



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 19-5729, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF MAGDA RAMIREZ CASTAÑEDA

WHEREAS, Magda Ramírez-Castañeda was born in Nueva Rosita, Coahuila, México, came to Chicago as a young child, and grew to become a leading activist and organizer for social and economic justice in the City of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, in the late 1960s, Magda Ramírez-Castañeda moved to Pilsen where she became ingrained in the Chicano/a and Civil Rights movements; and

WHEREAS, Magda Ramírez-Castañeda has been described as a once-in-a-generation kind of leader who dedicated her life to empowering Latinx communities; and

WHEREAS, Magda Ramírez-Castañeda was one of the first Latina students at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), where she co-founded the Latin American Student Union and fought for more students of color to be admitted to the school, and later, for a Latin American Studies Department; and

WHEREAS, Magda Ramírez-Castañeda lead the fight against discrimination alongside the Asociación Pro Derechos Obreros, (the Association for Workers' Rights) in the 1972 movement to demand that the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) hire more Latino bus drivers; and

WHEREAS, her daughter described Magda Ramírez-Castañeda as someone who “wanted to let people know that they had the power to change things if we worked together. The power to change the system and make it better for everyone;” and

WHEREAS, Magda Ramírez-Castañeda was a leader of many impactful groups and movements, including as co-founder of the Illinois Chapter of La Raza Unida, organizer of the United Farm Workers' boycotts, founder of the Committee Against the Militarization of Youth, Chairperson of the Drop-Out Task Force at Benito Juárez High School, co-host of Radio Chamba, and Board President of Pilsen Alliance; and

WHEREAS, Magda Ramírez-Castañeda co-authored the book Chicanas of 18th Street: Narratives of a Movement from Latino Chicago, which documented the testimonies of six female community activists who lived and worked in Pilsen; and

WHEREAS, as author of the book, Magda Ramírez-Castañeda said she hope to “leave a legacy to our youth, so we can have something to look up to,” and so that young people would learn about Pilsen and know “that their people were [there];” and

WHEREAS, her nephew Alderman Carlos Ramírez Rosa said of her passing, “Magda Ramírez-Castañeda will be missed by all whose lives she touched, but her spirit, her cry for justice and freedom will forever be felt in our picket lines, our marches, and our collective struggle for liberation.”

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cook County Board of Commissioners does hereby recognize the dedicated life of activism and the revolutionary impact of Magda Ramírez-Castañeda; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a suitable copy of this resolution be tendered to the family of Magda Ramírez-Castañeda.