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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



FOR INFORMATION CALL

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July 28, 2022

Ald. Marina Dimitrijevic  
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## **Council adopts Ald. Dimitrijevic-sponsored ADA ordinance to help businesses, persons with disabilities**

Today the Common Council approved legislation sponsored by **Alderwoman Marina Dimitrijevic** that removes an annual special privilege fee for the installation of wheelchair ramps at older businesses – effectively eliminating a financial disincentive for many businesses in making their facilities accessible.

Alderwoman Dimitrijevic, author of Council file #220190 – a substitute ordinance relating to accessible entrances for buildings predating the Americans with Disabilities Act – said a 14<sup>th</sup> District business owner looking to make her older premises more accessible brought the issue to the fore.

“I quickly realized that getting rid of this annual special privilege fee could help business owners and disabled persons across the city,” Alderwoman Dimitrijevic said.

With help from city ADA Coordinator Rebecca Rabatin and (then) interim DPW Commissioner Jerrel Kruschke (as well as former DPW commissioner Jeff Polenske) Alderwoman Dimitrijevic worked to craft legislation to eliminate this barrier for people with disabilities in Milwaukee.

“This is a small but important example of how constituents and the city can work together to make changes that are meaningful to improving inclusion and access citywide, and I would like to thank Cactus Club owner Kelsey Kaufmann for bringing this issue to my attention,” the alderwoman said.

**-More-**

## **ADA ordinance/ADD ONE**

Kaufmann said: “We’re happy to see Milwaukee remove one barrier for businesses to build ramps to make old buildings more accessible. Such infrastructure is overdue and absolutely possible when we make it a priority as a community.”

“Many thanks to disability justice activists and to Milwaukee ADA Coordinator Rebecca Rabatin, for their leadership and vision for vital infrastructure that benefits us all,” Kaufmann said. “Cactus Club plans to add a ramp to the front door and renovate the bathrooms for accessibility.”

“This month marks the anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and we are happy to honor its impact in this small way with the understanding that we have a long way to go,” Alderwoman Dimitrijevic said.

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