

# Gov. Evers: Statement on last night's protests

Posted on Tuesday, Aug 25, 2020

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MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers today released the following statement regarding last night's protests:

"The ability to exercise First Amendment rights is a critically important part of our democracy and the pursuit of justice. But there remains a line between peaceful assembly and what we saw last night that put individuals, families, and businesses in danger.

"We cannot forget the reason why these protests began, and what we have seen play out over the last two nights and many nights this year is the pain, anguish, and exhaustion of being Black in our state and country. But as I said yesterday, and as I'll reiterate today, everyone should be able to exercise their fundamental right—whether a protester or member of the press—peacefully and safely. We cannot allow the cycle of systemic racism and injustice to continue. We also cannot continue going down this path of damage and destruction.

"We are assessing the damage to state property and will be increasing the presence of the Wisconsin National Guard to ensure individuals can exercise their right safely, protect state buildings and critical infrastructure, and support first responders and fire fighters.

"Tonight, and in the days ahead, if you are going to protest, please do so peacefully and safely. Please do not allow the actions of a few distract us from the work we must do together to demand justice, equity, and accountability."