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**MAYOR EMANUEL INTRODUCES ORDINANCE TO EXPAND  
OPTIONS AND OFFERINGS AT TASTE OF CHICAGO**

*Admission, Entertainment Remains Free as Expansion of Reserved Seating  
and Small Increase in Food Ticket Surcharge to Help Cover Costs*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today introduced an ordinance to the City Council that allows the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) to keep the admission and entertainment free at the Taste of Chicago while expanding culinary options and meeting demand for reserved seating for musical performances.

"Last year's Taste of Chicago was a great success, recouping more than its costs for the first time since 2007 and generating an estimated economic impact of more than \$100 million for Chicago businesses," said Mayor Emanuel. "We continue to offer free admission and entertainment, and the proposed changes will create a sound financial future for our premier lakefront festival."

The ordinance allows DCASE to offer varied pricing that will both discount and increase the cost of tickets for concerts at the Petrillo Music Shell, as well the number of tickets that can be reserved. DCASE will also be allowed to vary the pricing and seating for the extremely popular Chef du Jour dining pavilion, which allowed celebrated chefs to serve a sit-down meal for \$40. The cost may increase or decrease, depending on chefs, offerings and dining options.

"A large part of the rejuvenation of the Taste was the success of newer programs such as Celebrity Chef du Jour and paid tickets for concerts," said DCASE Commissioner Michelle T. Boone. "The proposed changes will allow us to meet increased demand for these successful programs and strengthen the long-term finances of the Taste, while ensuring the festival remains free and open to all."

At the Petrillo Band Shell, the average cost per ticket to concerts will not exceed \$25. Premium seats closer to the stage will cost up to \$50, and seats farther back will cost less, following standards set by the music industry at private venues. In addition, DCASE will sell 3,000 general admission lawn seats and preserve more than 34,000 free lawn seats on Butler Field.

“Last year, four of the five concerts sold out, and this proposal will provide flexibility to add a reserved area directly behind the fixed seats,” said Boone. “We continue to schedule popular musical acts, and want to meet demands of music fans willing to help support the Taste by spending money for slightly better seats at free performances.”

The proposed ordinance also allows DCASE to increase the surcharge on food and beverage tickets for the first time since 2008. Per strip of 12 tickets sold, the surcharge will increase from \$2 to \$2.50, resulting in an increase of \$8 to \$8.50, or about 4 cents a ticket. The surcharge was raised from \$1.50 to \$2 in 2008 and from \$1 to \$1.50 in 2002.

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