

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

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



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**)

CHANTIA LEWIS
ALDERWOMAN, 9TH DISTRICT

American Rescue Plan Act approval is a life-changer for thousands in Milwaukee

Statement of Alderwoman Chantia Lewis March 10, 2021

I applaud the House and Senate for today approving the historic \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act that will bring much-needed relief to Milwaukee residents and Americans who have been struggling mightily during the COVID-19 pandemic.

When President Biden and leaders in Congress agreed to go deep and make some bold funding and relief decisions – and not just a half-hearted package that wouldn't do much – it was a game-changer for tens of millions. The emergency funding includes \$300 per week unemployment payments through Labor Day, and \$1,400 stimulus payments to eligible individuals. For example, in a qualifying household of five people, EACH person will receive the \$1,400 direct payment in that household!

The power of the direct cash payment will not only help individual Milwaukeeans and their families improve their conditions, it will also add a significant needed boost to our economy, as people are able to make purchases, and again make some repairs and upgrades.

After the initial benefit of the American Rescue Plan Act begins to fade, people will still be in need of assistance. Unemployment fueled by the pandemic will still be a reality.

This is when we will truly see the benefit of a Universal Basic Income payment for low-income and working class families and individuals. Last year I proposed a pilot Universal Basic Income (UBI) program for Milwaukee, and it is something that is being tried by other cities across the U.S.

Under my pilot program (modeled after a UBI program in Stockton, California), the city would ask residents who meet specific qualifications, such as being unemployed or underemployed, to apply to receive a monthly cash payment for an allotted period of time. The city would then blindly choose a total of 50 households throughout the city – 25 lower income individuals and 25 working family households – and would provide them with a monthly stipend for 18 months.

I envision the city being able to significantly raise the living conditions and quality of life for those receiving the payment (\$500 per month for 18 months) over time.

In my view this is the PERFECT time for Milwaukee and the federal government to explore more closely a wider UBI program to help provide a hand up to help pull families and individuals out of poverty's evil grip.

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