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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

February 21, 2019

### **BUFFINGTON HARBOR AND CASINO REACH ANOTHER HURDLE**

**Gary, Indiana**-Gary Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson and Council President Ronald Brewer praised the passage of Senate Bill 66 and Senate Bill 552 out of the Senate Appropriations Committee with unanimous votes. The city officials expressed their appreciation to Senator Eddie Melton and Senate Appropriations Chair Ryan Mischler for working to address concerns previously voiced about Senate Bill 66.

Last week, Senate Mischler filed Senate Bill 66, subtitled the Gary Economic Development Bill, in an effort to advance development at Gary's Buffington Harbor. The bill provided for the creation of a trans-modal compact to allow the city of Gary, Airport Authority and Port Authority to partner with state entities to accelerate development at Buffington Harbor.

During her testimony last week, Mayor Freeman-Wilson expressed concerns about the composition and the authority of the compact. After working with members of the General Assembly over the last week, Mayor Freeman-Wilson and Councilman Brewer commended the members of the Senate committee for amending the composition of the compact that provides a true voice for Gary residents.

Additionally, Mayor Freeman-Wilson and Council President Brewer are pleased that language was added to the bill that explicitly states that all assets such as the port and airport remain in the city of Gary's control. Mayor Freeman-Wilson also commended the addition of language that provides for a goal for local businesses and a pilot for local employment. Councilman Brewer praised the opportunity for collaboration with the State of Indiana for the benefit of Gary citizens.

Senate Bill 552 is a global gaming bill that provides for the move of the Gary casino from Buffington Harbor to 80/94 and allows a second license to move to Vigo County. The Mayor and Council President are pleased with the progress of the Senate Bill 552 and praised the amendment that gives discretion to the citizens of Gary about whether other casinos will be compensated for any losses that results from Gary's move.

Senate Bills 66 and 552 will now be considered by the full Senate before passing to the Indiana House of Representatives. City officials will continue to work towards the passage of these key pieces of legislation.

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