



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 19-3974, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

HONORING THE LIFE AND CAREER OF WILLIAM “BILLY” BONAPARTE, JR.

WHEREAS, William “Billy” Bonaparte, Jr. was called home to be with the Lord on May 25, 2019; and

WHEREAS, Billy Bonaparte, Jr. was born on December 11, 1942 in Chicago, Illinois; and

WHEREAS, Billy Bonaparte, Jr. was the second oldest of six children and accepted Christ at an early age; and

WHEREAS, during his childhood, Billy Bonaparte, Jr.’s father, William Bonaparte, Sr., instilled into him a strong work ethic. Billy also developed a deep understanding of the world through his love of reading and books; and

WHEREAS, Billy Bonaparte, Jr. completed high school and then entered the U.S. Army. During this time, he proudly served as a Field Engineer; and

WHEREAS, after his military service, Billy Bonaparte, Jr. began his career working as the first African American PBX Installer at Illinois Bell. He led a successful career at Illinois Bell and then AT&T. Billy was promoted to multiple managerial and executive level positions until his retirement from Corporate America in 1986; and

WHEREAS, shortly after leaving Corporate America, Billy Bonaparte, Jr. created Bonaparte Connections, a company that supplied communication connectivity services. He led Bonaparte Connections until 1991 and then formed Bonaparte Connections. Under his leadership, Bonaparte Connections became the largest African American owned electrical contractor in Chicago; and

WHEREAS, true to his Chicago roots, Billy Bonaparte, Jr. was a champion for diversity and inclusion, opening doors for many African Americans in the business community; and

WHEREAS, Billy Bonaparte, Jr. was recognized for his professional accomplishments from Who’s Who in Chicago Business, Chicago United’s Leaders of Color, Ernest & Young’s Entrepreneur of the Year, and Minority Enterprise Development Council Award. He was inducted into the Entrepreneurs Hall of Fame by the University of Illinois at Chicago and recognized by Crain’s Chicago Business as the 24th Largest Minority Owned Business in Chicago; and

WHEREAS, Billy Bonaparte, Jr. believed in the value of education and served as one of the founding board members of ACE Technical Charter High School. His generous gift of \$250,000 led to the creation of a state-of-the-art library and media center. He also was instrumental in reconstructing his former elementary school Gillespie Elementary library. The library was renamed “William Bonaparte, Jr. Library” in his honor; and

WHEREAS, Billy Bonaparte, Jr.’s most significant accomplishment was the special relationship that he held with his children, grandchildren, and great grandchild; and

WHEREAS, Billy Bonaparte Jr. was an avid photographer and travel who enjoyed food, art, jazz, and music; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of Cook County, on behalf of the 5.2 million residents of Cook County takes great pleasure in honoring and celebrating William “Billy” Bonaparte, Jr.’s life

and his many contributions bettering the lives of and citizens of Cook County, Illinois; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a suitable copy of this Resolution be spread upon the official proceedings of this Honorable Body and that an official copy of the same be tendered to the family of William “Billy” Bonaparte, Jr.