

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
UNIVERSITY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
UDC RESOLUTION No. 2019-17**

**SUBJECT: Conferral of Honorary Degree upon Maxine Waters, Congresswoman,  
United States House of Representatives**

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to D.C. Code §38-1202.06(3), the Board of Trustees has authority to award degrees and to establish policy with respect to the award of degrees; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to 8 DCMR §315.2, the President, upon consultation with the Honorary Degree Committee and the Faculty Senate, has recommended that Congresswoman Maxine Waters be awarded an honorary degree for her many notable contributions to our nation as a public servant, at state and national levels, and in a range of leadership positions spanning over four decades, including, but not limited to: 15 terms as Congresswoman in the U.S. House of Representatives, where she also served as the first woman and first African American Chair of the powerful House Financial Services Committee and as a chair of the Congressional Black Caucus; and 14 years as an elected official in the California State Assembly. Congresswoman Waters has used her platform to advocate for and enact laws and policies that help support and advance women, children, people of color, immigrants, and the poor; as well as laws and policies that focus on environmental protections, small business development, international peace, justice, and human rights. Her skills and fearless leadership help make her an outstanding role model and example of the positive influence and impact that a public servant can wield in addressing society's challenges, helping its citizens, and changing the world; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to 8 DCMR §315.3, the Board of Trustees must approve the recommendation of Maxine Waters by an affirmative vote of three-fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) of the members present at the meeting of the Board following the meeting at which the recommendation was made.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Trustees of the University of the District of Columbia hereby approves the recommendation of the awarding of the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters to Maxine Waters, with all the honors, privileges, and duties pertaining thereto.

Submitted by the Academic & Student Affairs Committee

April 18, 2019

Approved by the Board of Trustees

April 30, 2019

  
Christopher Bell  
Chairperson of the Board

Proposed Recipient of Honorary Degree for  
UDC's Spring Commencement

**Maxine Waters**  
Congresswoman, 43rd Congressional District of California  
United States House of Representatives

Maxine Waters is being recognized for her countless endeavors and contributions to our nation during four decades as a public servant. Through her leadership—first in California's State Assembly, and then 15 terms in the U.S. Congress—Waters has leveraged this role to influence public policy, address past inequities, and forge a better future for our nation and the world. She has displayed strong leadership, including as the first woman and first African American Chair of the powerful House Financial Services Committee, along with an understanding and appreciation of the power of collaboration and partnerships in achieving critical goals (such as helping to end apartheid in S. Africa, fighting HIV/AIDS, educating and advancing women and people of color, and strengthening communities). Waters has served as an outspoken advocate for women, children, people of color, immigrants, and the poor, as well as environmental protections, international peace, justice, and human rights. Congresswoman Waters serves as a model leader and an outstanding example of the influence and impacts that a public servant can wield in addressing society's challenges, helping its citizens, and changing the world. For representing UDC's values so well, we are proud to honor her achievements.



**Congresswoman Maxine Waters** was elected in November 2018 to her 15<sup>th</sup> term in the U.S. House of Representatives. With more than 70 percent of the vote in her California district, she represents a large part of South Los Angeles, including the communities of Westchester, Playa Del Rey, and Watts and the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County comprised of Lennox, West Athens, West Carson, Harbor Gateway and El Camino Village. The 43rd District also includes the diverse cities of Gardena, Hawthorne, Inglewood, Lawndale, Lomita and Torrance.

Throughout her 37 years of public service, Waters has been on the cutting edge, tackling difficult and often controversial issues. She has combined her strong legislative and public policy acumen and high visibility in Democratic Party activities with an unusual ability to do grassroots organizing.

Waters made history as the first woman and first African American Chair of the House Financial Services Committee. An integral member of Congressional Democratic Leadership, she serves as a member of the Steering & Policy Committee and is the Co-Chair of the bipartisan Congressional Task Force on Alzheimer's Disease. She is also a member of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, and member and past chair of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Prior to her election to the House of Representatives in 1990, Waters served 14 years in the California State Assembly, where she rose to the powerful position of Democratic Caucus Chair. She was responsible for some of the boldest legislation enacted in California, including: the largest divestment of state pension funds from South Africa; landmark affirmative action legislation; the nation's first statewide Child Abuse Prevention Training Program; the prohibition of police strip searches for nonviolent misdemeanors; and the introduction of the nation's first plant closure law.

