



# Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street  
Chicago, IL

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 15-2498, **Version:** 1

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### PROPOSED RESOLUTION

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF REV. WILLIE T. BARROW

**WHEREAS**, almighty God, in His infinite wisdom, has called one of our spiritual leaders, Rev. Willie T. Barrow from our midst; and

**WHEREAS**, Rev. Barrow was born in Burton, Texas, to Nelson and Octavia Taplin. At the young age of 12, in 1936, she organized and led her first demonstration when she confronted a bus driver and demanded that all students be allowed to ride the school bus regardless of race; and

**WHEREAS**, at age sixteen, Rev. Barrow moved to Portland, Oregon, to attend Warner Pacific Theological Seminary. It was here that she organized one of the first African-American Churches of God; and where during World War II she worked as a welder at the Kaiser Shipyards in Swan Island, Washington; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1943 Rev. Barrow and her husband, Clyde Barrow, moved to Chicago where she began studies at Moody Bible Institute and served as a youth minister at Langley Avenue Church of God; and

**WHEREAS**, Rev. Barrow began her civil rights activism in the 1950's when she became a field organizer for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). In this capacity she worked alongside Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. to organize demonstrators whom participated in marches and sit-ins across the country including, the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom and the 1965 March from Selma to Montgomery. Rev. Barrow was among the first to seek Dr. King's assistance in Chicago; and

**WHEREAS**, Rev. Barrow was a fervent activist, she also lent her organizing talents to the LGBT community, she fought for HIV/AIDs victims; and advocated for fair labor practices. She remained vocal about women's rights, Chicago gun violence, and changes to the Voting Rights Act until her passing. She also co-pastored The Vernon Park Church of God; and

**WHEREAS**, Rev. Barrow was preceded in death by her husband, Clyde Barrow and her son, Keith Barrow; and

**WHEREAS**, Rev. Willie T. Barrow's memory will be forever cherished in the hearts of those individuals whom she touched and loved; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the President and the Cook County Board of Commissioners, on behalf of the residents of Cook County, do extend their deepest condolences and most heartfelt sympathy to the family as well as to the many friends and loved ones of Rev. Willie T. Barrow.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that a suitable copy of this Resolution be tendered to the loved ones of Rev. Willie T. Barrow as a means of communicating our deep respect for Rev. Willie T. Barrow's contribution to the spiritual life and championing issues of equality and fairness for the people of Cook County.