

BY ALDS. KOVAC, COGGS, BOHL, PÉREZ, BORKOWSKI

Resolution congratulating Karyn Rotker on her 10th anniversary as the chair of the Shir Hadash Social Justice Committee.

WHEREAS,

KARYN ROTKER

was recognized for the 10th anniversary of her work on social justice issues as the chair of the Shir Hadash Social Justice Committee on May 1, 2016 at Casablanca 728 E. Brady St.; and

WHEREAS, *Karyn Rotker has worked tirelessly for the citizens of the City of Milwaukee and the State of Wisconsin, battling injustice in the courts and winning, and her grievances with single-sex classrooms based on stereotyped notions of learning resulted in school districts taking action to rescind such programs; and*

WHEREAS, *Karyn Rotker led a team of her peers in 2009 representing tenants of a racially integrated and disability accessible affordable housing complex in a nearly all-white suburb, arguing that the suburb's efforts to tear down the complex because of zoning violations would discriminate against renters of color and renters with disabilities, in violation of the Fair Housing Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, and through her advocacy, allowed the apartments to remain and guaranteed they would provide affordable housing through 2025; and*

WHEREAS, *Karyn Rotker lodged a complaint with the US Department of Health and Human Services challenging the W-2 "workfare" program for discriminatory treatment of applicants with disabilities and racial disparities resulting in a settlement in 2007 that limited the use of "job ready" classifications as a way to deny benefits; and*

WHEREAS, *Karyn Rotker worked with Dennis Grzezinski and challenged a \$2 billion reconstruction and expansion of the Zoo Interchange in Milwaukee on the grounds that WisDOT expressly refused to consider public transit as part of its proposal, and in May 2014, the defendants agreed to spend \$13.5 million on new commuter bus lines to take central city residents to jobs in the suburbs, resulting in the creation of three lines that didn't exist before; now, therefore, be it*

RESOLVED, *That the Common Council of the City of Milwaukee recognizes and thanks Karyn Rotker for her contributions to the community and her efforts on social justice issues and wishes for her success in all of her future endeavors.*

Introduced by Common Council members Nik Kovac, Milele A. Coggs, Jim Bohl, José G. Pérez and Mark A. Borkowski and approved by all members of the Milwaukee Common Council on April 15, 2016.

received her J.D. from University Wisconsin Madison in 1986;

MICAH & Black Health Coalition of Wisconsin v. Gottlieb, 12-CV-556 (W.D. Wis.): Karyn and Dennis Grzezinski litigated this challenge to a \$2 billion reconstruction and expansion of the Zoo Interchange in Milwaukee on the grounds WisDOT expressly refused to consider public transit as part of its proposal, in a way that would further widen the already large gap between transit-dependent communities of color and disproportionately white suburban highway commuters. In response to their motion for a preliminary injunction, Judge Adelman wrote an opinion finding they had a substantial likelihood of success, which forced DOT to the bargaining table. In May 2014, the defendants agreed to spend \$13.5 million on new commuter bus lines to take central city residents to jobs in the suburbs. There are now three lines running that didn't exist before.

Karyn wrote a series of letters to the City of Madison arguing that the City's ban on panhandling in the business district and on "aggressive" panhandling violated the First Amendment rights of panhandlers. These letters resulted in the City agreeing not to enforce those ordinances just last month.

Over the past few years, her complaints to the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights challenging single-sex classrooms based on stereotyped notions of how boys and girls learn resulted in school districts with such programs rescinding them.

State Financial Bank et al. v. City of South Milwaukee, 2000C1530 (E.D. Wis.): In this case, Karyn was a leader of a team of lawyers representing tenants of a racially integrated and disability-accessible affordable housing complex in a nearly all white Milwaukee suburb. A jury returned a verdict after a three-week trial in 2009 finding that the suburb's efforts to tear down the complex because of zoning violations would discriminate against renters of color and renters with disabilities, in violation of the Fair Housing Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. That verdict forced a settlement that allowed the apartments to remain and guaranteed they would provide affordable housing through 2025.

increased screening, assessment and services for persons with disabilities, increased monitoring of racial disparities, and increased training and oversight by OCR.

A series of administrative complaints over the years about state agencies (including DOC) and local governments (including Brown County) that discriminated based on national origin or limited English proficiency have resulted in new policies and procedures to provide materials in languages other than English.