

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, every day, hundreds of thousands of children across our City, including approximately 325,000 students enrolled in Chicago Public Schools, travel from their homes every day; and

WHEREAS, while these children often walk to school in many neighborhoods, which has a variety of positive benefits for their communities and the students themselves, the realities of living in an urban environment mean these children will often need to cross major arterial streets and dangerous intersections; and

WHEREAS, prior to 2016, the Chicago Police Department operated a crossing guard program throughout the City, serving students attending both public and private schools, with the program operated by the Office of Emergency Management and Communication (OEMC) from 2016 through 2020; and

WHEREAS, in 2021, as part of Mayor Lightfoot's attempt to shift costs to Chicago Public Schools (CPS) during the COVID pandemic, the crossing guard program – for *both* public and private schools – was shifted from OEMC to CPS; and

WHEREAS, in their recently approved FY2026 budget, the CPS board eliminated over 100 crossing guard positions, affecting both public and private schools with little to no notice to the affected communities, putting children across our City at risk as they travel to school each day; and

WHEREAS, this steep reduction in crossing guards presents very real safety risks, particularly given City data shows that high school-age children (15 – 18) and elementary school-age children (5 – 14) have the highest and second highest rates of pedestrian accidents, respectively; and

WHEREAS, indeed, within a month of the school year starting, a 9-year-old was killed crossing the street on their way to school – with only one crossing guard serving nearly 350 students who must cross Augusta Blvd. and Cicero Ave. on their way to school each day; and

WHEREAS, crossing guards serve the students and their community – not the schools they attend – and every single child in our City should be able to walk to school safely; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, do hereby call upon a joint committee consisting of the Committee on Pedestrian and Traffic Safety and the Committee on Public Safety to convene a subject matter hearing on the reduction in the number of crossing guards protecting our children, the resulting safety risks, and options to return the crossing guard program to OEMC; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we call upon the Executive Director of OEMC, the Commissioner of Transportation, and representatives from Chicago Public Schools to attend such hearing and provide testimony.



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Alderman, 13th Ward



MATTHEW J. O'SHEA
Alderman, 19th Ward



EMMA MITTS
Alderman, 37th Ward



SAMANTHA NUGENT
Alderman, 39th Ward