As a national Democratic Party leader, Waters has long been highly visible in Democratic Party politics and has served on the Democratic National Committee (DNC) since 1980. She was a key leader in five presidential campaigns: Sen. Edward Kennedy (1980), Rev. Jesse Jackson (1984 & 1988), and

**UDC VALUES**

*Learning, discovery, and engagement \* Academic excellence \* High expectations \* Student success  
Innovation \* Cross-cultural and international perspectives \* Technological competencies  
Collaboration among our internal and external partners \* Public service*

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President Bill Clinton (1992 & 1996). In 2001, she was instrumental in the DNC's creation of the National Development and Voting Rights Institute and the appointment of Mayor Maynard Jackson as its chair.

She has used her skill to shape public policy and influence funding, including but not limited to: \$10 billion in Section 108 loan guarantees to cities for economic and infrastructure development, housing and small business expansion; \$50 million appropriation for "Youth Fair Chance" program which established an intensive job and life skills training program for unskilled, unemployed youth; expanded U.S. debt relief for Africa and other developing nations; creation of a "Center for Women Veterans."

She is a co-founder of the Black Women's Forum, a nonprofit organization of over 1,200 African American women in the Los Angeles area. In the mid-80s, she also founded Project Build, working with young people in Los Angeles housing developments on job training and placement.

As she confronts the issues such as poverty, economic development, equal justice under the law and other issues of concern to people of color, women, children, and poor people, Rep. Waters enjoys a broad cross section of support from diverse communities across the nation. Throughout her career, Congresswoman Waters has been an advocate for international peace, justice, and human rights. Before her election to Congress, she was a leader in the movement to end Apartheid and establish democracy in South Africa; and she leads congressional efforts to cancel the international debts that poor countries in Africa and Latin America owe to wealthy institutions like the World Bank. She has been a vocal critic of the war in Iraq and a staunch supporter of active and veteran military personnel.

Expanding access to health care services is another of Congresswoman Waters' priorities. She spearheaded the development of the Minority AIDS Initiative in 1998 to address the alarming spread of HIV/AIDS among African Americans, Hispanics and other minorities. Under her continuing leadership, funding for the Minority AIDS Initiative has increased from the initial appropriation of \$156 million in fiscal year 1999 to approximately \$400 million per year today. She is also the author of legislation to expand health services for patients with diabetes, cancer and Alzheimer's disease.

Congresswoman Waters has led congressional efforts to mitigate foreclosures and keep American families in their homes during the housing and economic crises, notably through her role as Chairwoman of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity in the previous two Congresses. She authored the Neighborhood Stabilization Program, which provides grants to states, local governments and nonprofits to fight foreclosures, home abandonment and blight and to restore neighborhoods. Through two infusions of funds, the Congresswoman was able to secure \$6 billion for the program.

She is lauded by African American entrepreneurs for her work to expand contracting and procurement opportunities and to strengthen businesses. Long active in the women's movement, Rep. Waters has given encouragement and financial support to women seeking public office. Many young people, including those in the hip-hop music community, praise her for her support and understanding of young people and their efforts at self-expression. One testament to her work is the Maxine Waters Employment Preparation Center, a multimillion dollar campus providing education and employment opportunities to residents of the Watts area.

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## Fiscal Impact Statement

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**TO:** The Board of Trustees  
**FROM:** Managing Director of Finance *David A. Franklin*  
**DATE:** April 18, 2019  
**SUBJECT:** Honorary Degree upon Congresswoman Maxine Waters

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### Conclusion

It is concluded that there is no fiscal impact associated with the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) awarding an honorary degree to Congresswoman Maxine Waters.

### Background

The President, upon consultation with the Honorary Degree Committee and the Faculty Senate, has recommended that Congresswoman Maxine Waters be awarded an honorary doctorate of laws degree for her significant contributions and accomplishments as a public servant. She is currently serving her 15<sup>th</sup> term in the United States House of Representatives.

### Financial Impact

This request has been approved based upon the information provided. There are no anticipated risks at this time.