



**Tom Barrett**  
Mayor, City of Milwaukee

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February 15, 2018

Milwaukee Common Council President Ashanti Hamilton

Honorable Members of the Milwaukee Common Council

Council President Hamilton and Members:

I am returning Common File 171639 unsigned.

I have made clear my displeasure and concern with the rushed and unprecedented application of the Council's emergency appointment authority. The vetting of the interim Commissioner of Health should have gone through the Council's committee hearing process.

The actions of the Council were not motivated by public health concerns but by political concerns. An unfortunate result was that the public was not afforded the option to attend a committee meeting and an opportunity for Council members to ask additional questions and seek additional information was lost.

I do understand the politicization of the process to date. Quite frankly, the children and families who need action from their city government and health professionals do not deserve an extended controversy over an interim appointment. It's time for that to stop.

I will continue the search and selection process for a permanent Health Commissioner. The application process closes on February 23, 2018 and the selection process will begin soon after.

As Mayor and, as members of the Common Council, we have a shared obligation to families and citizens to move the Health Department forward - taking a course of corrective action, insuring that the morale and confidence of Department employees to undertake the necessary work is strong and engaging the public in the Department's service delivery improvements are essential to meeting the tasks ahead.

I have had two constructive meetings with interim Commissioner McManus and have shared both my concerns and my priorities. I have committed to her the Administration's full support in moving the Health Department forward.

I have put in place a support team to assist the interim Commissioner. There are immediate budget, position vacancies and programmatic corrective actions that must be addressed.

There is no question that there are multiple issues to tackle and multiple solutions being offered. We owe it to the public to work through those thoroughly, pragmatically and hopefully together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Barrett". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "T" and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Tom Barrett

Mayor