

# Evers campaign: Tim Michels open to defunding law enforcement and city services in high crime areas

Posted on Friday, Oct 14, 2022

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*"Michels did not reject the idea of withholding budget resources from cities that 'can't control' crime."*

MADISON, Wis. — In case you missed it, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel [highlighted](#) how Tim Michels is open to defunding law enforcement and city services in areas with high crime — taking away resources to places like Milwaukee when they need them the most.

Michels also opposed bipartisan federal legislation making it harder for domestic abusers to get guns and opposed universal background checks for gun purchases. If elected, Michels has promised to lift restrictions on firearms and let people bring loaded guns on school grounds.

Gov. Evers is committed to investing in Wisconsin's communities, connecting the dots and providing solutions. He has already [invested over \\$100 million](#) to law enforcement and public safety, including to every local law enforcement agency in Wisconsin, and plans to invest more. Gov. Evers will provide the common sense leadership needed to solve the issues and do the right thing for our communities.

Read more below.

**Milwaukee Journal Sentinel: [Tim Michels doesn't reject Milwaukee sales tax, cuts to cities struggling with crime](#)**

Wisconsin Republican candidate for governor Tim Michels has made crime the centerpiece of his campaign but three weeks before the election still hasn't detailed

how he would fund public safety — and has given mixed messages on two drastically different approaches to the issue.

In an interview on conservative radio host Vicki McKenna's show this week, Michels did not reject the idea of withholding budget resources from cities that "can't control" crime — but at a Thursday news conference in Milwaukee, he also did not reject the idea of allowing a referendum on Milwaukee's long-sought 1% local sales tax to buttress government budgets.

Michels is locked in a tight race with incumbent Democratic Gov. Tony Evers. Voters will decide between the candidates Nov. 8.

The two will debate Friday night for the first, and only time, during the campaign.

"I don't know what the right answer is," Michels said Thursday at a news conference where he was endorsed by the Milwaukee Professional Firefighters Association.

"I know that right now, there is not enough funding for law enforcement," he said. "There is not enough funding for the Fire Department. There is so much money in government. The (state) budget this year, \$43.5 billion, that is the money that has come out of taxpayers' pockets, and the taxpayers deserve to have safe communities.

His comments come as Milwaukee is facing increasingly dire financial straits that will become all the more difficult as federal pandemic aid runs out in the coming years. Significant drivers of the city's challenges include a spike in the annual pension contribution and stagnant shared revenue — that is, money the state collects but returns to local units of government.

[...]

### **Potential cuts to funding**

Michels has repeatedly blamed Evers for "coddling criminals." He told McKenna he would consider not providing budget resources to cities that can't control crime.

"Would you actually say something to the effect of if you can't control your crime, we're not going to continue to provide the budget resources that you rely on, or at least give cause of action to the surrounding communities to make claims against those cities?" McKenna asked.

“Vicki, I’ll work with the Legislature and we’ll consider everything that we can to get crime down,” he responded, blaming Evers for “coddling criminals” and President Joe Biden.

A spokesperson for Evers’ campaign slammed Michels over his comments on McKenna’s show, saying he “would take funds away from the communities that need it most.”

“Governor Evers has taken action to give communities the tools they need to combat violent crime, including directing \$100 million to law enforcement and public safety,” spokeswoman Kayla Anderson said in a statement. “Unlike Tim Michels, Gov. Evers supports funding for local public safety investments, including violence prevention, after-school programs in high crime areas, affordable housing, and more.”

During an event with the Milwaukee Press Club and WisPolitics on Monday, Evers said he wants to increase shared revenue to municipalities so local governments can take a comprehensive approach to tackling crime.

“We’re going to work hard to make that happen,” Evers said at the event, held at a Milwaukee Rotary Club meeting. “I hope from your vantage point, we will also think about how important that is for this city. I know that this city sends a lot of tax money down the road to Madison. You should be getting more than a zero percent increase over the last 10 years.”