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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

March 16, 2017

MAYOR KAREN FREEMAN-WILSON RESPONDS TO PRESIDENT'S BUDGET RELEASED TODAY

Gary, Indiana-Today, Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson released this statement following the release of President Trump's "skinny" budget. The budget contained substantial cuts in a number of programs. Freeman-Wilson says in his introductory letter, President Trump wrote, "Our aim is to meet the simple, but crucial demand of our citizens—a Government that puts the needs of its own people first. When we do that, we will set free the dreams of every American, and we will begin a new chapter of American greatness. A budget that puts America first must make the safety of our people its number one priority—because without safety, there can be no prosperity."

Mayor Freeman-Wilson continued, "However, it is clear from the budget that the President's definition of putting America first and protecting our freedom is narrow and shortsighted. Securing a nation is not only ensuring that we can protect our borders and fight enemies of freedom at home and abroad. Security also includes decent and affordable housing in urban and rural communities for our seniors, veterans and others who depend on Community Development Block Grant and HOME funds. Security insures that we establish trust between the community and police as provided through the Community Oriented Policing Initiative. Security also dictates that we provide mental health and substance abuse treatment in rural and urban communities devastated by opioids addiction. The ultimate test of security is whether we keep the promises of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness as laid out in the preamble to the Declaration of Independence."

"The President's budget cavalierly dismisses some programs as "outdated," "not benefitting poor people," or better provided by state and local government. Those baseless assertions make this budget the assault on America's cities that it was widely anticipated to be. This budget angers and saddens me at the same time because it baffles me how an administration who has billed themselves and expected to "put America first" has not only placed our most vulnerable citizens last but has "flipped them the proverbial bird" in the process. So now it is time for Congress to act and cities to lead."

The budget posted online this morning was called a blueprint for reshaping American government.