



# Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street  
Chicago, IL

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 19-5765, **Version:** 1

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### PROPOSED RESOLUTION

#### HONORING NATIONAL MUSEUM OF GOSPEL MUSIC

**WHEREAS**, few cities around the world can match Chicago's rich and vast musical heritage of electrified blues, jazz and gospel music;

**WHEREAS**, the vibrant community of art, history, science, and cultural museums, lauded as preeminent institutions throughout the world, is equally dynamic. Yet, despite the city's prolific artistic and cultural assets, there is no major institution dedicated to the history and worldwide influence of this distinctly American art form originating in Chicago;

**WHEREAS**, Chicago receives international recognition as the "birthplace of gospel music" with Pilgrim Baptist Church serving as its home.

**WHEREAS**, renowned architects Louis Sullivan and Dankmar Adler designed Pilgrim Baptist Church in 1890 originally as a synagogue until the 1920s, when it became a spiritual refuge for African Americans arriving in Chicago during the Great Migration;

**WHEREAS**, among the migrants was a blues pianist, Thomas Dorsey, who began weaving Christian praise hymns with the rhythms of blues and jazz, organized a choir, and became music director at Pilgrim Baptist Church during the 1930s;

**WHEREAS**, Thomas Dorsey, widely regarded as the "Father of Gospel Music" composed "*Take My Hand, Precious Lord*" while drawing top singers from across the country who would later become legends of gospel music;

**WHEREAS**, Gospel greats James Cleveland and Mahalia Jackson received their start by singing at Pilgrim Baptist Church.

**WHEREAS**, Aretha Franklin, Albertina Walker, Sam Cooke, and The Staples Singers are among the many artists who performed at Pilgrim Baptist Church;

**WHEREAS**, the National Museum of Gospel Music is an established 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, committed to educating and inspiring people of all ages to learn more about gospel music and its contributions to the foundation of American music culture through its exhibitions and programs;

**WHEREAS**, the National Museum of Gospel Music, will be known for its commitment to understanding the rich history of gospel music and its influence throughout the past, present and future of music by providing learning experiences for children and adults;

**WHEREAS**, the of the National Museum of Gospel Music plans to open in September 2020, during Gospel Heritage Month as established by former President of the United States, Barack Obama.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, BILL LOWRY, COOK COUNTY COMMISSIONER of the 3<sup>rd</sup> DISTRICT**, do hereby stand, and salute the future of the National Museum of Gospel Music, the Official Board of Directors, and Staff, in conjunction with the Pilgrim Baptist Church; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, a suitable copy of this Resolution will be presented to the official board of the National Museum of Gospel Music;

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:** a copy of this Resolution will be filed within the **Office of Cook County Commissioner Bill Lowry 3<sup>rd</sup> District**.