



ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY  
**INNOVATION**  
CENTER



**US Water  
Alliance**

## **Field Hearing on Promoting Water Equity in Great Lakes Cities and Safeguarding the Transformative Potential of the Infrastructure Law**

*Hosted by the Mayors Commission in Water Equity in Partnership with the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, the Environmental Policy Innovation Center, and the U.S. Water Alliance*

September 15, 2022 at 2-3:30pm CT/3-4:30pm ET  
Wisconsin Center, Room 101B, 400 W Wisconsin Ave, Milwaukee

### **EPA Officials in Attendance:**



#### **Debra Shore, Regional Administrator, U.S. EPA Region 5**

Debra Shore is the Regional Administrator for U.S. EPA Region 5. Her responsibilities include overseeing environmental protection efforts in the Great Lakes states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin, as well as 35 federally recognized tribal nations. One of her roles is manager of EPA's Great Lakes National Program, in which she leads restoration and protection of the largest freshwater system in the world.

Prior to joining EPA, Shore was an elected member of the Board of Commissioners of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, a \$1 billion agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management for more than five million people. She has been a strong advocate for cleaning up the Chicago waterways and for resource recovery, including the reuse of treated water and the generation of renewable energy. Shore is a past chair and board member of the Great Lakes Protection Fund and served as board member and chair of the LGBTQ Victory Institute.

Shore was born in Chicago. She graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Goucher College in Baltimore with a degree in philosophy and visual arts. She earned master's degrees from Johns Hopkins University and Columbia College (Chicago). Shore lives with her spouse, Kathleen Gillespie, in Evanston, Illinois. She has climbed 42 of the 58 mountains in Colorado more than 14,000' high. Her son, Ben, is an architect in Seattle.



#### **Karen Dettmer, Managing Director for Infrastructure Implementation, U.S. EPA, Office of Water**

Karen Dettmer is Managing Director for Infrastructure Implementation for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Water. The Office of Water works to ensure that drinking water is safe, wastewater is safely returned to the environment, and surface waters are properly managed and protected. Prior to joining EPA, Karen served as the Commissioner of Public Works for the City of Milwaukee and as Superintendent of Milwaukee Water Works in Wisconsin. In these roles she has developed and managed large capital projects, and her

leadership has been recognized for advancing racial equity. Karen is a licensed Professional Engineer in the state of Wisconsin, and she holds a B.S. in architectural engineering and an M.S. in environmental engineering from Milwaukee School of Engineering.

### **State Officials in Attendance:**



#### ***Casey Sweeney, Program and Policy Analyst in Community Financial Assistance Bureau, Wisconsin DNR***

Casey started in the water and sanitation field with an international volunteer program that allowed him to support small-scale projects in water scarce locations of Mexico. Having joined the DNR in 2019, he is the current SRF Federal Liaison and Policy Analyst for the Environmental Loans Section and is deeply involved with the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law implementation.



#### **Kelly Green, Administrator of Water Infrastructure Financing, Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE)**



#### **Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection**

### **Participating Mayors:**



#### **Mayor Cavalier Johnson, Milwaukee, WI**

In April of 2022, the people of Milwaukee elected Mayor Cavalier Johnson as the forty-fifth chief executive of the City of Milwaukee. Earning more than seventy-percent of the vote, he became the first Black mayor elected in the city, and only the fourth elected mayor in the past sixty-two years. Mayor Johnson took office as Acting Mayor of the City of Milwaukee in late 2021, and he set out immediately to build a safer city. He has prioritized violence reduction, economic development, and roadway safety. Before taking on his role as Acting Mayor, Johnson served as Common Council President while representing the city's 2nd Aldermanic District.

Mayor Johnson's commitment to public service began at an early age when he was selected by the YMCA to participate in a pre-college program for low-income Milwaukee Public School students. That program, Sponsor-A-Scholar, instilled in him a passion to make Milwaukee better for future generations. Growing up, his family moved frequently, and until middle school Mayor Johnson attended a different Milwaukee Public School almost every year. He has seen violence, evictions, and food insecurity — challenges common in urban poverty. He brings that lived experience to his work as Mayor.

After graduating Bay View High School, Mayor Johnson earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and returned home to work for the Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board, now Employ Milwaukee. His focus included working with at-risk young people, youth looking for their first jobs, and adults retooling to enter the workforce. Before his election as alderman, he served as a staff assistant in the Mayor's Office, where he worked with community and faith leaders to find creative solutions to pressing issues facing families.



### **Mayor Billy McKinney, Zion, IL**

Prior to becoming the 18<sup>th</sup> Mayor of the City of Zion, Mayor Billy McKinney worked for the National Basketball Association (NBA) for 39 years in various team and leadership capacities. Mayor McKinney worked as a professional athlete for the first seven years and using the same skill sets of leadership, 110% effort, and positive mental attitude, he transitioned into leadership with the NBA as a Front Office Executive for 32 years. After retiring from playing, McKinney's versatility, likeability, professional demeanor, and business acumen catapulted him into the front office management with the Chicago Bulls, where he became the first African American executive in the history of the organization. McKinney's management career consisted of positions as General Manager for the Minnesota Timberwolves, Detroit Pistons and the WNBA's Seattle Storm.

