



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**STATEMENT FROM MAYOR LORIE E. LIGHTFOOT**

The results of the independent investigation released today confirm the accounts of the many young women who bravely stepped forward to reveal their truth, and called for righteous accountability. As I have repeatedly said, it was critical that this investigation of allegations regarding serious misconduct, and in some instances, criminal conduct, be treated with integrity and conducted with full independence.

I am outraged and appalled by these findings, particularly those that show that the people entrusted to lead the Park District were aware of these heinous allegations of bullying, intimidation, sexual harassment, and assault and chose to do very little in response. It is clear that all the way to the top of Park District senior leadership absolutely failed to take these complaints seriously. The investigations themselves were, until recently, also hampered by unacceptable layers of incompetence.

To the survivors, this investigation is the first step in the process of bringing justice, accountability, and healing. I made a promise that you will be believed, abusers will be held accountable, and that we will change the culture of our institutions to minimize any opportunity for harm to occur. This is the moment where that process begins. To the thousands of residents and families who rely on the Chicago Park District for high-quality programming every single day, I am working each and every day with the Interim leadership team and the Board to restore your trust in our world-class park system.

To our Parks employees, you deserve leaders who share your closely held values of protecting our children against predators and believing survivors of sexual abuse. Lastly, I want to thank the interim CEO and General Superintendent, Rosa Escareño, and the Park District Board for seeing these investigations to their conclusion, leading with transparency by releasing the reports, and taking swift and deliberate action in light of their findings.

As long as I am Mayor, I am committed to ensuring that leadership at every level of municipal government takes allegations of sexual misconduct and abuse of power



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seriously, and to doing everything in my power to protect employees, residents, and patrons.

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