



Tony Evers

Office of the Governor | State of Wisconsin

July 20, 2020

Members of the State Capitol and Executive Residence Board (SCERB):

For more than a century, the Wisconsin State Capitol building and grounds have served as a gathering place for folks from across our state and country—from weddings to picnics, concerts to festivals, family photos to visiting Wisconsin students. So, too, the Capitol stands as a symbol of our Wisconsin State Government—where our three branches of government convene to conduct the people’s business, and where the people of our state gather to express their dissent to and demand change from their elected officials.

It is in light of the latter that I write today as the State Capitol has been in the backdrop of dissent and protest regarding the racial injustices plaguing our country. I believe, and I hope you do, too, that something that serves as a symbol of our state should be a reflection of the people we serve. To this end, in addition to repairing and returning Col. Hans Christian Heg and “Forward” to their platforms, today I would like to express my support for adding a statue of the late Vel Phillips to the Capitol grounds.

As you know, Phillips was the first African American woman to graduate from UW-Madison Law School, to win a seat on Milwaukee’s City Council, and to become a judge in Wisconsin. She also made national history when she was elected the first statewide elected African American in the state of Wisconsin as secretary of state. Her story is not only an important one in our state’s history, but it represents the stories of Black Wisconsinites and their resilience in the face of systemic challenges. Vel Phillips was a true treasure and Wisconsin icon, and her service to our state is deserving of permanent recognition at the State Capitol.

Thank you in advance for your important work in restoring and preserving our state history, and for your consideration ensuring our State Capitol and surrounding grounds is a more accurate representation of our state’s diversity and resilience. My administration welcomes the opportunity to work with SCERB members to begin taking bold steps in ensuring “The People’s House” remains a true reflection of our shared history and of all Wisconsinites.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tony Evers".

Tony Evers
Governor