

# Rep. Bowen: Releases statement on GOP's unserious law enforcement proposals

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*GOP Needs to Stop Playing Political Games, Come to Table for Real Bipartisan Reforms*

MILWAUKEE – In response to Republicans' press conference earlier this afternoon unveiling a package of bills that would create new law enforcement-related programs using funding that legislative Republicans do not control, State Rep. David Bowen (D-Milwaukee) released the following statement:

“Let's be clear here: there is bipartisan support here in Wisconsin for new policies that would help recruit and retain good police in our communities, both urban and rural. I and many of my Democratic colleagues would be more than willing to sit down with our Republican counterparts and craft legislation that would help keep our communities safe. The 'Supporting Law Enforcement' package released today by Republican legislators is the clearest example of what false support looks like and is not the way to make new changes happen.

First, far short of seeking bipartisan support in the drafting stages, my Republican colleagues drafted these bills in secret; I, nor the Governor, was engaged in the creation or to be aware that there was going to be a press conference announcing the bills until minutes before it happened. And second, legislative Republicans are pitting law enforcement against the Governor and municipalities by promising officers and departments financial support using money that they have no control over. In what way is that a serious proposal? Republicans are sitting on control of nearly \$2 billion in general purpose funding, but instead are choosing to play

political games by proposing new programs funded almost entirely by one-time ARPA funds that Governor Evers has already allocated toward other comprehensive needs affecting Wisconsinites.

If Republicans would like to have a conversation about comprehensive approaches to support *all* of the good emergency personnel and first responders across Wisconsin while also addressing the root causes of crime and violence, and funding those approaches in a sustainable way, I'm all ears. In fact, I've approached some of my Republican colleagues to have conversations about various proposals, but many have yet to fully engage in those conversations. That said, my door remains open, and I would welcome any bipartisan, productive conversations on these important topics.

It's long past time for the GOP to stop playing political games, come to the table for real bipartisan reforms, and work with Democrats and Governor Evers to actually advance policies that help both our communities and those who serve them!"