

NRSC: Cash bail opponent Mandela Barnes REFUSES to say if he still opposes cash bail

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Washington, D.C. - Yesterday, Senate hopeful Mandela Barnes [refused to say](#) if he still supports ending cash bail in a local TV interview. He was asked three times by the anchor if he [still](#) supports the elimination of cash bail. Barnes danced around the answer all three times.

Watch [here](#) or take a look at the transcript below:

ANCHOR: Do you still support the elimination of cash bail?

BARNES: What I support is a bail system that decides who should stay in jail based on the severity of the crime, based on the likelihood to reoffend, or cause harm. now, this has been in the news a whole lot because of Waukesha and I'll tell you my plan, which is one that's supported by the president, also supported by republicans like former new jersey governor Chris Christie who is certainly not soft on crime, is one that have kept that person in jail whether they paid 100,000. Unfortunately, we have people who commit heinous acts, violence crimes before trial, because they can afford their freedom, which makes us all less safe.

ANCHOR: So, under what circumstances should somebody be locked up before trial?

BARNES: It should be based on severity of the crime or past violent history.

ANCHOR: To be clear, cash bail off the table, it's not on the table for a judge, it's either consider the case and they're detain or not?

BARNES: What we have now is a system that treats people unfairly. We'll have a low-level offender, say somebody gets caught with possession of marijuana as an example because it is illegal in Wisconsin. A person shouldn't be held in jail because they can't afford to make their bail.

ANCHOR: So, no cash bail, period?

BARNES: It's about the severity of the crime.

ANCHOR: Got it.

In 2016, Barnes [sponsored](#) legislation to eliminate cash bail and bar courts from using the severity of the crime to argue against release. The bill failed to pass. But it all came back to light in November 2021, when a violent felon [killed](#) six people during the Waukesha Christmas parade after being released on bail. Despite that, in February 2022, Barnes [doubled down](#) on eliminating cash bail, which would allow felons to roam the streets freely before their trial.

So, why refuse to say where he stands now? Voters don't forget and it only makes Barnes look weak trying to prove to be something (a moderate) when he's not. Let's not forget that he also [refuses to oppose](#) defunding the police.