

July 9, 2024

Dear Honorable Members of the Milwaukee Common Council:

It is my pleasure to write to you in support of the appointment of Karen Gotzler to the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee (HACM) Board of Commissioners.

I have known Karen for approximately 20 years. I first met Karen while working on a crisis management task force intended to provide assistance to not-for-profit housing providers in Milwaukee after a number of the largest housing providers closed for numerous administrative and financial reasons. I was the Director of Community Development for the Wisconsin State Office of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The task force provided excellent analysis of the problem and produced documents as well as a crisis management team made available to the non-profit community.

Karen was the President & CEO of Urban Economic Development Association of Wisconsin (UEDA). My HUD office was impressed and pleased by Karen's work and subsequently selected UEDA numerous times to provide technical assistance for many Milwaukee-based housing and community development organizations. Now, twenty or so years later, I find it impressive that UEDA remains an active and leading provider of such technical assistance which, to me, is a testament to the organization that Karen build and inspired.

I worked often with Karen in her various positions working with housing and community development in Milwaukee. She has always been dedicated, extremely knowledgeable and well respected. In her consulting capacity, she has provided expert technical assistance to public housing agencies and nonprofit affordable housing organizations. She helped mentor me when I retired from HUD and started a small and successful community development consulting firm. I am also impressed with her tenure as a leader with the Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura where she manages a public housing agency's affordable housing portfolio. That is a difficult job and she has held it for a number of years. She has a depth of knowledge that will be

extremely beneficial to the City of Milwaukee and HACM. I have no doubt about that.

Karen is a highly respected and principled local professional across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. She is motivated by public service and working to ensure every member of her community has they need to thrive. Her values, skills, and specialized knowledge in the public housing field make her a highly qualified and valuable member of the Board.

Again, I highly recommend Karen Gotzler for appointment to the HACM Board of Commissioners. She will be an asset to the board, to the Council, and to the City. I strongly encourage your favorable consideration of her nomination.

Sincerely,

Bob Berlan

Retired, Director of Community Planning and Development
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development