Since being elected Mayor of Zion in 2019, McKinney was immediately appointed as the Board Member for the Lake County Land Bank, Vice President of the Coalition for Healthy Communities, Commissioner and Executive Board Member of the Lake County Community Housing Development Commission, and the Lake County Council of Mayors.

In July of 2021, Mayor McKinney was appointed to the prestigious position as the Chair of the Mayors Commission on Water Equity. This particular commission is working closely with the President Biden's administration to receive funding through the recently passed Infrastructure Bill to focus on the challenge of clean and affordable water to citizens, solutions to urban flooding, replacement of lead from water, replacing lead pipelines, and creating job opportunities for minorities in the water workforce. In 2022, Mayor McKinney continued his leadership with the organization and was elected chair of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative.



### **Mayor Daniel Biss, Evanston, IL**

Mayor Biss grew up in Bloomington, Indiana, and moved to Illinois after completing his Bachelor's degree at Harvard University and his Ph.D. in mathematics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

In 2021, Daniel Biss won the election for mayor of Evanston in the city's consolidated primary. Prior to his role as mayor, Biss was elected to the Illinois House of Representatives in 2010. In 2012, he ran for the Senate, where he represented Evanston and the 9<sup>th</sup> district for six years until his run for governor.

During his time in state government, Daniel developed a reputation of forwarding pragmatic and progressive solutions to policy problems covering a wide range of policy issues. He earned numerous recognitions for this work, including the Alzheimer's Association Illinois Legislator of the Year award, the Richard J. Phelan Profile in Courage Award from Planned Parenthood Illinois Action, and designation as one of Crain's Chicago 40 Under 40.

Daniel has passed historic legislation that led to a ban on so-called LGBTQ "conversion therapy", the creation of a groundbreaking first-of-its-kind retirement security program, and the protection of residents from inappropriate police surveillance using drones and other invasive technologies. He also passed legislation that moved his local community forward. He crafted legislation to streamline Evanston government so better and more efficient services could be provided. He also passed a law that moved his community closer to accessing offshore wind power.



### **Mayor Lori Lightfoot, Chicago, IL**

Lori E. Lightfoot is the 56<sup>th</sup> Mayor of Chicago. Since assuming office following her historic election, Mayor Lightfoot has undertaken an ambitious agenda of expanding opportunity and inclusive economic growth across Chicago's neighborhoods and communities, with early accomplishments including landmark ethics and good governance reforms, worker protection legislation, and closing a record \$838 million budget gap, as well as key investments in education, public safety and financial stability. Mayor Lightfoot also placed Chicago on the path to a \$15 minimum wage by 2021.

In response to the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis, Mayor Lightfoot has led a coordinated, citywide response across government, business, and community organizations to effectively address its spread and broader public impact, including the creation of the Racial Equity Rapid Response Team, the COVID-19 Recovery Task Force, among other actions.

Prior to her election, Mayor Lightfoot most recently served as a senior equity partner in the Litigation and Conflict Resolution Group at Mayer Brown. Previously, she served as President of the Chicago Police Board, as well as the Chair of the Police Accountability Task Force. Mayor Lightfoot also served as Chief of Staff and General Counsel of the Chicago Office of Emergency Management and Communications, interim First Deputy of the Chicago Department of Procurement Services, Chief Administrator of the Office of Professional Standards, and as Assistant United States Attorney.

A native of Massillon, Ohio, Mayor Lightfoot has been a resident of Chicago since 1986 and lives on the Near Northwest Side with her wife Amy Eshleman and their daughter.



### **Mayor Jack Bradley, Lorain, OH**

Jack W. Bradley is a husband, father, veteran, business owner and attorney with 43 years of legal experience and service to Lorain. He has been married to his wife, Deborah, for 50 years and is the proud father of Jaclyn and granddaughter, Roma. Jack also taught 4th grade at Emerson Elementary School in the City of Lorain for 5 years while attending law school at night. Unwavering in his commitment to the youth, he has spent nearly 20 years working with teens and leading youth retreats while supporting high school students and young adults to believe in themselves and lead successful lives.

Born in Lorain and living here his entire life, Jack has achieved much through hard work and dedication, yet he also understands hardship and believes in lending a hand to people when they most need support. When he was only 5 years old, his father, a mechanic, lost his right arm in a tragic work accident. Yet in watching his parents overcome this tragedy, he learned true strength and was also instilled with the value of never giving up.

Most recently, Mayor Bradley was an honored speaker at the Plenary Session of the 2022 U.S. EPA National Brownfields Conference in Oklahoma City, OK and was a participant in "Communities in Action: Building a Better Ohio" at the White House. As mayor, Jack has dedicated himself to making all of Lorain proud of our great city.



