

Milwaukee Ald. Rainey: Disallowing canines as use of force to go before Public Health and Safety Committee

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The Public Health and Safety Committee on Thursday (October 22) will take up legislation that would urge the Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission to disallow the use of canines by Milwaukee Police as a use of force.

Council file #200823 – sponsored by Alderman Khalif J. Rainey – would address the concerns of using canines in use of force situations in accordance with the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) of the Milwaukee Police Department. Non-white suspects constitute the largest number of injuries resulting from dog-bites, and the history of canines being used against people of color gives ample reasoning to amend the MPD's SOP.

“This legislation would change a policy that is both demeaning and dangerous to the citizens of Milwaukee,” Alderman Rainey said. “It has long been true that canines are used disproportionately on people of color, and it is necessary for us to take action to prevent anyone from being the victim of vicious canine attacks going forward.”

There were 200,000 attack canines used by Nazi Germany on the battlefield and in their camps, and they were used to brutally attack and maim any enemies of the Nazi party, and untold numbers of Jews were viciously killed at the hands of these attack dogs. Nazis took pleasure in letting the dogs do their work in such a vicious manner that is almost too gruesome to even contemplate.

Police dogs were unleashed on Black protesters during the Civil Rights Era, and most notably at the Selma March. Protesters were bitten and lunged upon by these

dogs as police used the canines to enforce the law and contain the protesters. Hardly any protection was provided by the police during these marches and many protesters were left at the mercy of dogs that had been trained to kill.

“These practices from decades ago are still sadly in place today, and the use of police dogs has a much darker history than is typically realized by people who have only seen the dogs as a wagging tail and friendly face,” Alderman Rainey said.

Cosponsors of the file are Alderman Russell W. Stamper, II, Alderwoman Chantia Lewis, Alderwoman Nikiya Dodd, Alderman Ashanti Hamilton and Alderwoman Milele A. Coggs.

The file will go before the Public Safety and Health Committee when it meets (virtually) at 9 a.m. on Thursday, October 22nd. The October 22nd meeting will be televised live on the City Channel (channel 25 on Spectrum Cable and channel 99 on AT&T U-Verse in the City of Milwaukee) and via streaming video on the city website at city.milwaukee.gov/Channel25.