



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

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PROPOSED RESOLUTION

HONORING THE YEARS OF SERVICE AND DEDICATION OF MATTHEW B. DeLEON

WHEREAS, Matthew (Matt) B. DeLeon will be retiring as Secretary to the Cook County Board of Commissioners and the Forest Preserve of Cook County Board of Commissioners on July 31, 2021; and

WHEREAS, Matt will leave Cook County after an almost 31-year career in local government, nearly three years with the City of Chicago and 28 of those years with Cook County; and

WHEREAS, Matt's family history reflects much of the Asian American experience of the 20th century. His parents were each part of two different waves of Filipino immigration that were essential to the Asian American experience. Twenty-four years apart in age, they would meet through their active participation in Filipino American community organizations in Chicago; and

WHEREAS, Matt was born at Evanston Hospital, June 27, 1969. The family would settle on the southwest side of Evanston near James Park. Matt was baptized at St. Nicholas Church in Evanston and would attend Dawes School, Martin Luther King, Jr. Laboratory School and Evanston Township High School, graduating in 1987. Matt would graduate from American University in Washington, DC in 1991 and DePaul University College of Law in 2009; and

WHEREAS, Matt would first participate in local politics volunteering for the Harold Washington campaign for Chicago Mayor in 1983. That summer, Matt would take the "L" from Evanston to attend Chicago City Council meetings during the contentious "Council Wars" times; and

WHEREAS, In 1984, Matt would volunteer at The Democratic Party of Evanston headquarters, going door to door and serving as a poll watcher for the Paul Simon for U.S. Senate campaign. Matt would participate in the YMCA Youth and Government program, become the Youth Mayor of Evanston in 1985 and Youth Governor of Illinois two years later; and

WHEREAS, Matt's first opportunity to work in government service came as a United States Congressional Page the summer before his junior year of high school. His sponsor was Congressman Sidney R. Yates; and

WHEREAS, Summers during college would see additional opportunities to work in government, serving as an intern for an Illinois State Representative-and future Cook County Chief Financial Officer-Woods Bowman. The following summer, he drew Census tract maps for the Illinois House and interned for the City of Chicago Commission on Asian American Affairs and its Executive Director Rudy Urian, now Chief of Staff for Commissioner Luis Arroyo, Jr. During those summers, Matt would attend meetings of the Filipino American Political Association and the Filipino American Democratic Organization of Cook County; and

WHEREAS, From 1991 to 1993, Matt's first full time job was with Mayor Richard M. Daley's Office in the Mayor's Correspondence Unit. This experience included being in City Hall on the day of the infamous downtown flood in 1992; and

WHEREAS, In 1993, Matt was offered a position in the Bureau of Administration under Chief Administrative Officer Albert Pritchett. As an Assistant to the Chief Administrative Officer, Matt became familiar with the County's Economic and Community Development efforts, Employment and Training Programs and the changes to the unincorporated areas

through Zoning Board and Building departments; and

WHEREAS, In 2006, after 13 years of service to Presidents Richard J. Phelan, John H. Stroger, Jr. and Bobbie L. Steele, Matt was appointed to the position of Secretary to the Board by President Todd H. Stroger. With the advent of the Health and Hospitals System Board in 2008, Matt became the first Secretary of that Board; and

WHEREAS, In 2010, Matt began service under his fifth County Board President, Toni Preckwinkle. And whereby In 2011, President Preckwinkle designated Matt to serve as Secretary to the Forest Preserve Board, becoming the first to serve in both roles simultaneously for the two governments; and

WHEREAS, Here are some firsts which, with the support of the President and the Board, were enacted by Matt during his tenure as Secretary:

- First livestream of all County of Forest Preserve Board proceedings
- First video recordings of all County and Forest Preserve committee meetings
- First electronic registration of public speakers and comments
- First comprehensive board-committee legislative management system linking Board items to committee items and the first unique item numbering system
- First electronic, interactive notices posted on a touchscreen
- First to make all Meeting Records paperless and electronic
- First to be selected Cook County Historian by the Board of Commissioners
- Established County Historic Archives and Records Office
- Co-authored first ever County Historic Archives and Records Ordinance

WHEREAS, Matt leaves Cook County Government at the relatively young age of 52, this resolution catalogues Matt's many professional achievements, leaving him more time to concentrate on the promotion and preservation of Cook County History as the County Historian; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the President and the Cook County Board of Commissioners, on behalf of the residents of Cook County, hereby honor and recognize Matthew DeLeon for their contribution to the viability of Cook County; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a suitable copy of this Resolution be tendered to Matthew DeLeon as a means of communicating our appreciation.