
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



FOR INFORMATION CALL

September 7, 2016

Ald. Khalif J. Rainey
(414) 286-2863

Resolution to be heard today on new city Office of African American Affairs

A resolution to create a City of Milwaukee **Office of African American Affairs** to improve the quality of life for African Americans in the city will be heard by the Common Council's Community and Economic Development Committee at **1:30 p.m. TODAY – Wednesday, September 7** – in room 301-B at City Hall, 200 E. Wells St.

The measure, authored by **Alderman Khalif J. Rainey**, would establish the Office of African American Affairs in the Department of Administration. According to the legislative file, the office would be responsible for “the administration, coordination and implementation of the city’s policies relating to the special needs of the city’s African American residents.”

Today’s Community and Economic Development Committee meeting will be televised live on the City Channel (Channel 25 on Time Warner Cable and on AT&T U-Verse Channel 99) in the City of Milwaukee. It can also be viewed via streaming video on the city website at www.city.milwaukee.gov/Channel25.

“Studies have been telling us what we already know -- that Milwaukee is the worst place in America to live if you happen to be African American,” Alderman Rainey said. “We need a real sense of urgency and my legislation calls on the city to have a key role in working to do everything possible to better the lives of African Americans, and that is precisely what the office would be charged with doing.”

The resolution (**attached**) cites massive and increasing disparities between Milwaukee’s African Americans and whites in education, incarceration, health, joblessness, income, home ownership, entrepreneurship, infant mortality, and several other categories.

-More-

Office of African American Affairs/ADD ONE

The Office of African American Affairs would be administered by a manager appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Common Council. The manager would serve concurrently with the term of the mayor.

According to the file, the **manager's top three duties** would be to:

1. Examine and define issues central to the rights and needs of African American residents of the city.
2. Identify and assess the potential disparate impacts of new budgetary and regulatory initiatives on African American residents of the city.
3. Present recommendations to the Common Council for changes in existing programs and ordinances that disparately impact African Americans residents of the city.

During his tenure as a member of the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors in 2015, Alderman Rainey was the author of successful legislation that created the county's Office on African American Affairs.

"It's time to do everything we can as a city to make sure all of our citizens have a chance to live better and richer lives, and that all of our children can reach their full potential," Alderman Rainey said.

"I am calling on my Council colleagues to support my proposal, and if approved, I am calling on Mayor Barrett to immediately create and fully staff this critical new office," he said.



Legislation Details (With Text)

File #: 160445 **Version:** 0

Type: Ordinance **Status:** In Committee

File created: 7/26/2016 **In control:** COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

On agenda: **Final action:**

Effective date:

Title: An ordinance creating the office of African American affairs.

Sponsors: ALD. RAINEY

Indexes:

Attachments:

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result	Tally
7/26/2016	0	COMMON COUNCIL	ASSIGNED TO		

160445
ORIGINAL

ALD. RAINEY
An ordinance creating the office of African American affairs.
375 cr

This ordinance creates an office of African American affairs under the supervision of the department of administration which shall be responsible for the administration, coordination and implementation of the city’s policies relating to the special needs of the city’s African American residents. Whereas, It is the public policy of the City of Milwaukee to ensure equal opportunity for all of its residents; and

Whereas, The City of Milwaukee is the largest and most ethnically diverse city in Wisconsin; and

Whereas, According to U.S. Census Bureau 2014 estimates, the City of Milwaukee is home to 239,856 African Americans, comprising 63.1% of Wisconsin’s African American population and forming the largest minority group in Wisconsin; and

Whereas, According to the City of Milwaukee Health Department, the infant mortality rate for African Americans in Milwaukee is three times higher than that of whites; and

Whereas, Wisconsin ranks last in the nation regarding the overall well-being of African American children based on an index of 12 measures that gauge children’s success from birth to adulthood; and

Whereas, According to the Nation’s Report Card, among the states, Wisconsin is tied with Nebraska for the highest score gap between African American and white students, based on eighth grade math scores; and

Whereas, A report prepared for the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction found that the trend of the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concept Examinations over five academic years, from 2008-2013, indicated that the African American-white achievement gap continues to widen for both reading and mathematics; and

Whereas, A University of California-Los Angeles report found that Wisconsin's kindergarten through grade 12 schools suspend African American high school students at the highest rate nationally and with the second-highest disparity suspension rate between African American and white students; and

Whereas, The 2010 U.S. Census Bureau showed Wisconsin having the highest African American male incarceration rate in the nation, with over half of African American men in their 30s in Milwaukee County having served prison time; and

Whereas, A study by Trust for America's Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation revealed that Wisconsin has the highest rate of obesity in African American adults at 45.8 percent; and

Whereas, According to 2013 U.S. Census Bureau statistics, 18% of African Americans age 65 or older live in poverty, compared to 7% of whites age 65 or older; and

Whereas, Forbes Magazine's March 2011 edition listed the Milwaukee Metropolitan Area as last among 52 cities in the United States for minority entrepreneurship; and

Whereas, A 2012 study by the Manhattan Institute showed that Milwaukee was the most racially segregated city in America; and

Whereas, 24/7 Wall Street in 2015 named the Milwaukee Metropolitan Area as the worst American city for African Americans based on racial disparities in household income, poverty, high school and bachelor's degree educational attainment rates, homeownership rates, unemployment rates, incarceration rates and mortality rates; and

Whereas, Racial discrimination and institutional racism continue to create barriers to success for African American residents of the City of Milwaukee; and

Whereas, Creation of a City of Milwaukee Office of African American Affairs is integral to recognition and resolution of the City of Milwaukee's racial inequities for the benefit of all of its residents and for the region to achieve its full potential; now, therefore

The Mayor and Common Council of the City of Milwaukee do ordain as follows:

Part 1. Chapter 375 of the code is created to read:

CHAPTER 375

OFFICE OF AFRICAN AMERICAN AFFAIRS

375-1. Creation. There is created an office of African American affairs in the department of administration which shall be responsible for the administration, coordination and implementation of the city's policies relating to the special needs of the city's African American residents.

375-3. Administration. Under the direction of the department of administration, the office of African American affairs shall be administered by a manager appointed by the mayor and confirmed by the common council. The manager of the office of African American affairs shall serve concurrently with the term of the mayor.

375-5. Duties. The manager of the office of African American affairs shall:

1. Examine and define issues central to the rights and needs of African American residents of the city.
2. Identify and assess the potential disparate impacts of new budgetary and regulatory initiatives on African American residents of the city.
3. Present recommendations to the common council for changes in existing programs and ordinances that disparately impact African Americans residents of the city.
4. Identify barriers faced by African American residents of the city to existing government resources and services and present recommendations for removing those barriers.
5. Develop and implement policies, plans and programs related to the special needs of African Americans residents of the city.
6. Promote equal opportunities for African American residents of the city with regards to home ownership, business ownership, job creation, job training, health care and education.
7. Promote multiculturalism and full participation by African American residents of the city.

375-7. Cooperation. The manager of the office of African American affairs shall coordinate the activities of the office under this section with any other city departments, boards, commissions and councils that have been tasked with attending to the needs of the city's African American residents.

375-9. Annual Report. The manager of the office of African American affairs shall submit an annual written report of its activities under this section to the common council and the mayor.

APPROVED AS TO FORM

Legislative Reference Bureau

Date: _____

IT IS OUR OPINION THAT THE ORDINANCE
IS LEGAL AND ENFORCEABLE

Office of the City Attorney

Date: _____

Dana J. Zelazny
LRB164046-1
7/12/2016