



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 18-6419, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

HONORING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LINCOLN PARK ZOO

WHEREAS, The Lincoln Park Zoo was established in 1868 with the gift of a two pairs of swans from New York City's Central Park; and

WHEREAS, Starting in 1888 Cyrus DeVry supervised the construction of new structures to house many new animal species, including monkeys and elephants; and

WHEREAS, The first three decades of the 20th Century saw construction of Café Brauer, Bird House, Lion House and Primate House, all landmark structures that grace the grounds of the zoo today; and

WHEREAS, Marlin Perkins became Zoo Director in 1945, bringing the animals and their individual stories into homes through NBC's *Zoo Parade*; and

WHEREAS, The year 1959 saw the foundation of The Lincoln Park Zoological Society by philanthropists and civic leaders; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Lester Fisher became Zoo Director in 1962, beginning a 30-year tenure that oversaw the society raise over \$400 million for new exhibits and improved animal care; and

WHEREAS, In 1976 the most advanced habitat for great apes opened, which was later named for Dr. Fisher. Kevin J. Bell was also hired in 1976 as Curator of Birds at Lincoln Park Zoo; and

WHEREAS, With just two staff members the Conservation and Science department launched in 1989, forming the foundation of one of the nation's largest and most effective wildlife conservation and science programs; and

WHEREAS, In 1992, Kevin J. Bell was promoted to Assistant Director; and in 1993, was appointed Director at Lincoln Park Zoo; and

WHEREAS, The year 1995 saw the Lincoln Park Zoo and Chicago Park District enter a 30-year agreement shifting the zoo to self-governance, the same year saw the Zoo Society's Board of Trustee's adopting full-time management of zoo operations; and

WHEREAS, After the zoo was privatized in 1995, Kevin J. Bell was also named President and CEO of the Lincoln Park Zoological Society, which manages and operates Lincoln Park Zoo; and

WHEREAS, 1995 launched the five-year "Heart of the Zoo" campaign, raising over \$50 million for new and renovated animal habitats including the Regenstein Small Mammal-Reptile House; and

WHEREAS, The Davee Center for Epidemiology was created in 2001 to bridge the gap between population biology and veterinary medicine through the study of epidemiology, and was expanded in 2005 to incorporate endocrinology research, making it the Davee Center for Epidemiology and Endocrinology; and

WHEREAS, the first decade of the 21st century saw the opening of three major new exhibits in the Regenstein Center for African Apes, the Regenstein African Journey and the renovated Pritzker Family Children's Zoo; and

WHEREAS, in 2008 the Urban Wildlife Institute was founded, becoming the most comprehensive urban wildlife conservation and science program in the country and one that has been adopted by over ten cities nationwide; and

WHEREAS, The year 2011 saw the Zoo enter into a partnership with the City of Chicago and the Chicago Park District to unveil the Nature Boardwalk, a complete refurbishment and restoration of The South Pond; and

WHEREAS, 2016 saw the announcement of the \$125 million "The Pride of Chicago" campaign which has already resulted in the opening of the Regenstein Macaque Forest, the Walter Family Arctic Tundra and the Robert & Mayari Pritzker Penguin Cove; and

WHEREAS, In 2017 the Zoo unveiled plans for its new visitor center to better serve guests as the Zoo welcomes the 3.7 million annual visitors; and

WHEREAS, In 2018 the Zoo announced one of the most ambitious capital projects in their 150 year-history as they conduct a complete overhaul of the Kovler Lion House; and

WHEREAS, The Lincoln Park Zoo remains the nation's only privately managed free admission zoo in the United States of America; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cook County Board of Commissioners does hereby acknowledge and appreciate the importance of the Lincoln Park Zoo on the cultural fabric of our City and County, and congratulate the Lincoln Park Zoo on their 150th anniversary.