



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 14-3665, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

IN MEMORY OF THE HONORABLE JUDGE ANTHONY BURRELL

WHEREAS, Judge Anthony Burrell, a man whose inspirational life story of altered trajectories and accomplished leadership and service, died far too soon at age 52 after a long battle with cancer. Judge Burrell left behind countless friends, family and a community enriched for having known him; and

WHEREAS, Anthony Burrell was born on the west side of the city of Chicago where, at an early age he confronted issues of violence and was an eye-witness to many of the social pathologies and lack of opportunity associated with the poverty that exists there; and

WHEREAS, Anthony Burrell's exceptional talent revealed itself early in life. As a young student, his essay about Michele Clark won distinction and resulted in the naming of a new Chicago school, the Michele Clark Academic Preparatory Magnet High School, on Chicago's West Side in the heart of the South Austin Community. In 1974, Austin Middle School was renamed to honor the Chicago based journalist, who was killed in a plane crash in December 1972. Anthony Burrell's essay and award ceremony were featured on a nationally syndicated television show; and

WHEREAS, Anthony Burrell nearly succumbed to the pressure of street gangs; he dropped out of Austin High School as a freshman. However, shortly afterward, he completely changed the direction of his life. He sought and obtained his general equivalency diploma. Next, he pursued criminal justice classes at Malcolm X College and later graduated from Loyola University in Chicago; and

WHEREAS, while at Loyola, Anthony Burrell was, again recognized for academic ability; he received the Dean Charles Hart prize. The Hart Prize was established posthumously by Dr. Hart's colleagues in the English department at Loyola. It is given each year to a graduating senior who has excelled as a student of literature; and

WHEREAS, because Anthony Burrell had entirely changed the direction of his life and because of his exceptional academic abilities he was awarded a full scholarship at Cornell University Law School. During his time at Cornell, Burrell was a member of BLSA, the Black Law Student Association, and assisted other students of color with their legal studies and advanced the cause of black achievement; and

WHEREAS, from 1989 to 1994, Anthony Burrell worked as a Cook County prosecutor in the juvenile court system; and

WHEREAS, Anthony Burrell was first elected to be a Cook County Circuit Court judge in 2002 and won re-election in 2008. In 2009, the Illinois Committee for Honest Government presented him with the Distinguished Service award; and

WHEREAS, a natural and dedicated community leader, Mr. Burrell was concerned with violence prevention and was committed to making positive changes in the region. He was an organizer for the NAACP and worked at Maryville Academy, a home for troubled youth, as a resident adviser and counselor; and

WHEREAS, Judge Burrell was an effective and pragmatic problem solver. He never forgot the challenges of growing up in a community that routinely forces its young people to confront lethal danger. He crafted the "Safe Neighborhoods Action Plan" a comprehensive violence prevention plan to fight back to against Chicago's youth homicide crisis; and

WHEREAS, Judge Burrell fought a valiant battle against cancer. And, in much the same way as he had taken the lessons from his childhood on the west side to help the children who came after him, Judge Burrell found a way to assist others who battled with cancer. He was an advisory member of the Brad's Kid's Pediatric Cancer Foundation, a charity focusing on children with cancer; and

WHEREAS, Judge Burrell is survived by sisters, Pamela Burrell, and Lavette Bradford; his nieces, Tamika Burrell, Samara Wiley, Alicia Wiley and Jasmine Wiley; his nephew, Shaun Burrell, and eight grand-nieces and four grand-nephews; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of Cook County, on behalf of the 5.2 million residents of Cook County who he served dutifully, commemorates the extraordinary life of the Honorable Judge Anthony Burrell, and herewith expresses its sincere gratitude for the invaluable and innumerable contributions he has 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 the same be tendered to the family of the Honorable Judge Anthony Burrell.