



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

# Press Release

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## Rev. Willie Barrow's lifelong commitment to equality honored

The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) Board of Commissioners paused to recognize the late American civil rights activist and minister, the Rev. Willie Barrow.

At its April 9 meeting, the Board of Commissioners passed a resolution honoring Barrow for her tireless advocacy for equality in dozens of causes. Barrow died March 12 at the age of 90.

"Rev. Barrow taught us that 'We are not so much divided as we are disconnected,'" said Vice President Barbara McGowan. "We present this resolution in memory of Rev. Barrow for her courageous and groundbreaking work and her commitment to connecting countless Americans to the resources they deserve and need."

On behalf of the National Rainbow PUSH Coalition, Betty Magness thanked the Board of Commissioners for the resolution and spoke about Barrow's many influences in Chicago and throughout the world. As a field organizer, Barrow was a pioneer in the civil rights movement, organizing sit-ins and boycotts in the South and speaking out against disparity in food pricing and quality between black and white neighborhoods. For Operation PUSH, which she helped found, she led campaigns to serve the poor and most vulnerable communities in Chicago and joined in the fight for women's rights, labor rights and gay rights. In later years, she focused her advocacy work on AIDS



*Betty Magness (left), of the National Rainbow PUSH Coalition, was presented with a resolution from MWRD Vice President Barbara McGowan (right) in honor of the recent passing of the Rev. Willie Barrow and her lifetime commitment to equality for all.*

awareness, gun violence in Chicago and the dilution of the Voting Rights Act.

"I knew Rev. Barrow for more than 40 years and she was really the person who helped mold me and make me the person who I am today," Magness said. "Her influence will forever be felt in Chicago and beyond in her dedicated fight for human equality."

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*Established in 1889, the MWRD ([www.mwrdd.org](http://www.mwrdd.org)) is an award-winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois.*