



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 19-3707, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION HONORING SPENCER LEAK, SR. AND THE NEHEMIAH PROJECT

WHEREAS, Spencer Leak, Sr. was born April 15, 1937, to pioneering Chicago mortician A.R. Leak, who opened Unity Funeral Home in Chicago in 1933 and A.R. Leak Funeral Chapels in 1938; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Leak and his three brothers grew up near 37th and State Streets, attended Raymond Elementary School, and graduated from Hyde Park High School in 1956 and went on to attend Wilson Junior College, and graduated from Worsham College of Mortuary Science in 1959; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Leak served in the United States Army and later became involved in the Civil Rights Movement; In 1964, he joined 10,000 activists led by his father and Reverend Clay Evans to protest the racially segregated Oak Woods Cemetery eventually integrating it; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Leak is a lifelong resident and supporter of Chicago, a second generation in the Funeral Business for Leak and Sons Funeral Homes for which he serves as Funeral Director and President, and his sons are the 3rd generation and his grandchildren are the 4th generation; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Leak has been married for 50 years to Henrietta Leak, is the father of three and grandfather of 6; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Leak was a former Director of Cook County Corrections, where he worked to rehabilitate inmates and give them a start on the path to success; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Leak has a long history as a concerned philanthropist and community activist, and provides a forum for religious, civic and political issues to be discussed every Sunday on the radio broadcast named after the book he authored entitled "It's Time Truth Speaks; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Leak is a recipient of a multitude of Humanitarian Awards in support of the work he has done to support families across the city and consistently donates services to families who cannot afford them; and

WHEREAS, at 82 years old, Spencer Leak, Sr. has stated, "*He does not want his legacy to be that he helped bury the young people of Chicago. He wants it to be that Spencer Leak, Sr. did something to try and save their lives*"; and

WHEREAS, responding to the great distress and reproach facing his native home, Nehemiah of the Bible was told that the walls of his city were broken down and the gates were on fire, which prompted him to take action; and

WHEREAS, just as Nehemiah in times past, Mr. Leak is prepared to lead the charge in partnership with the broader faith-based leadership to address a constant dilemma facing his beloved community, in this case gun violence and senseless deaths of our children and to restore a sense of safety to our seniors; and

WHEREAS, the Nehemiah Project is the passion of Spencer Leak Sr. and the Nehemiah Project Event will take place this Thursday May 23, 2019 at the House of Hope, 115th & the Bishop Ford Freeway; and

WHEREAS, at this event there will be a launch of a series of actions and initiatives to address the ills of our city over the

coming summer months. Attendees will include faith leaders, national personalities, elected city officials, victims and families of gun violence and the keynote speaker will be Bishop Charles E. Blake Sr., Presiding Bishop, Church of God in Christ of Los Angeles, CA; and

WHEREAS, the musical lineup will feature, Fred Hammond, Kierra Sheard, Charles Jenkins, Walt Whitman and the Soul Chicago, many more local artists and the event is free to all families of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, hosting the Nehemiah Project at his own cost, the Mr. Leak is hopeful the concert will promote the coming together of Chicago against violence;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the President and Members of the Cook County Board of Commissioners proudly honor Spencer Leak Sr. for his committed service to the community, the City of Chicago and Cook County; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, we wish much success for the upcoming Nehemiah Project Event; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, this text be spread upon the official proceedings of this Honorable Body and that a suitable copy be presented to Spencer Leak, Sr. as a symbol of our respect and esteem.