



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 21-6018, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION HONORING THE CHICAGO FEDERATION OF LABOR FOR 125 YEARS OF FIGHTING FOR WORKER JUSTICE

WHEREAS, the Chicago Federation of Labor was issued its charter by the American Federation of Labor President Samuel Gompers on November 9, 1896; and

WHEREAS, Chicago is the hometown of the American Labor Movement, the site of the Haymarket Affair, the Pullman Strike, the Republic Steel Strike, and more Local 1's than anywhere else; and

WHEREAS, the Chicago Federation of Labor has fought for economic, racial, and social justice for workers in Chicago, Cook County, and beyond for 125 years; and

WHEREAS, the CFL organized workers across industries in the 19th and 20th centuries regardless of race, ethnicity, or nationality; and

WHEREAS, one of the first presidents of the Chicago Federation of Labor was John Fitzpatrick, an innovator whose dedication to justice and passion for organizing sustained the CFL for 40 years; and

WHEREAS, President William A. Lee guided the CFL for nearly four decades after the passing of President Fitzpatrick, navigating a changing world during the civil rights movement and beyond; and

WHEREAS, the Chicago Federation of Labor merged with the Cook County Industrial Union Council and other local labor councils in 1962; and

WHEREAS, the CFL created and managed WCFL, the "Voice of Labor", from 1926 to 1978, bringing the latest news, information, and entertainment to working people in Chicagoland and beyond; and

WHEREAS, the CFL has published the *Federation News* for more than 100 years, first a newspaper and now a quarterly magazine bringing labor news to local workers; and

WHEREAS, the Chicago Federation of Labor has brought freedom fighters and labor leaders from around the world to Chicago, including Cesar Chavez, Lech Walesa, and Nelson Mandela; and

WHEREAS, in recent years the Chicago Federation of Labor has worked to pass increases to the minimum wage, fair workweek and paid sick leave laws, protections to retirement security, and a host of other policies to protect workers; and

WHEREAS, essential union workers have put their life on the line to keep the City of Chicago and Cook County moving and providing needed supports and services during the COVID-19 pandemic; and,

WHEREAS, the CFL played a vital role in ensuring essential union workers had access to the COVID-19 vaccine by the launch of the nation's first vaccination site operated by the labor movement for union workers in partnership with the City of Chicago; and,

WHEREAS, the Chicago Federation of Labor supports its approximately 300 affiliates and their 500,000 union members in Chicago and Cook County; and

WHEREAS, the Chicago Federation of Labor maintains the spirit of solidarity that has guided the organization for 125 years, continuing the fight for justice for all workers; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cook County Board of Commissioners celebrates the Chicago Federation of Labor as it recognizes the 125th anniversary of its founding and recognizes the CFL for its legacy of activism and solidarity with the working people of Cook County; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a ceremonial copy of this resolution will be delivered to the Chicago Federation of Labor.