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COLLEEN FOLEY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

January 12, 2021

City of Milwaukee Common Council
City Hall
200 E. Wells Street
Room 205 Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Honorable Members of the City of Milwaukee Common Council,

I am writing to support the appointment of Makda Fessahaye as the Director of the Department of Employee Relations for the City of Milwaukee.

I have had the pleasure of knowing Makda for the last two (2) years through our mutual membership in the Wisconsin African American Lawyers Association (WAAL) and our frequent communications involving Legal Aid's Public Interest Justice Initiative (a program that reviews the sentences of individuals who committed crimes as juveniles under a methodology since revised by the United States Supreme Court) and the Department of Corrections, where she has served as the Administrator for the Division of Adult Institutions. Makda responded to requests in a prompt, professional manner, efficiently and diplomatically ensuring that our program proceeded within an often complicated system.

I know what makes for a successful lawyer and professional after twenty-five years as a lawyer, including my two (2)-plus year tenure as head of this organization, and my former position for twelve (12) years as Deputy Corporation Counsel for Milwaukee County. Makda Fessahaye exhibits the right attributes to be the Employee Relations Director for the City of Milwaukee. Her keen intellect and genuine curiosity for solving complex legal matters will serve her well in this position, which necessarily involves compliance with state and federal employment laws and civil services rules. Makda also has other skills that are critical to any leadership role - a respectful attitude towards others and a positive and energetic approach to problem solving.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Very truly yours,

Colleen Foley
Executive Director