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JOSÉ G. PÉREZ
ALDERMAN, 12TH DISTRICT

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- Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District Commission
- National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials
- National League of Cities
- Walker's Point Association
- Walker Square Neighborhood Association

March 20, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

In his veto message concerning Common Council File Number 181544, Mayor Barrett expends a lot of effort attempting to make a procedural case.

The Mayor's case is not based on an opinion from the Office of the City Attorney, but on an e-mail from staff.

What the Mayor fails to do, is address the substance that brought all of the Council to a unanimous vote (of those present) when this resolution was adopted.

The Mayor makes no mention of the fact that I introduced this file more than a year ago, asking that the Department of City Development (DCD) work with the Office of the City Attorney to extricate the City from its contracts with the troubled Friends of Housing organization.

It makes no mention of the commitment made to the members of the Zoning, Neighborhoods, and Development Committee by DCD staff in March of last year to see what could be done.

It makes no mention of the decision by DCD staff not to keep their word to the committee, but instead extend the contract -- even though the contract was set to expire. A move that could have potentially resolve this whole matter with a fresh, clean bidding process.

It makes no mention of the Commissioner of DCD's refusal to answer my written questions pertaining to all this, or of his insistence that he would only answer questions in front of the very same committee his own staff had already disrespected.

And, most troubling, his message does nothing to refute the litany of problems associated with the Friends of Housing's management of properties included in the file under consideration.

The Mayor seems content to let an outside agency that has engaged in behavior that is more commonly associated with a slumlord continue to receive public money to provide poor service to our residents.

The very emptiness of the Mayor's response should be reason enough for a unanimous rejection of his veto.

Sincerely,

José G. Pérez,
Alderman, 12th District