

Rep. Crowley: Statement on passing of Milwaukee pioneer Vel Phillips

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MILWAUKEE, WI – Rep. David Crowley (D-Milwaukee) issued the following statement on the passing of Milwaukee civil rights leader, Vel Phillips:

“I am deeply saddened to learn of the passing of great Milwaukeean Vel Phillips. Ms. Phillips was truly a pioneer in all aspects of her life: the first African American woman to graduate from the University of Wisconsin Law School, the first woman and African American elected to the Milwaukee Common Council, the first African American judge in Wisconsin, and the first and only African American to win a state wide race in the State of Wisconsin.

“Not only was she a dedicated and trailblazing public servant, she also spent her career as a tireless advocate for civil rights. She was instrumental in passing an open housing ordinance in Milwaukee, and would regularly lead marches in the streets of Milwaukee.

“The city of Milwaukee has lost one of its truly great citizens, but her accomplishments will never be forgotten. Without Ms. Phillips, I would not be where I am today. Although we will carry on the work she began many decades ago, her presence will be sorely missed.”