

Rep. Myers: Urges law enforcement to proceed with caution regarding operation relentless pursuit

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MADISON – Representative LaKeshia Myers (D-Milwaukee) urged state and local law enforcement agencies to act equitably and proceed with caution with regard to implementation of Operation Relentless Pursuit (ORP). Operation Relentless Pursuit announced earlier today by Attorney General William Barr is an initiative aimed at combating violent crime in seven American cities, of which Milwaukee, WI, was one of the cities listed.

According to Barr, the operation will involve increasing the number of federal law enforcement officers to the selected cities, as well as bulking up federal task forces through collaborative efforts with state and local law enforcement partners. The surge in federal agents will be complemented by a financial commitment of up to \$70 million in federal grant funding that can be used to hire new officers, pay overtime and benefits, finance federally deputized task force officers, and provide mission-critical equipment and technology.

Myers stated, “Milwaukee is a city of nearly 600,00 people—most of whom are hardworking, law abiding citizens; I question anyone and any program that believes the best way to combat the crime that occurs in this city is by increasing the number of police and increasing the number of federal agents. The city of Milwaukee should not be ruled by marshal law and neighborhoods should not be under siege by federal agents. I hope law enforcement agencies choose to spend these grant dollars wisely—by investing in intervention services and programming that seeks to restore trust in law enforcement agencies. Investment in Milwaukee-based programs such as Safe & Sound, Program the Parks, and the Milwaukee Office of Violence Prevention’s interrupter teams have already proven valuable to

decreasing violent crime.”

In his press avail, United States Attorney Matthew D. Krueger made mention of gun violence and the uptick in opioid abuse as possible targets for Operation Relentless Pursuit in Milwaukee. To that, Representative Myers responded, “If the goal is to tackle opioid abuse and gun violence, I hope Attorney Krueger and all of the law enforcement agencies involved broaden the radius of their operation beyond the City of Milwaukee; because the city has been inundated for years by opioid addicts from the WOW (Washington, Ozaukee, and Waukesha) counties coming to Milwaukee to purchase and use opioids—therefore it seems to me that this is a regional issue and not just one that is specific to Milwaukee.”