



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

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PROPOSED RESOLUTION

CONGRATULATING THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF MEXICAN ART (NMMA) ON ITS 30TH ANNIVERSARY

WHEREAS, In 1982, Carlos Tortolero organized a group of fellow educators and founded the Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum, which opened its doors in 1987; and

WHEREAS, the Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum aimed to fill a void in Chicago: the lack of a place to present Mexican art and history and to celebrate the culture so vital to the Pilsen neighborhood, Chicago's Mexican community, and the city at large; and

WHEREAS, the goal was to establish an arts and cultural organization committed to accessibility, education and social justice all while also providing a positive influence for the local Mexican community, especially since many other art institutions did not address Mexican art; and

WHEREAS, over the years, the institution has grown, its audience has broadened, and its reach now extends across the United States and beyond; and

WHEREAS, to support this evolution, in 2001, the museum expanded to a 48,000 square-foot, state-of-the-art facility in the heart of Pilsen and in 2006 they unveiled a new name, the National Museum of Mexican Art (NMMA); and

WHEREAS, while the NMMA presence has grown, it remain true to the founding mission: *To showcase the beauty and richness of Mexican culture by sponsoring events and presenting exhibitions that exemplify the majestic variety of visual and performing arts in the Mexican culture; to develop, conserve and preserve a significant permanent collection of Mexican art; to encourage the professional development of Mexican artists; and, to offer arts-education programs; and*

WHEREAS, today, the NMMA stands out as one of the most prominent first-voice institutions for Mexican art and culture in the United States and is home to one of the country's largest Mexican art collections, including more than 10,000 seminal pieces from ancient Mexico to the present; and

WHEREAS, as the first Latino museum accredited by American Alliance of Museums, the NMMA recognizes the unique responsibility to present exhibitions of artistic and cultural value and to deliver high-quality education that demonstrates the breadth and depth of Mexican art, culture and history; and

WHEREAS, twenty of the NMMA's exhibitions have traveled across the United States and six have traveled to Mexico. Landmark exhibitions that have traveled include *The Art of the Other Mexico* (1992), *Maria Izquierdo* (1996), *The African Presence in Mexico* (2006), and *Frida's Contemporaries: Women Artists of Modern Mexico* (2007); and

WHEREAS, the NMMA also hosts cultural programs- including symposia, theater, dance, music, authors and performance companies- that share the rich diversity of the Mexican culture; and

WHEREAS, the NMMA believes in art as a bridge between communities, and that art in education expands minds and breaks down barriers while preserving cultural heritage; and

WHEREAS, the NMMA offers a wide range of educational programs for children and families, teens, school groups, and educators and its art exhibitions, performance arts, and educational programs are experienced by more than 130,000 visitors annually, including 58,000 K-12 students; and

WHEREAS, the NMMA is also a national leader and mentor for cultural institutions and community organizations, and for its advocacy of “first voice” and cultural equity issues; and

WHEREAS, from building a world-class institution in Chicago’s largely Mexican American neighborhood of Pilsen to creating groundbreaking exhibitions and forming partnerships with institutions in Mexico, the NMMA has a history of being bold and activist in its approach and reach.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cook County Board of Commissioners hereby congratulates the National Museum of Mexican Art (NMMA) on its 30-year legacy and anniversary; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this text be spread upon the proceedings of this Honorable Body and that a suitable copy of this resolution be presented to the National Museum of Mexican Art (NMMA).