



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 15-1927, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE, MANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND MEMORY OF THE HONORABLE WILLIAM “NED” LAUTERBACH

WHEREAS, William “Ned” Lauterbach, an extraordinary man and visionary leader who was dedicated to social justice, family and community died at the age of 92. He has left behind a devoted family, countless friends and a community profoundly enriched for having known him; and

WHEREAS, Ned Lauterbach was born to American parents in Warsaw, Poland, where his father was on assignment for the YMCA helping resettle World War I refugees. When Ned was two, the family moved to Kewanee, Illinois, where Ned grew up and graduated from high school; and

WHEREAS, Ned Lauterbach grew up during the Depression, for recreation the family spent their spare time camping and traveling to National Parks all over the country. The experience left him with a life-long love of the outdoors and a reverence for America’s system of public lands, a love he eagerly shared and passed on to his children; and

WHEREAS, Ned Lauterbach attended Antioch College where he met his wife of 67 years, Alberta. Ned and Alberta spent a lifetime being devoted to one another. She was every bit his equal in her accomplishments and contributions; her death in 2012 devastated him; and

WHEREAS, his years spent at Antioch College framed Ned Lauterbach’s world view. He noted on more than one occasion that his time there had a major influence on the direction that he took in life. He credited Antioch College’s externship program for “opening his eyes” to the shocking realities of segregation; and

WHEREAS, Ned and his wife Alberta raised five children, first in the Chicago neighborhood of Rogers Park and later in the city of Evanston where they became treasured community leaders and neighbors; and

WHEREAS, Lauterbach’s first job was with Armour Research Foundation. He worked there while completing his graduate studies in engineering at the Illinois Institute of Technology. Later, he worked as a sales manager and engineer for Dole Refrigerating Company, where he earned several patents for designs of truck refrigeration units. Later when Dole left the region, he worked for Douglas & Lomason. He belonged to the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineers; and

WHEREAS, Ned Lauterbach was a tireless community volunteer and leader. He was president of the Y’s Men’s Club at the High Ridge YMCA in Rogers Park. He ran the organization’s annual Christmas tree sale, and got the entire family involved in YMCA activities, earning them “Family of the Year” in 1960.

WHEREAS, Ned Lauterbach was first elected alderman to represent the Third Ward in the Evanston City Council in 1975. As alderman, Ned Lauterbach helped create the city’s first Department of Human Services. During his years in the Evanston City Council, he and his fellow aldermen guided the community through difficult and weighty issues - race

relations, development, zoning, budgeting, condo conversion, social services, and rent control; and

WHEREAS, Ned Lauterbach served in the Evanston City Council from 1975 to 1983. It was his role as alderman of the Third Ward that gave him the opportunity for what he would later call the proudest achievement of his life. The city was about to sell off Noyes Elementary School to private developers; enrollment in the city had declined and the building was deemed beyond repair. He proposed renovating the historic building and turning it into a community arts center. Ned worked tirelessly to bring in the money necessary to make this vision a reality. Now, 45 years later, the Noyes Cultural Arts Center remains a vibrant hub of the arts in Evanston; and

WHEREAS, Alderman Lauterbach used his engineering and analytic skills to help the city tackle another of its enduring problems, flooding. Ned Lauterbach was appointed the first chairman of Evanston's Flood and Pollution Control Commission which oversaw a \$200 million public works project that completely overhauled the city sewer system. He headed the commission for all eight years of his two terms as alderman and continued to serve for 17 more years as a citizen member. After almost 30 years, when the commission was dissolved, the City of Evanston honored him with a commemorative plaque; and

WHEREAS, after opting against a third term, Ned Lauterbach continued to serve his community working with numerous community organizations. He served on the board of Youth Organizations Umbrella (Y.O.U) and Housing Options for the Mentally Ill in Evanston; and

WHEREAS, Ned Lauterbach forged strong bonds with his fellow aldermen that outlasted their terms of office and spanned decades. They gathered once a month until Ned was well into his 90's, meeting socially to talk about everything from Evanston politics to their grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Ned and his wife were ardent Democrats and are widely credited with founding the Democratic Party of Evanston, one of the foremost Democratic organizations in the state; and

WHEREAS, Ned Lauterbach was a legendary outdoorsman who had a daily three-mile walk regimen that he maintained well into his 80s. He was a backpacking enthusiast who took dozens of trips with family and friends over the years, exploring every major mountain range in the country; and

WHEREAS, because of their lifetime of commitment to the community, Ned and his wife were recognized in 2010 with an Evanston City Council resolution designating the 700 block of Forest Avenue as "Lauterbach Way."; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the community he loved and served Ned Lauterbach will be sorely missed by his five children, Steve (Cathy Hobson), Stew (Barb Swary), Chris, Katherine "Kacki" (Rick Grant), Amy (James Yurchenco) and his four grandchildren, Claire Grant, Eric Lauterbach, Jack Grant of Boulder and Nathan Lauterbach; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Commissioners of Cook County that the Board on behalf of the nearly the 5.2 million residents of Cook County commemorates the life of William "Ned" Lauterbach, and herewith expresses its sincere gratitude for the invaluable contributions he has made to the Citizens of Cook County, Illinois; and does hereby offer its deepest condolences and most heartfelt sympathy to the family, and many friends of Ned Lauterbach and joins them in sorrow at the loss of this remarkable and accomplished civil servant and community leader; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this text be spread upon the official proceedings of this Honorable Body and a suitable copy of same be tendered to the family of William "Ned" Lauterbach that his memory may be so honored.