



July 14, 2025

Police and Fire Commission

Re: Selection of Interim Chief for the City of Madison Police Department (MPD)

Dear Members of the Police and Fire Commission,

I am writing on behalf of the Latinx Consortium for Action (LCA) to again offer our highest recommendation for Interim Chief John Patterson to be selected as the next Chief of Police for the City of Madison. The LCA is a collaborative of Latinx-led organizations, councils and professional associations and Latinx education and governmental leaders in the greater Madison area who come together with a vision of aligning strategy and programs for the greater good of the Latinx community. I have worked closely with Interim Chief Patterson, I have witnessed firsthand his extraordinary leadership grounded in humility, his deep commitment to community well-being, and genuine authenticity in every aspect of his work. I believe Interim Chief Patterson should be the next leader of the Madison police department.

Centro is the largest Latinx-led organization in Dane County, Wisconsin, with an intentional mission of empowering youth by also strengthening families. At Centro we are dedicated to ensuring strong neighborhoods, thriving young people and stable families. The success of our mission relies on collaborative relationships with diverse systems and like-minded partners who believe in the value of healing ethno-racial trauma among BIPOC communities as foundational to a safer and healthier community.

Interim Chief Patterson has consistently demonstrated an unwavering commitment to building stronger relationships between law enforcement and the communities we serve. During this time of leadership transition and anxiety in our community he has always been available. This comes as no surprise since during his tenure as the Southside Captain, he was always at Centro, not because there was an event or because there was an “ask” but because he personally enjoys getting to know the community, building relationships and because he enjoyed practicing his Spanish. Under his leadership, community engagement efforts continue to flourish in Madison. His commitment to open dialogue, trust-building, and ensuring that every resident feels heard and valued is so needed. While Southside Captain, together we built community gardens, shared community dinners and created a beautiful community mural inside the South Madison Police Station on Hughes Place. His approach to policing is rooted in empathy and



understanding. Without his knowing, through his organic presence in the community, he consistently sends a signal to community residents that they belong, that he believes in them and that they are safe. During this volatile time for the Latinx community, his approach to policing speaks volumes.

It is clear to me that Interim Chief Patterson embodies integrity, transparency, and a commitment to ethical practices informed by the community. His ability to remain grounded and true to his values inspires confidence. For a department committed to growing diversity equity and inclusion in hiring and retention, I know his approach is important for groups such as *Amigos en Azul*, whose mission is to dissolve cultural barriers, build partnerships and open lines of communication between the Latino community and the City of Madison Police Department, in partnership with Dane County-area law enforcement.

Leaders like Chief Patterson don't come along all the time. He has proven how instrumental he is in addressing complex challenges and driving positive change. I have every confidence that if given this opportunity, he will continue to lead with the same dedication, vision, and authenticity he has demonstrated to date. He brings a unique combination of skills, experience, and passion that will serve our community well. The LCA wholeheartedly recommends him for this position and looks forward to the positive impact he will continue to make as our City's Chief.

Thank you for considering this recommendation. There really is no better choice. Should you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me directly at 443-676-9996 or karen@micentro.org

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Karen", followed by a long horizontal line.

Karen Menendez Coller, PhD
Executive Director
Centro and on behalf of the Latinx Consortium for Action