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Dear Faith Leaders:

We first want to express our appreciation for the continuous work you do each day to lift up the community, empower those you serve and make meaningful impact in the City of Milwaukee. The faith community historically and presently has been a significant driving force in the progress our City has experienced pertaining to equity and social justice.

This month, the City of Milwaukee commemorates the 50th Anniversary of Milwaukee's Open Housing Marches. In the spirit of celebration and recognition of this defining time in our City, we are calling on leaders in the faith community to take a moment on the weekend of August 26-27 to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Open Housing Marches by sharing this history with those who gather in your places of worship.

The following information is what we like the residents of our City to know and memorialize:

- August 28, 2017 marks the 50th Anniversary of the open housing marches in Milwaukee that began on August 28, 1967.
- For 200 consecutive days, advocates including Vel Phillips, Father James Groppi, the NAACP Youth Council and hundreds of African-American residents led a push for open housing that took marchers north to south, across the Sixteenth Street Viaduct and onto what is now known as Cesar E. Chavez Drive.
- The open housing marches sparked the passage of a municipal open housing law.
- The municipal open housing law strengthened federal and state laws that were in place at the time and along with it, gave promise that the city's housing would one day be integrated.
- Milwaukee's open housing marches garnered national attention and were instrumental in helping pass the Fair Housing Act of 1968 which prohibited discrimination concerning the sale, rental and financing of housing based on race, religion, national origin and sex.
- 50 years later, we still see that there is work that must continue to end racial segregation in housing in Milwaukee.
- We must continue to use our voices and commitment to service in ways that unite people of all beliefs and identities to engage in social justice work that actualizes liberty and justice for all.

This history can be shared as an announcement or included in the inspiration you will share in your place of worship. Again, we are extremely grateful for the strength we see in our faith community in Milwaukee and the impact you have on its residents. Sharing this information is one way to keep these historical moments relevant in our hearts and thoughts as we strive to build upon what the leaders who have gone before us worked to accomplish.

Sincerely,

Tom Barrett
Mayor

Ashanti Hamilton
Common Council President