



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

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PROPOSED RESOLUTION

HONORING THE EXCEPTIONAL LIFE OF PHILIP KALAYIL, CHAMPION OF THE INDIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY, EDUCATOR AND DEDICATED HUMANITARIAN

WHEREAS, Philip Kalayil, an exceptional man whose life was devoted to family, faith and improving the community died at the age of 86 leaving behind a devoted family, countless friends and a community profoundly enriched for having known him; and

WHEREAS, Philip Kalayil represented the best qualities of citizenship and humanity through his tireless work building bridges in the Asian-American community and educating people. He will long be remembered for his work as a leader and organizer of the Indian-American community; and

WHEREAS, Philip Kalayil was born in the village of Keezhoor in the Indian state of Kerala. In 1956, he came to Chicago to study at Loyola University, where an uncle, a priest, was also studying. In 1959, his wife, Annamma, joined him in Chicago, briefly leaving their children in India. In 1964, she and their daughter Ann, who was born in Chicago, returned to India. Kalayil followed in 1965 to teach and be the librarian at St. John's Medical College in Bangalore. In 1967 Philip and Annamma decided to make the United States their home and to raise their family in Chicago. The two raised extraordinarily accomplished children who have each continued the family's proud legacy of commitment to community service; and

WHEREAS, Philip Kalayil's career was multidimensional but shared a common theme with his community service; in each he guided people to achieve their potential. He taught at a local business college briefly before going to work as a social worker for Catholic Charities in Chicago. In 1970, he went to work for the city of Chicago in its Department of Human Services. He was assistant director of emergency services with the department when he retired; and

WHEREAS, Philip Kalayil worked to bridge gaps between Asian-American groups divided by ethnicity, religion, and socio-economic levels. He brought those diverse groups together and helped them thrive and encouraged them to become active citizens. He is widely credited with having successfully organized an Indian Independence Day celebration in which over one thousand people participated. The success of the event was a turning point and helped launch the Indo-American Democratic Organization which is still going strong, decades later; and

WHEREAS, Philip Kalayil was a respected community leader throughout his life. His deeply held religious beliefs led him to establish the Indian Catholic Association of America. He helped start the Indo-American Democratic Organization and the Asian Forum to empower people to register to vote and to make their opinions heard. His wisdom, compassion and political aptitude made him a major force for good in the community; and

WHEREAS, Philip Kalayil's many accomplishments were routinely singled out for distinction and appreciation. His leadership and bridge-building was recognized by the Association for Asian American Studies, when they awarded him their Heart of Asian America Community Award in 2008; and

WHEREAS, the impact felt by the loss of Philip Kalayil is significant and has left a tremendous void in the community. His loss will be felt most acutely by his wife Annamma and his children: Tom, Sales and Ann, his sisters, Sister St. John Kalayil, Sister Dominic Savio Kalayil and Tresia; eight grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren; 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 commemorates the extraordinary life of Philip Kalayil, and herewith expresses its sincere gratitude for the invaluable 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 Philip Kalayil that his memory may be so honored.