



CITY OF CHICAGO



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Chicago Board of Health Resolution On the Death of Carl C. Bell, M.D.

WHEREAS, the members of this Board were deeply saddened to learn of the death on August 1, 2019, of Carl C. Bell, MD—clinician, researcher, former Chicago Board of Health member, and pillar of the city’s health community; and

WHEREAS, Born in Bronzeville in 1947, Dr. Bell spent his life pursuing equity and justice for Chicago residents and was one of the city’s most prominent figures in areas including mental health, trauma, and HIV prevention; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Bell enjoyed national renown, winning numerous honors, sitting on presidential boards, and writing hundreds of articles and book chapters—challenging us by his example to do more and aim higher to improve the health of the most vulnerable residents of this city and country; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Bell was particularly invested in addressing childhood trauma resulting from violence, centering much of his work on African American and South Side communities; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Bell recognized that health cannot be disentangled from race or race-related issues like criminal justice—and indeed posited that racism may itself constitute a mental illness; and

WHEREAS, In recent years he focused on what he saw as a “silent epidemic” of fetal alcohol exposure among African Americans—again demonstrating his commitment to lifting up communities that have been disadvantaged and underserved; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Bell fought injustice, challenged conventional wisdom, and pushed for new health system paradigms tailored to community needs; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Chicago Board of Health is grateful and honored to have had the opportunity to serve with Dr. Bell, whose legacy will be felt by Chicago residents for generations to come; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we stand ready to continue Dr. Bell’s work by pushing for equitable healthcare and public health systems that are anti-racist, research-driven, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive—helping to advance his vision of a world without health inequities.

Dated this 18th day of September 2019,

Carolyn C. Lopez, M.D.
President, Chicago Board of Health