



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 18-6780, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

IN HONOR OF PONNI ARUNKUMAR, MD, FCAP, CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER

WHEREAS, on July 1, 2003, Dr. Ponni Arunkumar was hired as a Fellow Pathologist and subsequently became an Assistant Medical Examiner; and

WHEREAS, in September 2012, Dr. Arunkumar became the Deputy Chief Medical Examiner for Cook County; and

WHEREAS, on July 13, 2016, Dr. Arunkumar was appointed the Chief Medical Examiner for Cook County; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Ponni Arunkumar graduated from Bangalore Medical School, in India. She is Board certified in Anatomic and Clinical Pathology and in Forensic Pathology. She has 15 years of forensic pathology experience, has conducted close to 6,500 postmortem examinations, and testified in court and depositions over 150 times. She teaches at RUSH University, University of Illinois at Chicago, and Northwestern University. She has presented at various national conferences and published articles in the field of forensic pathology. She is a member of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, the National Association of Medical Examiners, the College of American Pathologists, and the American Society for Clinical Pathology.

WHEREAS, Dr. Arunkumar was recognized for her efforts in organ and tissue donation by receiving the Gift of Hope 2017 Lifesaving Partners Award; and

WHEREAS, in 2017 she was recognized with an Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties (NACo) for a Medical Examiner online data portal that provides up-to-date information about Cook County's deaths, including those caused by gun violence and the opioid epidemic and;

WHEREAS, Dr. Arunkumar hosted the first Missing Persons Day in Illinois to help those with missing friends and family have the ability to submit DNA samples, medical records, pictures and other records to aide in the search of their loved ones; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of Medical Examiner's (NAME) is the national professional organization of physician medical examiners, medicolegal death investigators and death investigation system administrators who perform the official duties of the medicolegal investigation of deaths of public interest in the United States.

WHEREAS, NAME serves as a resource to individuals seeking to improve medicolegal death investigation by continually working to develop and upgrade national standards for death investigation. The published NAME Standards for a Modern Medicolegal Investigative System provide a model for jurisdictions seeking to improve death investigation. NAME aims to involve competent professional medicolegal death investigators in every jurisdiction in the United States.

WHEREAS, NAME representatives participate and serve in an advisory capacity to federal, public and private organizations on projects of mutual interest. As the official specialty association of physician medical examiners, the NAME promotes its vision of competent national death investigation from a seat in the House of Delegates of the American Medical Association.

WHEREAS, NAME serves as the national forum for medical death investigators and system administrators for the

discussion and dissemination of such information. NAME further encourages members to participate in the training of law enforcement officers, allied health professionals, paramedical personnel and others who interface in death cases.

WHEREAS, Dr. Arunkumar has been a leader at the Cook County Medical Examiner's Office and played an instrumental role in the office receiving national accreditation in January 2016 by ensuring that new policies and procedures were implemented, raising expectations of employee performance, upgrading operations and technology, and bringing a culture of change to the office. As a result, the Cook County Medical Examiner's Office is now recognized as one of the premier institutions for death investigations in the nation.

WHEREAS, Dr. Arunkumar was elected to the National Association of Medical Examiner's Board on October 16, 2018.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the President and the Board of Commissioners of Cook County do hereby extend their gratitude to Dr. Ponni Arunkumar for her accomplishments and continued contributions and leadership that she provides as Chief Medical Examiner for Cook County; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a suitable copy of this Resolution be presented to Dr. Ponni Arunkumar as a small token of appreciation for her continued service to Cook County.