

**Statement by Sharon D. Robinson  
City of Milwaukee - Common Council Hearing  
June 30, 2004**

Chairman Murphy, Vice Chairman D'Amato and distinguished members of the Committee, it is an honor and privilege to appear before you today.

Let me begin by expressing my profound gratitude to Mayor Tom Barrett for his friendship and for appointing me to serve as Director of the Department of Administration. I am excited about the prospect of joining Mayor Barrett's team and serving the people of Milwaukee.

I have spent nearly all of my working life in public service. To me, there is no greater honor or responsibility. I am especially thrilled about this opportunity because for me it means coming home. I grew up in the Midwest and have family members and many close friends who live here in Milwaukee.

I have spent a lot of time here and my ties to this City and region are strong. For eight years, first as Legislative Director and then as Chief of Staff, I worked for then U. S. Representative Barrett when he represented Milwaukee in the United States Congress. Prior to this, I held a senior position in the office of another Midwestern Congressman elected from a district in Michigan but born and raised in Wisconsin. I currently direct the Washington office of a leading international development institute headquartered at the University of Michigan Business School.

So I come to you with more than twenty years of experience in public service. And I pledge to bring the full measure of my energy and ability to bear in managing DOA programs and activities if confirmed.

As an African-American woman who grew up with limited means, I have faced adversity and know what it is like to survive in an environment where dollars are scarce. My father provided for a wife and five children on an annual income of less than \$20,000. Every dollar had to be spent wisely. My parents taught me the importance of hard work and instilled in me a set of core values – values including integrity, spirituality, leadership, teamwork and fiscal responsibility. I pledge to approach the DOA job with these values foremost in mind. Because at the end of the day, this job is about serving taxpayers with compassion and integrity and making every dime count.

As the Mayor said in his inaugural address, many challenges lie ahead. We must not be afraid to confront them head on. Together, we must find innovative and effective ways to create jobs, grow our economy, improve our schools, strengthen health care and provide for public safety. I pledge to work diligently to advance DOA's core mission to make Milwaukee one of the nation's most attractive cities in which to work, live and do business. My agenda will include working to guarantee top quality service by DOA divisions, getting the most value for taxpayer dollars, and influencing state and federal policies in a way that will help the city thrive.

As we prepare the City's 2005 budget, I will carefully review every division under the authority of DOA, with the goal of adopting budget and policy measures that will provide greater efficiency, protect the city's fiscal foundation, and ensure the highest degree of coordination with other City departments. Given my extensive federal experience, I also look forward to developing and implementing a plan to capture more federal dollars for City services and programs.

And other  
City  
Departments

On a personal note, my father was called to the ministry 20 years ago. And I have benefited greatly from the spiritual light that shines through both him and my mother. As much as I have enjoyed the excitement of working in Washington, and more recently, on international issues, I too feel a calling – a calling to come back home to work on domestic ~~policy~~ issues I am most passionate about.

In closing, let me thank you once again for the opportunity to be here today. I look forward to sitting down with each of you to further discuss and better understand your concerns and ideas. I am confident that working together we can achieve great success in serving the people of this great city and in promoting Milwaukee as one of the nation's renowned centers of opportunity, leadership and governance.

I ask for your support and hope you will vote to confirm my appointment. And now I would be pleased to respond to any questions you might have.

**Sharon D. Robinson**  
**Reference List**

Wendy Sherman  
Partner  
The Albright Group  
901 15<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Suite 1000  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
Phone: 202-842-7222

E. LaBrent Chrite  
Associate Dean and MBA Director  
University of Arizona  
Tucson, Arizona 85721  
Phone: 520-626-3372 or 520-955-1343  
(Former Managing Director - William Davidson Institute)

Jan Piraino  
Chief of Staff  
Office of the Mayor  
City of Madison  
210 Martin Luther King Boulevard, Room 403  
Madison, Wisconsin 53710  
Phone: 608-266-4611 or 608-772-2445  
(Former Chief of Staff – U. S. Representative Tom Barrett)

Bob Carr  
Attorney  
(Former U. S. Representative – Michigan)  
Phone: 202-364-0069 or 202-296-9600