



# Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street  
Chicago, IL

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 21-4417, **Version:** 1

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### PROPOSED RESOLUTION

#### DECLARATION OF RUDY LOZANO DAY IN COOK COUNTY

**WHEREAS**, Rodolfo “Rudy” Lozano was born in Harlingen, Texas on July 17, 1951. He was one of six children born to Guadalupe and Anita Lozano; and

**WHEREAS**, Rudy Lozano and his family moved to Chicago in the early 1950’s, and he spent his formative years in the Pilsen neighborhood on the near Southwest Side; and

**WHEREAS**, Rudy Lozano developed a sense of activism at an early age and as a child walked strike picket lines with his siblings alongside their metalworker and staunch union activist father; and

**WHEREAS**, Rudy Lozano’s life was characterized by his passion for community activism and his unwavering dedication to humanity and the betterment of all working-class people; and

**WHEREAS**, Rudy Lozano’s mission was to empower all workers and uplift the voices of immigrants and to organize the unorganized, and to strategically forge coalitions among Latino, Black, white progressive allies, and other historically underrepresented community groups; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1970, Rudy Lozano helped organize Black and Latino students at Carter Henry Harrison Technical High School (now Maria Saucedo Scholastic Academy) to stage a series of walkouts protesting the lack of representation in the curriculum and of bilingual education as well as substandard facilities-Harrison, located in South Lawndale, also served Pilsen and was overcrowded; and

**WHEREAS**, approximately 35,000 Chicago Public School (CPS) students were inspired by the Harrison action to walk out and within a decade, as a result of both the walkouts and continuing community pressure, the Board of Education built a new high school to serve Pilsen, Benito Juarez Community Academy; and

**WHEREAS**, Rudy Lozano was among the first wave of Mexican American students at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), and led struggles for student diversity and multicultural curriculum leading to the establishment of the Latin American Recruitment and Educational Services Program (LARES); and

**WHEREAS**, Rudy Lozano married Guadalupe “Lupe” Lozano on December 8, 1973 and became the loving father of three sons: Rodolfo Lozano Jr., Jose Alberto Lozano, and David Emiliano Lozano; and

**WHEREAS**, after attending UIC, Rudy Lozano became an integral part of the *Centro de Acción Social Autónoma - Hermandad General de Trabajadores* (Center for Autonomous Social Action - General Brotherhood of Workers) or CASA and focused on advocating for immigrant workers; and

**WHEREAS**, CASA worked to unionize noncitizen workers and provided them with social services and information to better know their civil rights as workers; and

**WHEREAS**, Rudy Lozano became the Midwest Director of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, in which he helped union members organize their grievances so the union, and especially their employers, would finally address

their poor working conditions and other labor related concerns; and

**WHEREAS**, Rudy Lozano directed his attention to the largest tortilla factory in the midwest, where immigrant laborers worked and lived in dangerous conditions, and where the company tried to hinder the unionization campaign by calling Immigration and Naturalization Services on their workers; and

**WHEREAS**, Rudy Lozano began his electoral organizing in Chicago's 25th Ward IPO near west side, where he registered Latino voters and prioritized creating unity between Latino, Black and White community members; and

**WHEREAS**, Rudy Lozano ran for Alderman of the 22nd Ward in a highly contested and controversial race in 1983. Although he was 17 votes short of forcing the runoff in his race, he played a key role building a strategic coalition between the Latino, Black and White communities that resulted in electing candidates in districts where together they shared a majority vote; and

**WHEREAS**, Rudy Lozano was instrumental in forging a winning multi-racial coalition that resulted in the historic election of Chicago's first African American mayor, Harold Washington, and organizing the Mexican American community to support Washington thereafter. After Mayor Harold Washington's win, Rudy Lozano was elevated to a trusted adviser; and

**WHEREAS**, out of this work Rudy Lozano, Lupe Lozano, Jesus "Chuy" Garcia and others established the 22nd Ward independent political organization (IPO) in the Little Village community, which still remains a key progressive force in the region; and

**WHEREAS**, that grassroots and progressive movement was recognized internationally and inspired many to fight for political independence and to run for office in their community; and

**WHEREAS**, Rudy Lozano's life was cut short when he was assassinated on June 8, 1983 at his home at the age of 31; and

**WHEREAS**, Rudy Lozano's murder stunned the whole city. Thousands of mourners attended Rudy Lozano's funeral, including the new mayor Washington, who stated, "If the coalition of Chicago which came with my election is due to anyone, it is due to Rudy Lozano" and people like him; and

**WHEREAS**, although the devastation of losing Rudy Lozano left a tremendous void in the Southwest Side communities, it inevitably charged and politically activated the Latino community; and

**WHEREAS**, Rudy Lozano's activism, dedication, vision for unity among people, and his life's work made his legacy well known throughout the city and had a ripple effect that transcended generations; and

**WHEREAS**, Rudy Lozano's vision survives to this day carried by peers, fellow allies of the movement, and devoted family members, including his widow, children, grandchildren, siblings, nieces, and nephews; and

**WHEREAS**, on September 7, 1989, the Chicago Public Library system opened the Rudy Lozano Library in the Pilsen neighborhood in his honor; and

**WHEREAS**, on 1994, Rodolfo Lozano Bilingual & International Center Elementary School was opened in the north side of the City of Chicago; and

**WHEREAS**, we must never forget that Rudy Lozano was and continues to be one of our most valuable local labor and community leaders and human rights activist of all time; and

**WHEREAS**, during the past year and a half, Rudy Lozano's teachings have never been more important- the push for

unity among Black, Brown, White and all who stand for love and compassion for each other, the protection and advocacy for immigrant families, and the fight for social justice, racial equity and political power for disinvested communities of color; and

**WHEREAS**, Rudy Lozano's life has left a profound lesson for us all to continue building solidarity among all working-class people in the name of peace and justice.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Cook County Board of Commissioners does hereby honor the life and legacy of Rudy Lozano, in what would have been his 70th birthday, and hereby declare today, July 29, 2021, Rudy Lozano Day in Cook County; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that a suitable copy of this resolution be tendered to the family and friends of Rudy Lozano so that his memory may be honored and ever cherished.