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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Mayor Stone Statement on Veto of City Council's Attempt to Circumvent the Charter and Effectively Eliminate Civil Service**

After a careful review of the ordinance adopted by the Warren City Council on April 14, 2026, under Agenda Item 12(b), I vetoed the ordinance issued due to significant concerns about its impact on the City's civil service system and its misalignment with Warren's City Charter. Council's changes would weaken fairness, transparency, and accountability in how full-time city employees are hired, promoted, and disciplined.

For nearly 70 years, our Civil Service Commission has ensured that city jobs are filled based on merit, not favoritism, and that there are clear, consistent rules in place for employees and taxpayers alike. The proposed ordinance would remove the Civil Service Commission's core functions and responsibilities including testing, hiring, demotions, transfers, and classification decisions, effectively stripping the Commission of its ability to carry out the role it was established to perform.

Changes to the ordinance were presented as minor technical changes. However, these changes fundamentally alter how the system operates by removing independent oversight from the body designed to provide it. Changes of this magnitude raise serious concerns about whether the system required under the City Charter can continue to function as intended.

I am also concerned about Council's decision-making process. Council has failed to consult the Civil Service Commission on this matter. Changes to the civil service system established in our City Charter must be done so thoroughly, thoughtfully, and transparently with input from the people it impacts.

This ordinance creates uncertainty for our union workforce, because collective bargaining agreements refer to civil service rules to guide personnel management processes and appeals.

I believe there is a better path forward. The Civil Service Commission is already working to modernize its rules, and I encourage collaboration to ensure any updates strengthen, not weaken, this important system.

My decision to veto this ordinance maintains a system where merit, consistency, and independent oversight remain central to how employment decisions are made. I remain open to working with City Council and the Civil Service Commission to find a solution that serves our community, while maintaining the integrity of the City Charter.

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