

## **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



**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*)

# Time for us to transform lives with Universal Basic Income payments

## **Statement of Alderwoman Chantia Lewis July 22, 2021**

In the largest city in Wisconsin, with the largest problems related to income inequality, and with the largest population of working poor, you would think establishing a pilot Universal Basic Income (UBI) program would be a no-brainer.

My legislation to utilize American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to launch a pilot UBI program in Milwaukee (File #210487) goes before the full Common Council next week (July 27).

The file was strongly recommended for approval last week by the Community and Economic Development Committee – and for good reason: The once-in-a-generation ARPA funding provides the perfect scenario for a pilot UBI program, and I'm hopeful my colleagues who supported it last time will support it again, and ensure we can do the right thing for the people of Milwaukee!

File #**210487** establishes the creation of a pilot UBI program, and authorizes utilizing \$400,000 in ARPA funds for it. The file stipulates that the funding is to be used for staffing, start-up costs, and initial program costs associated with the creation of the program.

There will be a fiduciary agent for the UBI program, and 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. Once a program coordinator is hired, he or she would work closely with the fiduciary agent to finalize the UBI program.

This initiative could be a life-changing boost for those who are eligible, making their lives less chaotic and uncertain. A tremendous amount of work and research has gone into the Universal Basic Income program legislation during the past few years, and time is of the essence to get it rolling.

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Sadly, after the initial benefit of the American Rescue Plan Act has begun to fade, people will still be in need of further assistance. Unemployment fueled by the pandemic is still a reality. This is when we will truly see the benefit of a UBI payment for low-income and working class families and individuals.

I envision the program being able to significantly raise the living conditions and quality of life for those receiving the payment through the pilot program.

So if you also see the benefit of my UBI legislation, I urge you to reach out to your Alderperson, and ask them to vote in favor of File #210487 on July 27<sup>th</sup>. You can get Common Council members contact information via the city's website – [www.city.milwaukee.gov/commoncouncil](http://www.city.milwaukee.gov/commoncouncil) -- or by calling 414-286-2221.

Let's get the pilot Universal Basic Income program up and rolling so we can transform lives across Milwaukee!

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