



Office of Councilman Roy McCalister, Jr.
2 Woodward Avenue, Suite 1340
Detroit, Michigan 48226
Phone: (313) 224-4535

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: DiAnna Solomon
Email - solomondi@detroitmi.gov
Cell – 313.300.4389

DETROIT CITY COUNCIL LAUNCHES MENTAL HEALTH TASK FORCE

Detroit, MI – The month of May is devoted to Mental Health Awareness. Councilman Roy McCalister, Jr. deliberately selected May 4, 2018 to stand with key stakeholders within the mental health industry to launch his Mental Health Task Force and use his position to help serve those in need of care. Detroit City Council unanimously approved the formal testimonial on April 24, 2018.

Councilman McCalister began conversations with other Councilmembers, industry leaders and those individual who have been the front lines about the need for a heightened awareness on mental health issues during his first 30 days in office. The Mental Health Task Force is the direct result of the healthcare concerns, McCalister heard in the community. This task force will bring the Council, the Administration, industry specialist and the community together to support those in need of care.

The Councilman said, *“The greatest asset in the City of Detroit is our people. I am calling on all key stakeholders and legislators in the mental health care arena to come and stand together to assist, educate, raise awareness and coordinate the efforts to address the issues of mental health which is affecting our family members, neighborhoods, veterans, returning citizens and youth.”*

The designed goal of the Mental Health Task Force is to use the platform of Council and the Administration to support the Mental Health space to better serve the citizens of Detroit. The initial focus will be to educate the citizens of Detroit on the state of Mental Health, heighten awareness on services currently available and support coordination of services were possible.

“Quality mental health services are crucial to our success as a city and this task force will work to ensure Detroiters have access to the services they deserve,” said Mayor Mike Duggan. *“I applaud Councilmember McCalister’s commitment to the health and safety of our community and look forward to working with him and this task force moving forward.”*



Chief James Craig was the first to join the task force. *“The biggest crisis in our community is and will continue to be the mental health crisis. Much too often, people suffering from mental illnesses are not receiving proper treatment. A lack of adequate care can lead to violence against innocent people as well as unnecessary incarceration. It’s important that we as a community remain proactive in advocating for the chronically mentally ill to ensure that they receive sustained treatment. Sustainability is key,”* said Chief James Craig.

The Mental Health Task Force launched with support from community leaders. The task force will meet monthly beginning in June and all are welcome. For more information and those interested in serving on the task force may contact Councilman McCalister’s office at (313) 224-4535.

Councilmember McCalister is an experienced leader and community servant. He faithfully served the residents of Detroit for 24 years with the Detroit Police Department. He achieved the rank of lieutenant and is the former commanding officer of Detroit Police Homicide Section. He also is a retired Chief Warrant Officer IV/Special Agent with the United States Army & Army Reserves, Criminal Investigative Division. Prior to his election to City Council, Member McCalister served as an investigator with Legal Aid, Federal Defender Office, for the Eastern District of Michigan, defending the constitutional rights of citizens. He was the only criminal investigator in Michigan certified by the Criminal Defense Investigation Training Council.

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