

# **ACLU: State legislator joins ACLU lawsuit against Stop-and-Frisk Program by Milwaukee Police conducted without reasonable suspicion, based on racial profiling**

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Milwaukee, Wisconsin — Last night, the American Civil Liberties Union, the ACLU of Wisconsin, and the law firm of Covington & Burling filed an amended complaint in their class-action lawsuit against the city of Milwaukee over its police department's vast stop-and-frisk program. The revised complaint adds three named plaintiffs to the lawsuit, one of whom is Representative David Crowley, a state legislator representing Wisconsin's 17th Assembly District. Like the other named plaintiffs and tens of thousands of other Milwaukeeans of color, Rep. Crowley has been subject to an unconstitutional stop and frisk by the Milwaukee police without reasonable suspicion of criminal activity and based on racial profiling.

One evening before he was elected to the Wisconsin State Assembly, Rep. Crowley was walking with his godbrother in Milwaukee. "We heard gunshots in the distance, so we walked in the other direction to avoid trouble. A patrol car stopped in front of us, and two officers jumped out with guns drawn and pointed right at us. I was terrified," said Rep. Crowley.

He and his godbrother put up their hands. The police frisked them, taking their

wallets from their pants pockets and pulling their IDs from the wallets. One officer asked if the two men had thrown a gun into the field where they had been walking.

“The police treated us like suspects, yet we had done nothing wrong. The officers drew their guns on us, searched us without our consent, and never explained why,” said Rep. Crowley. “As young Black men, we were presumed guilty. The police decided that the Constitution doesn’t apply to us.”

Another new plaintiff in the suit is Jerimiah Olivar, a 19-year-old Latino Milwaukeean, who was stopped and frisked by police without reasonable suspicion while riding his bike in the early afternoon. The third new plaintiff, Jeremy Brown, is Black, and a police officer stopped him while he was walking one morning because the officer didn’t recognize his face. The officer ordered Mr. Brown to drop what he was carrying and stand against a fence while he questioned him. Mr. Brown was eventually taken to the police station and released with a \$185 ticket for disorderly conduct.

“The Milwaukee Police Department has been routinely interfering in the lives of tens of thousands of Black and Latino residents, stopping them, searching them, and worse—all without reasonable suspicion and as if the Constitution didn’t exist,” said Karyn Rotker, senior staff attorney at the ACLU of Wisconsin. “The department’s practices have caused Black and Latino Milwaukeeans to deeply distrust and fear police, crippling its ability to investigate crime.”

The Milwaukee Police Department conducts far more stops and frisks in neighborhoods that are predominantly Black or Latino than in other parts of the city.

*Collins v. City of Milwaukee* seeks reforms of the Milwaukee Police Department that protect constitutional rights through bias-free and evidence-based policing, transparency, and accountability. These reforms include an end to conducting stops and frisks without reasonable suspicion and to stopping people based on race or ethnicity. The lawsuit also seeks improved training, supervision, and monitoring of officers who conduct stops and frisks, and the collection and semiannual release to the public of data on all stops and frisks to permit analysis for evidence of constitutional violations.

For the amended complaint and more information about the lawsuit:

ACLU: <https://www.aclu.org/cases/collins-et-al-v-city-milwaukee-et-al>

ACLU of Wisconsin: <http://aclu-wi.org/issue/collins-v-city-milwaukee>

For more information about Covington & Burling: <https://www.cov.com/>

This press release can be found at: <http://aclu-wi.org/media/state-legislator-joins-aclu-lawsuit-against-mpd-stop-and-frisk-program>