



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

# Press Release

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## Gov. Pritzker appoints Chakena D. Perry to MWRD Board of Commissioners

A knowledgeable, experienced, and talented water professional serving the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) has been appointed by Gov. JB Pritzker to serve as an MWRD commissioner.

Chakena D. Perry was appointed to fill the seat of Debra Shore, who now leads the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 5. Since January 2019, Commissioner Perry served as an aide to Commissioner Josina Morita. The Board of Commissioners is responsible for providing financial oversight of the MWRD and advancing policy and procedures that help the MWRD's staff of nearly 1,750 meet its mission in protecting the regional water environment. Commissioner Perry is a resident of Justice, IL, and at the age of 28, is the youngest Board member. She said she is prepared to take on this new position of leadership.

"Over the past three years, I've worked every day to advance green infrastructure, better land use management and clean energy initiatives at the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, and I'm honored that I will be continuing that work as a commissioner," said Commissioner Perry. "As a resident of the south suburbs, I'm proud to stand up for my community and all Cook County residents as we safeguard their health and safety and our waterways."

Governor Pritzker said in a statement that it was important to build equity and expand representation on the MWRD Board.



*Chakena D. Perry has been appointed to the MWRD Board of Commissioners to establish policies and procedures that help the MWRD meet its mission in protecting the water environment for the region.*

"I am proud to appoint Chakena Perry to serve as MWRD Commissioner - her commitment to equity, environmental justice, and fighting climate change will help lift up communities across Chicago and have positive impact across Cook County," said Governor Pritzker. "Since the passing of Commissioner Tim Bradford, the southland has lacked representation on the MWRD board and with Chakena's appointment we're bringing back their voice. I am delighted that the MWRD board will be able to count on Chakena's professional expertise and lived experience as a young, dynamic, Black woman as they work to serve the diverse communities of Cook County."

"We welcome Chakena D. Perry to the MWRD Board of Commissioners and thank *(continued)*

## Gov. Pritzker appoints Chakena D. Perry to MWRD Board, *cont.*

Governor Pritzker for appointing a qualified and deserving candidate whose knowledge of the MWRD runs deep,” said MWRD President Kari K. Steele. “As we transition to a new year with new challenges amid a pandemic, it is encouraging to have a leader we can count on in protecting our water environment.”

Commissioner Perry earned a Bachelor of Arts in History from Connecticut College and is currently studying at the Harris School of Public Policy at the University of Chicago to earn a Master of Arts in Public Policy.

Before joining the MWRD, Commissioner Perry held an array of professional experiences, including deputy press secretary for the Chicago Public

Schools. Her passion for civic engagement and voting rights advocacy previously led her to serve as president of Chicago Votes Action Fund and chairwoman of the Cook County Youngs Democrats. Additionally, she has received many honors, including the Posse Foundation’s Ainslie Alumni Achievement Award and the WE Will “Young Woman of the Year.” She was recognized as a Chicago Scholars “35 under 35” Honoree and a Quad City Urban League’s Women’s Empowerment Honoree.

Commissioner Perry is excited to continue exploring her love of environmental justice, civic engagement, and economic development in this new capacity. She resides with her husband and their son.

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***Recovering Resources, Transforming Water***

*Established in 1889, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) is an award-winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois. Learn more at [mwrld.org](http://mwrld.org).*