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VICE CHAIR

- Public Safety and Health Committee

CO-CHAIR

- City-County Carjacking and Reckless Driving Task Force

MEMBER

- Community & Economic Development Committee
- Licenses Committee
- City-County Carjacking and Reckless Driving Task Force
- Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Committee
- Milwaukee Continuum of Care
- Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District Commission



CHANTIA LEWIS
ALDERWOMAN, 9TH DISTRICT

NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES (NLC):

- Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Committee (*Vice Chair*)
- Military Communities Council (*Vice Chair*)
- National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials (*Director - Region 7*)

ARPA proposals would create pilot Universal Basic Income program, Office of Veterans' Affairs

Statement of Alderwoman Chantia Lewis October 20, 2021

When the full Common Council takes up **American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)** funding allocation proposals tomorrow (**1:30 p.m. Thursday, October 21 – in the third floor Council Chamber at City Hall, 200 E. Wells St.**), two important proposals I am sponsoring will be on the docket.

The first would use \$400,000 in ARPA funding to launch a pilot **Universal Basic Income (UBI)** program in Milwaukee, and the second would use \$200,000 to establish a city-operated **Office of Veterans' Affairs**.

A tremendous amount of work and research has gone into the Universal Basic Income program Council legislation that has been brought forward (and previously approved at committee), and I am very proud to be the primary sponsor of the file and now of this ARPA allocation proposal.

My UBI proposal establishes the creation of a pilot city UBI program, and stipulates that the funding would be used for staffing, start-up costs, and initial program costs associated with the creation of the program. The Office of the Common Council - City Clerk would work with the Department of Administration - Purchasing Division to prepare and issue a request for proposals for a UBI Program Coordinator.

Very little has changed in our economy and our neighborhoods since the UBI funding proposal was approved at committee earlier this year: People and families are in dire need of assistance, and unemployment fueled by the pandemic is still a reality. A Universal Basic Income payment for low-income and working class families and individuals would help to significantly raise the living conditions and quality of life for those needing a hand up during this ongoing emergency.

My second ARPA proposal – to create a city **Office of Veterans' Affairs** – was also approved earlier this year at committee. \$200,000 in ARPA funds would be allocated to the City Clerk's Office to provide staffing, office space and start-up funding for the Office of Veterans' Affairs.

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As a 9/11 era U.S. Air Force veteran, I know how critical this proposal could be, as sadly a huge number of veterans are living without adequate housing, employment, and resources they need. Helping those who served must be a priority for this once-in-a-generation funding, and I believe the Office of Veterans' Affairs will help connect services and assistance to those vets who need them.

The UBI and Office of Veterans' Affairs proposals are a step forward for the City of Milwaukee to provide a foundation for a strong and equitable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, and each are ideal uses of the federal ARPA funding to help us recover from the pandemic.

The ARPA represents an immense opportunity for our community, and my proposals will help ensure that funding allocations are equitable, and make a significant impact in the lives of our residents.

If you support my ARPA proposals, please contact your Common Council member via email or by calling 414-286-2221 and ask that they please vote in support of each of my allocation proposals.

NOTE: Tomorrow's special Council meeting will start at 1:30 p.m. and be televised live on the City Channel (channel 25 on Spectrum Cable and channel 99 on AT&T U-Verse in the City of Milwaukee) and via streaming video on the city website at city.milwaukee.gov/Channel25.

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