



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 15-2987, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

PUERTO RICAN ARTS ALLIANCE

WHEREAS, founded in 1998, Puerto Rican Arts Alliance was created to increase awareness, knowledge and access to the arts by its immediate Puerto Rican community. Initially serving the Northwest Side of Chicago, PRAA's service area expanded to include Metropolitan Chicago. PRAA now draws legions of visitors and artists from the East to West coasts; and

WHEREAS, spearheaded by Carlos Hernandez, Founder and Executive Director, PRAA remains dedicated to preserving Puerto Rican culture by upholding their traditions, advocating their arts and administering educational opportunities in these arts, encouraging the cultivation of pride in the heritage of future generations to come; and

WHEREAS, guided by four core principles of: preserving and promoting the traditions, culture and art of Puerto Rico, advocacy of intercultural understanding and appreciation, reinforcement of Puerto Rican intergenerational understanding and instilling ethnic pride within the Puerto Rican community, PRAA remains dedicated to promoting the richness and diversity found in its native Taíno Indian, Spanish and West African roots; and

WHEREAS, now a major broker of Puerto Rican arts, through performances, art exhibits and other arts-related educational programs, PRAA has become a beacon to hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans in Chicago. PRAA strives to secure donations so that their high quality, impactful programs remain free to all underserved youth; and

WHEREAS, remaining true to their core principles, PRAA students may participate in the Latino Music Project, teaching students how to play violin, the cuatro or the Spanish guitar. Historical and cultural traditions are taught in the Taíno Project and The Three Kings Project. Experimentation with various types of media and art forms can be learned in the Studio Arts Program. An integral part of PRAA, Carlos Hernandez recently completed PRAA's \$2.5 million capital campaign drive to establish and expand the Puerto Rican/Latino Cultural Center in the Logan Square/Avondale community; and

WHEREAS, Carlos Hernandez remains a key leader in cultural programming, fundraising, office operations, board development and volunteer recruitment. He directs El Archivo, an archival effort aimed at documenting the historical migration contribution of the Puerto Rican community, guides its Taíno Project and the exhibition and studio arts programs as well as produces PRAA's annual Emmy Award Winning National Cuatro Festival; and

WHEREAS, PRAA strongly encourages and advocates cross cultural connections among other ethnic groups and diverse audiences throughout the city. Utilizing their ingenious and innovative programs as vehicles to do so, PRAA has partnered with Chicago Public Schools and Chicago Park Districts to offer their music program in 15 Chicago Public Schools and the Humboldt Park Field House. PRAA has served over 5,000 CPS students to date. Other notable collaborations have also taken place with the National Museum of Mexican Art, DAMA International, The Field Museum and University of Illinois at Chicago.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the President and board of the Cook County Board of Commissioners does hereby acknowledge the contemporary programming, developmental and cultural contributions made by Puerto Rican Arts Alliance and Carlos Hernandez in honor of National Hispanic Heritage Month; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this text be spread upon the official proceedings of this Honorable Body and a

ceremonial copy of this resolution be presented to Carlos Hernandez, Founder and Executive Director of Puerto Rican Arts Alliance.