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## **MAYOR KAREN FREEMAN-WILSON NEXT PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE CHICAGO URBAN LEAGUE**

**Gary, Indiana**-Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson announced today her decision to accept the position as President and Chief Executive Officer of the Chicago Urban League. Freeman-Wilson will assume the helm of the Urban League upon the completion of her term in office.

“I am excited about the opportunity to join the Urban League team,” said Freeman-Wilson. “I consider it a divine mission. I am also humbled by the opportunity to build on the legacy of Interim CEO Barbara A. Lumpkin and her predecessors who have been amazing community advocates for justice, housing, employment and business development. I look forward to working with the board of directors and staff of the Chicago Urban League as well as the partners throughout Chicagoland to continue the impact and prestige of this historic organization in the community.”

Chicago Urban League Board Chairman Eric S. Smith said, “Karen Freeman-Wilson has a depth of leadership experience and a demonstrated passion for the issues of equality and social justice that are central to the mission of the Chicago Urban League. We are confident that she will be a strong, visionary leader who will continue to advance the organization’s excellent work toward serving the needs of African-American communities and advocating for equity.”

Freeman-Wilson is the first woman to serve as Mayor of Gary and the first African-American female mayor in the State of Indiana. She lost the May primary election to Democratic Mayoral Nominee Jerome Prince, who is presumed to take office on January 1, 2020.

Freeman-Wilson cited a “to do” list that the team is pursuing prior to her departure. “There are a number of exciting plans in store in the coming months.” Spectacle Entertainment is expected to break ground with Hard Rock Casino in the fall. The renovated Hudson Campbell facility will be complete. Phase 2 of the Lake Street project is underway and expected to be complete in November. Finally, a statue of Mayor Richard Gordon Hatcher, the first African-American mayor

of Gary and one of the first to serve as mayor of a major city will be erected in the fall as well. We also continue our work to stabilize the city's finances.

“It has been an honor to serve the citizens of my hometown with an amazing team of dedicated individuals. From the development of the Gary/Chicago International Airport to the development for the Hard Rock Casino to unprecedented investment by public and private partners, we have created a body of work that will benefit Gary citizens for decades to come. I am humbled most by the establishment of new businesses and the creation of jobs. While I will miss serving as Mayor, I look forward to continuing my passion for service.”

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