



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Chris Abele

MILWAUKEE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

DATE: March 14, 2016

TO: The Honorable Milwaukee Board of Supervisors

FROM: Chris Abele, Milwaukee County Executive

RE: Support for County Board File No. 16-109

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Milwaukee Area Technical College is a critically important institution in Milwaukee. It educates thousands of students every year and is a crucial component of Milwaukee's jobs pipeline. MATC's student body reflects the diversity of the Milwaukee region, and it is important that its Board reflect that diversity as well.

MATC does a phenomenal job of educating students and placing them in good paying jobs. That is why I am a proud supporter of the MATC Promise, a new initiative that provides free college education for area high school graduates who meet program eligibility requirements. The MATC Promise will help area high school students realize their dream of attending college and preparing for a career while providing more well-trained employees for Milwaukee-area businesses.

While Milwaukee County is home to over 80% of the MATC student body, our County possesses only 50% of the appointing power. This leaves Milwaukee underrepresented, and the state legislation that created this situation should be analyzed to see how it can be improved. The Board's resolution presents multiple ideas on how to do this.

It is important that Milwaukee County citizens have accurate information as to the current makeup of the MATC Board and my record in making appointments to that Board. The Whereas clause stating that I have "consistently voted to appoint candidates from Ozaukee County over qualified African Americans and other candidates from the County" is factually false.

I have participated in MATC Board appointments in 2012, 2014, and 2015. In that time, we have appointed 13 individuals, some multiple times. Of those 13 individuals, only one does not live or work in Milwaukee County. It is also worth noting that, of the 13 individuals appointed since my involvement in the process began, only two did not at some point also receive the support of the Milwaukee County Board Chair.

The Whereas clause stating that "African American representation on the District Board has plummeted from four to one" is also false. The MATC Board currently has two African American members. Nonetheless, this is not enough. I am eager to strengthen the Board's diversity and have worked to proactively attract Board candidates to diversify the candidate pool from which Board

members are chosen from. We will have the opportunity to demonstrate a commitment to diversity during the next appointment cycle later this month.

Participating in the MATC Board appointment process is one of many critical roles that I play as County Executive. MATC's role in maintaining Milwaukee as a vital community is paramount, and I am happy that the appointment process is getting the attention that it should.