

# Reps. Bowen, Brostoff: Joint statement on incident at Speedway gas station in Menomonee Falls

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MILWAUKEE – In response to the decision of a Speedway gas station in Menomonee Falls to deliberately close its doors to a group of peaceful protestors during last night’s peaceful civil rights protest, State Representatives David Bowen (D-Milwaukee) and Jonathan Brostoff (D-Milwaukee) released the following statement:

“What happened at that gas station last night was racist, plain and simple. I’m calling on the people of Menomonee Falls to acknowledge the racism in their community and work as hard as possible to make their city welcoming to everyone. In light of the recent violent comments and hostility shown towards the Black community by a number of individuals, including some of their own local elected officials, Menomonee Falls has a lot of work to do. Black people in 2020 shouldn’t have to worry about a Trustee joking about police using live ammunition on protesters, or something as simple as trying to patronize a store without being turned away because of their race,” said Rep. Brostoff.

Last night, as protesters marching against racism and police brutality made their way through the Milwaukee suburb of Menomonee Falls, they were denied entry to a Speedway gas station, where they had hoped to purchase food and drink and use the station’s facilities. When the clerk was pressed on the decision, she cited “corporate policy” before locking the doors and turning off the lights well in advance of the posted closing hours, despite the fact that a number of other

patrons were still inside.

Added Rep. Bowen, “Incidents like last night’s are exactly why we’re still marching today. Just a few days ago, protesters used a different Speedway without any issue; but now we’re being told that locking doors on Black protesters who are trying to buy food and use the restroom is a ‘corporate policy.’ You’ve got to be kidding me – it felt like seeing a ‘Whites only’ sign on that storefront! For almost a century during the Jim Crow era, people who looked like me were legally denied equal access to stores and restrooms because of the color of their skin. And here, outside of Milwaukee in 2020, we’re still facing the same kind of discrimination? For anyone who thinks that Supreme Court decisions, the leaders of the Civil Rights Movement, or President Obama somehow ‘solved’ the problem of racism, I’d invite you to try to visit the Speedway in Menomonee Falls alongside a group of Black people. In the meantime, we’ll continue marching, we’ll continue this fight until the day that we never again have to worry about shameful incidents like last night’s ever again.”

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