



# Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street  
Chicago, IL

## Legislation Text

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**File #: 22-3979, Version: 1**

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### **PROPOSED RESOLUTION**

**PASTOR JOHN F. HARRELL**

**FOUNDER, PRESIDENT, AND CEO OF BLACK MEN UNITED FOUNDATION**

**WHEREAS**, Pastor John F. Harrell was born April 11, 1971 on Easter Sunday in Chicago, Il to Francine and Jerry Harrell. He is the great nephew of Nancy B. Jefferson who is considered the “Mother Theresa of the Westside” of Chicago; and

**WHEREAS**, in May 1989, Pastor Harrell graduated from John Marshall Metro high school. In 1991, Pastor Harrell enlisted in the Army National Guard and completed basic training at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri and his Advanced Individual Training at Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas; and

**WHEREAS**, Pastor Harrell attended Lakeland College in 2001 receiving a Associates Degree in Commercial Custodial Maintenance. He later received his Bachelors of Biblical Studies in 2005 and Masters in Pastoral Counseling in 2007 at The Midwest Theological Institute. That same year he received an Honorary Doctorate in Divinity from Midwest Theological Institute; and

**WHEREAS**, Pastor Harrell entered into the ministry in 1995 under the mentorship of Pastor Marvin E. Wiley of Rock Of Ages Baptist Church in Maywood, IL. On December 23, 1999, he fully came into his calling and was appointed to be the Youth Pastor under the leadership of Reverend Charles E. Robinson at the Holy Starlight M.B.C. in the North Lawndale Community. In July of 2007 Pastor Harrell was appointed his first pastoral placement as Pastor of Gracious Beginnings Baptist Church; and

**WHEREAS**, in July 2012, Pastor Harrell met and married the love of his life Rahshedah Harrell. They have a beautiful blended family with a total of 9 children and 2 grandchildren; and

**WHEREAS**, While Pastor Harrell was answering his spiritual calling, he was also dedicating time into nationwide service. In August 2005, Pastor Harrell led his first nationwide outreach when he coordinated relief efforts for Hurricane Katrina survivors and provided \$6 Million in relief aid to New Orleans. The following month, Pastor Harrell continued his efforts and sent \$4 Million in relief aid to Hurricane Rita survivors in Tallahassee, FL. In April 2014 sent \$600,000 in Tornado relief to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and August 2015 sent 120 pallets of water to Flint, Michigan to combat the water crisis; and

**WHEREAS**, on April 11, 2016, Pastor Harrell was selected to succeed civil rights icon and trailblazer, Bishop Dr. Claude Porter, where he became the second Pastor at Proviso M.B.C. in Maywood IL in Proviso Township.

**WHEREAS**, in March of 2020 Pastor Harrell cofounded The Black Men United Foundation where he currently serves as President and CEO. Black Men United’s mission is to impact socioeconomic and cultural change in urban communities through addressing food insecurities, providing community programming to reduce gun violence, and employment opportunities through various work force development programs and partnerships; and

**WHEREAS**, Black Men United currently has 37 Chapters in 37 states. Since it’s founding, Black Men United has donated over \$10 million in supplies and serviced over 387,000 people in the Chicagoland area. Nationally, Black Men

United has served 12 million people and donated \$3.6 million in fresh produce during the pandemic; and

**WHEREAS**, Pastor Harrell also serves as special assistant to Bishop Dr. Claude Porter, the President of P.L.C.C.A. an agency that serves over 30 need base programs with an operating budget of over \$9 Million dollars and property valued at \$17 Million. Serving over 100,000 people annually with services to 38 municipalities and the Chicago Metropolitan area; and

**WHEREAS**, Pastor Harrell is the Midwest Region Coordinator for Concessions/ Exhibits / Corporate sponsorship for the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A. Inc. and was named Distinguished Gentlemen of Illinois; and

**WHEREAS**, Pastor Harrell sits on several boards including Triton College Foundation, Ambassadorship for World Vision, Southern Baptist's of Illinois State Credentials Committee, Woodlake Hospital, and The Loretto Hospital; and

**WHEREAS**, April 11, 2020, Pastor felt an urge to return to his roots on the Westside of Chicago, so he accepted another Pastorate at New Hope M.B.C.; and

**WHEREAS**, Pastor Harrell believes his purpose is to serve and prides himself on the work he has done. His favorite scripture depicts his life view "Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and give his life as a ransom for many," Mathew 20:28; and

**WHEREAS**, Pastor Harrell was honored due to his significant contribution serving the city of Chicago; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, BILL LOWRY, COOK COUNTY COMMISSIONER of the 3<sup>rd</sup> DISTRICT, DENNIS DEER, COOK COUNTY COMMISSIONER of the 2<sup>nd</sup> DISTRICT, AND BRANDON JOHNSON, COOK COUNTY COMMISSIONER of the 1<sup>st</sup> DISTRICT** do hereby stand, and salute the presentation of this prestigious award to Pastor John Harrell; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a suitable copy of this Resolution will be presented to Pastor Harrell and his family; and

**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, Cook County Commissioner Dennis Deer 2<sup>nd</sup> District, and Cook County Commissioner Brandon Johnson 1<sup>st</sup> District.**