

Milwaukee Common Council: Asks state legislators to reconvene

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Dear Senator Fitzgerald and Representative Vos:

We write to ask you in the strongest possible terms to reconvene as soon as is possible for a special legislative session on issues of police reform and police misconduct.

We join in full support of the special session called earlier today by Governor Evers to take up long-languishing legislation meant to reduce police brutality and address other policing issues. The matter has been made more urgent, we believe, by the police shooting last evening of Jacob Blake in Kenosha.

Mr. Blake was unarmed when officers reportedly shot him seven times in the back during a call involving a domestic incident. It is reported that M. Blake had arrived at the location to break up an altercation, and was attempting to leave in a vehicle when he was shot (while three of his children were inside the vehicle and witnessed the shooting). Witness video of the incident quickly went viral and unfortunately there was significant public unrest and property damage overnight in Kenosha.

The special session's legislation would include several police accountability proposals, including a ban on chokeholds by police officers, and a measure to make it more difficult for overly aggressive officers to simply move to a different jurisdiction and get a new job.

In Milwaukee we have been active in passing legislation urging several reforms within the Milwaukee Police Department, including a ban on chokeholds and strangleholds, a weapon-drawn file to record any time a weapon is drawn during a police call for service, and a measure that requires MPD to submit any proposed

purchases of militaristic equipment for Common Council review.

In your sworn oath you vowed to protect the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Wisconsin. We ask that you fulfill that sworn duty by leading your colleagues on both sides of the aisle during this critically important special legislative session, and that you approve vitally important, long-overdue police reform measures.

Most importantly, we ask that you act decisively and for the benefit of the citizens of Wisconsin.

Respectfully,