

Sen. Taylor hints at run for Milwaukee mayor on 'UpFront'

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Sen. Lena Taylor, D-Milwaukee, hinted at a run for Milwaukee mayor in a weekend television interview.

"I've got on my Converse. Normally you wear tennis shoes when you are ready to run," she said Sunday on "UpFront," produced in partnership with WisPolitics.com.

Tom Barrett, Milwaukee's mayor since 2004, is up for re-election in 2020. He has not made a formal announcement about his plans, but published reports have said he is laying the groundwork for a re-election campaign.

"UpFront" guest host Matt Smith asked Taylor what would prompt her to get into the race. She said it would be what people tell her they want.

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"It really seems really clear that the people want change," Taylor said.

But she said there is "no need" to make a final decision right now.

Taylor also discussed her new bills, offered with Democratic state representatives Chris Taylor and Melissa Sargent of Madison, that deal with childhood sexual assault.

One bill would remove the statute of limitations on filing a lawsuit over a childhood assault; the other would require mandatory reporting for clergy who learn about child sexual abuse cases in private conversations.

"We all should want to stop trauma for our children. In the end, who wants to not stand against individuals who are doing these heinous crimes to our children?"

Taylor said.

Taylor said that although no Republicans have signed on to either bill, they “have had some conversations,” and she thinks one or both bills will be successful. She also said she is open to compromise on the bills.

In another segment, Madison Police Chief Mike Koval said a policy debate on gun safety laws is “long overdue.”

Koval commented after recent mass shootings in Texas and Ohio left a combined 31 people dead.

Koval said there is some public consensus around universal background checks. He said other measures, such as “red flag laws,” which allow for temporarily disarming people judged to be a danger to themselves or others, deserve a look.

“We have some conversations that can be taking place over the red flag laws, or extreme risk protection orders. I think that’s an area where we’ve already seen, I think at last look, 17 states, including the District of Columbia, that are dabbling in those, so I think all of those are worthy of a policy debate, long overdue,” Koval said.

He also said Madison police are attempting to learn what “horrific lessons” they can from the Texas and Ohio shootings and apply them to public safety in Madison.

See more from the program:
<http://www.wisn.com/upfront>