



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 19-4269, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

CELEBRATING THE HONORABLE KIMBERLY A. LIGHTFORD AS THE FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN FEMALE ILLINOIS STATE SENATE MAJORITY LEADER

WHEREAS, Senator Kimberly A. Lightford was born in Chicago, Illinois on May 10, 1968; and

WHEREAS, Senator Kimberly A. Lightford was raised in Maywood, Illinois and graduated with a bachelor's degree in Public Communications from Western Illinois University and a master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Illinois Springfield; and

WHEREAS, prior to being elected to public office, Senator Kimberly A. Lightford gained extensive management experience working as a Trustee for the Village of Maywood and for State of Illinois departments such as the Illinois Department of Central Management Services, the Illinois Department of Corrections and the Illinois Secretary of State's office; and

WHEREAS, in 1998, Senator Kimberly A. Lightford became the youngest African American female elected to the Illinois State Senate representing the 4th District. Senator Lightford has become a vocal champion for promoting quality education, advocating for quality healthcare, and providing support for working families; and

WHEREAS, Senator Kimberly A. Lightford became Assistant Majority Leader in 2009 and enhanced her role as an advocate for education reform. Senator Lightford has served on the Senate Education Committee as either a sitting member, Vice Chair or Chairman. Her expertise positioned her as a lead negotiator on the legislation that established stronger methods of evaluating teachers and tracking student progress; and

WHEREAS, on January 9, 2019, Senator Kimberly A. Lightford was appointed as the Illinois State Senate Majority Leader, making her the first African American female to hold the position and among the highest-ranking elected officials in state government; and

WHEREAS, Senator Kimberly A. Lightford currently serves as Chair of the Assignments Committee and a member on Committees such as the Committee of the Whole, Education, Energy and Public Utilities, Executive, and Executive Appointments. She is also the Sub-Chairperson for the Special Committees on Government Operations and Charter Schools and a member on the Special Committees on Supplier Diversity and Oversight Medicaid Management Care; and

WHEREAS, due to her leadership, Senator Kimberly A. Lightford has helped to pass laws that provides universal preschool programs and makes sure that all children start school at six years old. Senator Lightford has also improved the safety of children by providing specialized bullying prevention curricula and no bullying school zones; and

WHEREAS, Senator Kimberly A. Lightford has worked to improve the quality of life for working families by passing legislation such as the Illinois Equal Pay Act, the African American Equal Pay Act, reforming the Payday Loan Industry, and raising the minimum wage in Illinois to \$15 dollars per hour; and

WHEREAS, in addition to advancing a progressive legislative agenda, Senator Kimberly A. Lightford has led efforts to rebuild The Loretto Hospital in the Austin community. Senator Lightford secured more than \$20 million in funding that helped the hospital build a state-of-the-art emergency department, a pharmacy and remodel all bed space. Due to her

efforts, The Loretto Hospital renamed their emergency department to The Kimberly A. Lightford Emergency Department; and

WHEREAS, for nearly two decades, Senator Kimberly A. Lightford has brought resources back to the 4th District. Senator Lightford initiated the “Uplift Our Future” program, a Saturday University which provides mentoring and educational resources for middle school students. She has also hosted an annual Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Rainbow Tea and breast cancer and prostate cancer awareness events; and

WHEREAS, in December 2018, Senator Kimberly A. Lightford was instrumental to securing \$3 million to improve a community center operated by the Maywood Park District. The Maywood Park District named the Lightford Recreation Center in her honor; and

WHEREAS, Senator Kimberly A. Lightford currently serves as the Chair of the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus, Commissioner for the Education Commission of States, Co-Chair of the Education Committee of the National Conference of State Legislatures, and an Executive Fellow at the Erikson Institute; and

WHEREAS, Senator Kimberly A. Lightford and her family currently resides in Maywood, Illinois where she is active in the community as a member of the Board of Directors for the Proviso-Leyden Council for Community Action, The Loretto Hospital, and the Boys & Girls Club of West Cook County. Senator Lightford is also a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated; 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 does hereby congratulate Senator Kimberly A. Lightford as the first African American female Illinois State Senate Majority Leader and honors her many contributions to the people of 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 Senator Kimberly A. Lightford.