

Gov. Walker: Announces plan to name future Milwaukee state office building after Vel Phillips, civil rights pioneer & former Wisconsin Secretary of State

Posted on Tuesday, Jun 19, 2018

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Contact: Amy Hasenberg, (608) 266-2839

MADISON – Governor Scott Walker today announced his plan to name the future Milwaukee State Office Building after civil rights pioneer and former Wisconsin Secretary of State Vel Phillips.

“It is only fitting that the state’s future office building in Milwaukee be named in honor of Vel Phillips,” Governor Walker said. “She was the first African-American woman to graduate from the University of Wisconsin Law School, the first African-American elected to the Milwaukee Common Council, the first African-American judge in Wisconsin, the first African-American and first woman to be elected Wisconsin Secretary of State, and the first African-American to be elected to the National Committee of a major political party. Vel Phillips was a nationally renowned trailblazer for civil rights, and her honorable legacy will benefit the city of Milwaukee and the state of Wisconsin for generations to come.”

Phillips, who passed away on April 17, 2018, at age 95, was a civil rights trailblazer and tireless advocate for the African-American community in Milwaukee and beyond. As Milwaukee County Executive, Governor Walker was part of efforts to rename the Milwaukee County Children’s Court Center as the Vel R. Phillips Juvenile Justice Center in her honor.

Governor Walker, who Chairs the State Building Commission, will include language enumerating the Vel R. Phillips Milwaukee State Office Building in the 2019-21 Capital Budget proposal in early 2019. The full Building Commission and Wisconsin Legislature will act on the proposal.

The new building will replace the current Milwaukee State Office Building at 6th and Wells Street, which was built in 1963. The Department of Administration (DOA) issued a request for proposal (RFP) for the new office building and is currently reviewing the responses.