



Karen Freeman-Wilson

Mayor, Gary, Indiana

President, National League of Cities

Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson is the mayor of Gary, Indiana, and the president of the National League of Cities (NLC), the nation's largest organization representing cities and their leaders. As president of NLC, Freeman-Wilson is leading the organization to focus on four priority areas: helping city leaders tackle the housing crisis; uplifting legacy cities; creating communities for all generations; and, encouraging civic engagement.

Through these four pillars of work and a national campaign, Love My City, Freeman-Wilson and NLC will engage city leaders to create a more meaningful bond between communities and their residents. Freeman-Wilson also leads the organization's advocacy efforts, focused on the critical issues of infrastructure, public safety and economic development.

Freeman-Wilson has served as the mayor of her hometown Gary, Indiana, since 2012 when she became the first woman to lead the city of Gary and the first African-American woman mayor in the state of Indiana. Her accomplishments include extensive infrastructure improvement, including significant investment at the Gary Chicago International Airport; the creation of ArtHouse: A Social Kitchen, a work of public art, supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies and the Knight Foundation, that doubles as a small business incubator; and the development of vital areas in the city including Indiana University, the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore and Downtown Gary.

Prior to her role as mayor, Freeman-Wilson served as the Indiana Attorney General, the Director of the Indiana Civil Rights Commission and the presiding judge of the Gary City Court. She is also a leader of the national drug court movement having served as the CEO of the National Association of Drug Court Professionals and executive director of the National Drug Court Institute.

Freeman-Wilson is a graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Law School. She and her husband Carmen Wilson, II, have a blended family of four children.

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