



Memorandum

TO: Rules Committee

FROM: Councilmember Pierluigi Oliverio

SUBJECT: See Below

DATE: February 23, 2016

Approved:

Date:

2-23-16

SUBJECT: "Welcome Back" Library Fine Amnesty

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Direct staff to implement a two week "Library Fine Amnesty Program" prior to Summer school break which would include:
 - A. Receiving past due library materials (books, Tapes, DVDs etc.) and put them back into circulation.
 - B. Waiving any penalties and outstanding fees for library patrons.
 - C. Reinstate blocked library cards due to outstanding fine to good status.

BACKGROUND:

The total amount of library fines is currently \$6,839,621. 39% of all Library cardholders have debt attached (187,000 accounts). Children under the age of 18 have racked up over \$1,000,000 in fines. Many of these youth need the resources the Library provides particularly in the summer months.

Library Amnesty programs have proven to be an effective and economical way to get materials back into the Library, and patrons back into the system.

In 2012, Chicago Public Library's three week amnesty program received 101,301 overdue items, valued at approximately \$2 million, and waived \$641,820 in fines. Over 40,000 patrons got their library cards reinstated. They just finished another amnesty program this February. Historically, the value of the returned materials during an amnesty program outweighs the late fees.