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**CITY COUNCIL PASSES MAYOR EMANUEL'S ORDINANCE TO EXPAND
VETERANS BID INCENTIVE**

City Council today passed Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the Chicago Department of Procurement Services' (DPS) ordinance designed to allow more veteran-owned businesses to take advantage of the existing bid incentive.

"The City offers a variety of bid incentives to ensure that City contractors represent the diversity of the City itself, and expanding this incentive supports this goal by further encouraging the participation of Veterans in City contracts," said Mayor Emanuel. "Ensuring our brave Veterans more opportunities to gain employment and to take an active role in society is the least we could do for them, as they have made the ultimate sacrifice to protect our freedom."

The City currently has a five percent bid incentive benefitting joint ventures of veteran-owned businesses and small, local businesses. This amendment expands eligibility for the five percent bid incentive to small, local businesses that are also veteran-owned without requiring a joint venture with another veteran-owned business or small, local business.

"Veterans possess unique skills, experiences and knowledge that should be leveraged whenever possible to help enrich our communities and strengthen our City," said Alderman Gilbert Villegas, Chairman of the Veterans Caucus. "Expanding this incentive will ensure that the valuable perspective of our Veterans will be included in City contracting."

In addition, the ordinance will give a bid incentive of up to two percent of the contract base bid amount for the utilization of veteran-owned subcontractors on construction contracts. The amount of the bid incentive depends on the total dollar value of work performed by veteran-owned subcontractors as a percentage of the total contract value. If one to 16 percent of the total dollar value of the work under the contract is committed to be performed by veteran-owned subcontractors, then the bidder receives a 0.5 percent bid incentive; if 17 to 32 percent of the total dollar value is committed to be performed by veteran-owned subcontractors, then the bid incentive is one percent; if 33 to 49 percent is committed, then the bid incentive is 1.5 percent; and if 50 percent or greater is committed, then the bid incentive is 2 percent.

Since taking office, Mayor Emanuel has made key investments to support continued education and employment for Veterans. To ensure that all Veterans and military Service Members are able to secure housing and to prevent discrimination in the housing application process, the City's Council

on Human Relations approved the Mayor's ordinance making Veterans, active military personnel, reservists and National Guard members a protected class.

Additionally, Mayor Emanuel launched a new [resource website](#) this year designed to improve coordination of citywide resources to better meet the needs of Chicago's military Veterans. By directing the City's 311 service call center operators to ask callers up front if they are Veterans, operators are able to identify the most appropriate resources and programs that are available. Ultimately, this information helps the city tailor, target, and allocate the right resources for future programs and services to better serve Veterans.

"As a Veteran myself, I know the value that Veterans services have in supporting those of us who have served our country, and the challenges that many fellow Veterans face in gaining employment after their military service," said Victor LaGroom, Director of the Chicago Office of Veteran Affairs. "By incorporating more veteran-owned businesses into city projects, we will ensure that Chicago provides ample opportunities for our Veterans to re-integrate into society, gain meaningful employment, and support their families."

This effort builds on the success of last month's Operation: Help-A-Hero drive, led by Mayor Emanuel, 19th Ward Alderman Matthew O'Shea and Military Outreach USA to support Veterans re-integrating into society post service. In just one month, the drive raised \$50,000 worth of goods to assist thousands of Veterans across the city who recently gained permanent housing through the City's End Veterans Homelessness Initiative.

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