



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 15-1105, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION HONORING THE OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF JULIE HAMOS, DIRECTOR OF THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTHCARE AND FAMILY SERVICES AND THANKING HER FOR HELPING THE COOK COUNTY HEALTH AND HOSPITAL SYSTEM

WHEREAS, as director of the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services, Julie Hamos has been an advocate and supporter of healthcare in Illinois. She worked tirelessly to insure that Illinois government was strong and smart enough to convert the noblest of aspirations into practical and sustainable realities that have immeasurably improved the delivery of healthcare to all in Illinois; and

WHEREAS, as director of the largest state agency in Illinois with a budget of nearly \$20 billion and with over 2,400 employees, Julie Hamos was a leader who was known as a champion of the poor and disabled in the face of huge cutbacks, bureaucratic hurdles and constricting deadlines; as a thoughtful proponent of programs to address social injustices and as a principled and innovative thinker who recognized that good health policy did not have to be at odds with good government. Julie Hamos was so frequently ahead of her time she came to be understood more as a statesman than a politician; and

WHEREAS, as director of the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services she was responsible for implementing Medicaid expansion under national healthcare reform and she worked in partnership with the Cook County Health and Hospital System to improve Cook County. Because of that successful expansion nearly one-hundred-thousand previously uninsured Cook County residents had early access to preventive and emergency services, mental health care and prescription drugs under national health care reform. Her term will inevitably be remembered for its launching of a major redesign of Medicaid with care coordination for Medicaid clients that has led to the financial stability of the Cook County Health and Hospital System; and

WHEREAS, a significant impetus behind Julie Hamos' achievement and exceptional empathy can be found in the story of her early life and emigration to the United States. Born in Budapest, Hungary to Holocaust survivors, seven-year-old Julie, her brother and parents escaped at the height of the Hungarian Revolution in 1956 and settled in Cleveland, Ohio. The courage and hard work necessary to adapt to a new country and culture made an imprint and guided her to an education and later a successful career dedicated to creating solutions to assist others who confronted struggles; and

WHEREAS, after receiving her law degree in 1975 from George Washington University, Julie Hamos was chosen to be the first staff attorney for a newly formed Subcommittee on Oversight of the U.S. House Committee on Ways and Means. In her early days she assisted with implementation of the nation's first Earned Income Tax Credit. Later, she became legislative and political action director for the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees where she focused on policy issues affecting working men and women; and

WHEREAS, Julie Hamos came to Illinois to advocate for social justice including the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment; and

WHEREAS, Julie Hamos was an advocate for groundbreaking laws; from 1981 to 1984, Hamos served as legislative counsel and policy advisor to then-State's Attorney Richard M. Daley, advocating for the first-ever laws and policies on domestic violence and sexual assault. She was appointed in 1984 as director of the child support division, with oversight of 300,000 child support cases; and

WHEREAS, in 1988, Hamos founded Julie E. Hamos & Associates, a public policy and community relations consulting

firm and was the Federal Monitor in various Teamster Elections and the Community Coordinator for Development of a Downtown Chicago Circulator Transit System; and

WHEREAS, prior to being selected by Governor Quinn to run the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Human Service, Julie Hamos was elected State Representative by the citizens of the 18th District. She was a distinguished member for over 11 years. When she began her work in Springfield she brought with her to the office nearly two decades of experience in public interest policies and community issues as a public interest attorney, legislative counsel, community relations consultant and advocate; and

WHEREAS, while a member of the General Assembly, she served as chief sponsor for such key health initiatives as the Illinois Health Information Exchange and Technology Act; the Consumer's Guide to Health Care; the Children's Mental Health Act; universal hearing screening for all newborns; and the Older Adults Services Act; and

WHEREAS, Julie Hamos' passion and visionary thinking regarding transit lead to major improvements to transit in Illinois. She also delivered the direction and leadership that created superior alternatives to nursing homes for seniors and the disabled and that ushered in the passage of rental housing subsidies that encouraged innovative and affordable housing options; and

WHEREAS, while being consistently regarded as a hard worker and dedicated team player, Julie Hamos' exceptional abilities have singled her out for distinction. In addition to many other recognitions and awards she has received the "Excellence in Public Service Award" by Motorola Solutions Foundation, Norwegian American Hospital Innovative and Breakthrough Leadership Award, Equal Justice Under Law Business and Professional People for the Public Trust Award, Paul Simon Courage in Public Service Award, Threshold Hero Award, Chicago Women in Trades Award, AARP Senior Independence Award, American Public Transportation Association Local Distinguished Service Award, Illinois Environmental Council Leadership Award, Aaron L. Brown Memorial Public Service Award, she was also named by the Chicago Tribune Business Section as one of the "People to Watch"; and

WHEREAS, Julie Hamos has the rare distinction of excelling in each of her pursuits and for which she was regularly honored. She was named a fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government for Senior Executives in State and Local Government and named "Top Legislator" by over 50 organizations. Crain's Chicago Business singled her out by including her in their "25 Women to Watch"; 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 takes great pleasure in honoring and celebrating Julie Hamos and herewith honors her not only for bettering the lives of the citizens of Cook County but the entire state of Illinois; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that January 29, 2015, Julie Hamos' birthday, be proclaimed Julie Hamos Day in Cook County; 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 Julie Hamos.