic needs and in the most extreme cases, leading to death; and

WHEREAS, in the last year, more transgender people have been murdered in Chicago than any other U.S. city; and

WHEREAS, in March 2022 alone, two Black, trans women, Tatiana LaBelle and Elisa Malary, were found dead within 24 hours of each other days after being reported missing with LaBelle found beaten to death and put in a garbage bin in East Chatham and Elise Malary pulled out of Lake Michigan; and

WHEREAS, in March 2022, Kathryn Newhouse, a 19 year old transgender woman formerly a resident of Illinois, was shot and killed by her father; and

WHEREAS, according the Human Rights Campaign Foundation, at least 57 transgender or gender non-conforming people were fatally shot or killed by other violent means in 2021. The majority of the deaths were Black and Latinx people with the greatest numbers being Black, Trans women; and

WHEREAS, the American Medical Association has publicly described the level of violence against the transgender community as epidemic; and

WHEREAS, most medical experts, law enforcement officials, and community members have stated that data should assume to be incomplete given the misgendering of transgender people; and

WHEREAS, the National Center for Transgender Equality cites that one in five transgender people in the United States has been discriminated when seeking a home, and more than one in ten have been evicted from their homes, because of their gender identity. One in five transgender individuals have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives; and

WHEREAS, according to Lambda Legal, nearly one in six transgender Americans-and one in two black transgender people-has been to prison. Many of those individuals face discrimination by administrators and threats of sexual assault; and

WHEREAS, countless other barriers exist in the daily lives of transgender individuals including with Cook County government; and

WHEREAS, Cook County stands with transgender residents and there is still more work to do to provide gender-affirming services to transgender residents; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the Cook County Board of Commissioners request a convening of the Cook County Human Relations Committee to conduct a hearing regarding current protocols and future plans in serving the transgender community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the following Cook County offices appear at the hearing to report to the Board regarding this topic:

- Cook County Health
- Cook County Medical Examiners' Office
- Cook County Sheriff's Office
- Cook County Department of Human Resources
- Cook County State's Attorney's Office
- Cook County Justice Advisory Council
- Cook County Department of Human Rights and Ethics

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the reports, updates, and strategies will detail the separately elected officials, or County department's, offices', and/or bureaus individual and collaborative efforts to address this important and serious issue.