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MILELE A. COGGS

6th District Alderwoman

**Election energy, turnout a victory for
Milwaukee**

Statement of Alderwoman Milele A. Cogg

June 6, 2012

No matter what anyone says about the results of yesterday's historic gubernatorial recall election, the City of Milwaukee achieved a great victory in the enormous voter turnout – especially in the huge numbers of African American and younger voters.

We saw droves of new voters, young voters, older voters, and entire families and neighborhoods coming to the polls. The grass roots effort that has taken place in the city over the last several months to inform, energize, and ultimately get people out to vote, worked.

I witnessed an incredible amount of energy and community yesterday and during the past several days, as neighbors, organizations, canvassers, and elected officials worked together to get voters to the polls. This effort, this unity, and this energy must be sustained in future elections, and I will do everything I can to make sure the energy and momentum does not fade.

Victory is generally measured by whoever gets the most votes on Election Day, but I would offer a different view. I believe firmly that there is victory to be had in the record numbers that the City of Milwaukee turned out on Election Day. In the midst of our great city taking several hits in the weeks leading up to the election (we all heard about the anti-Milwaukee statements made by our current governor pointing out our challenges, including poverty, crime, education issues, and joblessness) 70% of voters turned out in Milwaukee, the kind of turnout usually seen only in presidential elections.

Young people and African Americans voted at a rate substantially higher than past elections. Continuing to build on this level of political engagement is key not only for future elections, but as a demonstration of these respective groups' ability to impact elections and the greater need to address their policy concerns. Now that the recall is over, all eyes will be on Milwaukee to see if we remain civically engaged.

I am extremely proud of my city for demonstrating to the world that we can step up and exercise our right to vote, and in doing so tell everyone watching and listening that Milwaukee Matters.