### **Mayor Marcus Muhammad, Benton Harbor, MI**

Marcus Muhammad, 1993 graduate of Benton Harbor High School, starred as a player for the Benton Harbor Tigers and then went on to play college basketball at DePaul University in Chicago, Illinois. He later returned to Benton Harbor as the Head Boys Basketball Coach and Assistant Ladies Basketball Coach.

He was elected as Commissioner-at-Large for the City of Benton Harbor in 2009 and re-elected in 2013; appointed as the Mayor Pro-Tem under the leadership of former Mayor Wilce Cooke and Chairman of the Legislative Committee. In 2015, he was elected as the Mayor of the City of Benton Harbor where he continues to serve his community.



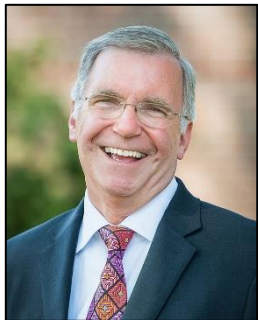
### **Mayor Ken Johnson, Muskegon, MI**

Kenneth D. Johnson was elected the 67<sup>th</sup> mayor of the magnificent City of Muskegon in the great State of Michigan on Nov. 2, 2021, and he was sworn into office on Jan. 3, 2022. His current term runs through the end of 2025.

After high school, Ken attended The George Washington University, where he earned a dual B.A. in International Affairs and Political Science. He returned to Muskegon in 2009 with a desire to help move Muskegon forward. He became active in the Nims Neighborhood Association, of which he remains a board member, and ran successfully for the City Commission in 2013.

Prior to being elected mayor, Ken served two, four-year terms as an-at-large City Commissioner. He's the first openly gay person to serve as an at-large commissioner and now as mayor.

Mayor Johnson is honored to preside as Chair of the most diverse City Commission in Muskegon's history and to work with a great team of competent and caring staff. His priorities include improving governance, bolstering communications and community engagement, reviving the City's Parks & Recreation Department, expanding entrepreneurial opportunities, enhancing the City's environmental and fiscal sustainability, and expanding the array of quality and affordable housing options available.



### **Mayor Joe Schember, Erie, PA**

On Jan. 2, 2018, Joseph V. Schember was sworn in as the 48<sup>th</sup> Mayor of the City of Erie. On Jan. 3, 2022, he was sworn in for his second term.

A lifelong Erie resident, Joe obtained his undergraduate degree in English at Gannon University. He went on to obtain a master's degree in English from the University of Dayton and a master's degree in business management from Gannon University. After teaching high school in St. Mary's, Pa. for two years, Joe returned to Erie and began a career in banking. What Joe loved about banking is that it is a "people business". That is why he spent 40 years in various banking roles and why he loves being Mayor now. A dedicated teacher, Joe spent 30 years teaching summer banking classes for the PA Bankers Association and the American Bankers Association at Bucknell, Georgetown, University of Pennsylvania and Penn State Universities.

In an effort to give back to the community, Joe served as a member of Erie City Council for 5½ years. During this time, he chaired the finance committee and was active in guiding decisions that would help the city's finances. Now, as mayor, Joe is committed to being Open, Honest, Transparent, and Accessible. He is on a mission to "Build Opportunity. Restore Hope. Transform Erie" for future generations. While listening and collaborating, he is tackling the tough, complex issues facing this city and region. Joe is working hard to achieve his Vision: "Erie is a Community of Choice. We celebrate our Rich Cultural Diversity, Welcoming and Vibrant Neighborhoods, World-Class Downtown and Bayfront, Excellent Education for Everyone, and Abundance of Family-sustaining Jobs.



### **Mayor Malik Evans, Rochester, NY**

Malik D. Evans is the 71<sup>st</sup> Mayor of Rochester. As the leader of the City's executive branch, Mayor Evans is committed to promoting positive, systemic and structural change by providing transparent and collaborative leadership, offering equitable access to essential municipal services, enabling productive intergovernmental, private, and non-profit partnerships, and promoting increased quality of life through investments that create vibrant neighborhoods and employment opportunities, making Rochester a hope-filled city with an exciting future. He was inaugurated on Jan. 1, 2022.

Mayor Evans' career in elected office began at the age of 23, when he became the youngest person ever elected to the Rochester Board of Education. He served in that role until 2017, including as President of the Board from 2008 to 2013. It was at the School Board that he adopted a mantra that would guide all future decisions in elected office: "We can find solutions to our most pressing challenges by focusing on finding common ground." In 2017 he was elected to an at-large seat on the Rochester City Council and held the position through 2021, serving as chair of the Finance Committee.

Prior to becoming Mayor, Mayor Evans worked as an officer in the banking industry for more than 20 years, holding various leadership positions at M&T Bank Corporation and ESL Federal Credit Union. He developed a focus to ensure the financial sector responded to the needs of all customers with equity and fairness by ensuring all individuals and businesses have access to the knowledge, tools and information that will help them build a stronger financial future.