



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 19-1410, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

HONORING TIMUEL “TIM” D. BLACK

WHEREAS, on December 7, 1918, Timuel “Tim” D. Black was born in Birmingham, Alabama; and

WHEREAS, at eight- months old, Tim became part of the first wave of the Great Migration when his family moved to the Bronzeville community of Chicago, Illinois; and

WHEREAS, he attended Burke Elementary School and graduated from DuSable High School, where some of his classmates included Johnson Publishing Co. founder John H. Johnson and jazz musician Nat King Cole; and

WHEREAS, in 1941, after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Tim joined the army and fought in the Normandy Invasion and the Battle of the Bulge, two of the bloodiest battles of World War II; and

WHEREAS, Tim has received four battle stars for his military service and on December 9, 2018 was awarded The French Legion of Honor Medal, France’s highest honor, by the Consul General of France in Chicago; and

WHEREAS, after watching African Americans fight and die in the war, and seeing first-hand the atrocities of the Buchenwald concentration camp, Tim returned to a segregated Chicago and committed to actively fight for social justice; and

WHEREAS, Tim enrolled in college and graduated from Roosevelt University with a bachelor’s degree in sociology in 1952 and went on to earn a master’s degree from the University of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, Tim taught for 30 years at the City Colleges of Chicago and for many more years in Chicago Public Schools; and

WHEREAS, Tim is a pioneer in the independent black political movement and was one of the first African Americans to challenge the “Regular Democratic Organization”; and

WHEREAS, Tim’s first experience as an organizer came in his early thirties when he helped organize the “Don’t Spend Your Money Where You Can’t Work” campaign, which led to the formation of the Negro Retail Clerks Union; and

WHEREAS, Tim has been a marcher for civil rights, an advisor to activist Martin Luther King, Jr., and an advisor to many elected officials including Mayor Harold Washington and former President Barack Obama; and

WHEREAS, Tim received an honorary doctoral degree from Roosevelt University in 2008, and in 2012 was awarded the Benton Medal for Distinguished Public Service from the University of Chicago, the first person of color ever to receive this award; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, the City of Chicago honored Tim with the inaugural Chicago Champion of Freedom award in recognition of his work in the civil rights movement both locally and nationally; and

WHEREAS, Tim has published two volumes of oral histories, *Bridges of Memory: Chicago's First Wave of Black Migration* and *Bridges of Memory: Chicago's Second Generation of Black Migration*, which chronicles black Chicago history from the 1920s to the present, and *Sacred Ground: The Chicago Streets of Timuel Black*, which chronicles the life of Timuel D. Black; and

WHEREAS, on December 7, 2018, Timuel Black turned 100 years old, and to mark his 100 years of life, the University of Chicago's Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture presented "*The Life and Times of Timuel D. Black: A Centenary Symposium*", which was held at the Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts on Saturday, December 8, 2018; and

WHEREAS, as part of his centenary celebration, Tim was honored during a birthday gala at the South Shore Cultural Center on December 9, 2018, with suite of music commissioned in his honor, composed and arranged by Robert Irving III and performed by the Sonic Portraits Orchestra: "*Sound Pictures of a Century-The Living Legacy of Timuel D. Black*"; and

WHEREAS, Timuel "Tim" D. Black is not only an author, political and civil rights activist but a great mentor to many throughout Cook County; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the President and the Cook County Board of Commissioners, on behalf of the residents of Cook County, honors Timuel "Tim" D. Black and praise his essential contributions to people of Cook County and wish him a Happy Birthday 100th Birthday.