

# Rep. Bowen: Statement on passage of AB 606

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**Madison** – Rep. David Bowen (D-Milwaukee) issued the following statement on the Assembly’s passage of legislation that would force the City of Milwaukee to continue paying discharged police officers facing criminal charges and which would also force changes to the makeup of the Fire and Police Commission:

“This unnecessary bill threatens police and community relations in Milwaukee. With a new chief of police transitioning into the role, now isn’t the time to change the dynamics of the commission. An independent Fire and Police Commission was crucial in the Ernest Lacy case in the early 1980s as well losing the life of Sylville Smith causing an uprising in Sherman Park two summers ago, and we should be careful to sustain the commission as an independent body that can maintain the public trust by rewarding good officers and holding bad officers accountable for malfeasance and crimes.

“Forcing the City to pay discharged officers who are facing criminal charges is an attack on local governments that have already been put in tight fiscal situations. Past officers fired in 2016 and 2017 convicted of crimes that this bill would protect did heinous crimes and have no business continuing to be paid by taxpayers. This bill sends the wrong message to upstanding officers and the public by softening the consequences of bad behavior.”