

WisGOP: Mandela Barnes tries to backtrack from the far-left fringe

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[Madison, WI] – In case you missed it, yesterday the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel [reported](#) on Mandela Barnes' newfound claims that he doesn't support the far-left "Defund the Police" or "Abolish ICE" movements – despite the years of tweets, endorsements, and even [T-shirts](#) that suggest otherwise.

Support for law enforcement is top-of-mind for Americans amid rising crime across the country, and even CNN has called rising crime Democrats' "[kryptonite](#)." Wisconsin families have seen the consequences of soft-on-crime policies in Kenosha, Milwaukee, and [statewide](#). Despite Barnes' efforts to duck, dodge, and waffle until November, he has already shown voters that he stands with criminals and the far-left instead of Wisconsin families. Now more than ever, Wisconsin needs a straight-shooter on policies that are critical to keeping the public safe.

Read more from the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel [below](#):

Mandela Barnes distances self from increasingly unpopular, left-wing defund police and abolish ICE movements

[Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#)

Daniel Bice

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Lieutenant Gov. Mandela Barnes has tried to stake out his place as a liberal candidate seeking the Democratic nomination for the U.S. Senate.

But Barnes is now distancing himself from two unpopular, far-left political movements — defunding police and abolishing ICE — despite support from groups backing these efforts and past social media activity referencing these causes.

Indeed, in the case of “Abolish ICE,” the 35-year-old Milwaukee Democrat even got the T-shirt.

[...]

In a statement, the former two-term state lawmaker, who is leading the Democratic field in the race to take on Republican Sen. Ron Johnson, said recently that he did not jump on the abolish ICE bandwagon — despite any previous appearances.

“I am not a part of the Abolish ICE movement because no one slogan can capture all the work we have to do,” Barnes said in the statement.

[...]

Barnes has received the endorsement of five national groups that have called for defunding the police, which became a rallying cry among many activists after the death of George Floyd at the hands of police officers in Minneapolis in May 2020.

[...]

Barnes has even posted a couple of tweets that seem to suggest he has supported the movement, such as his July 10, 2020 post: “Defunding the police only dreams of being as radical as a Donald Trump pardon.”

“We need to invest more in neighborhood services and programming for our residents, for our communities on the front end,” Barnes told PBS Wisconsin in 2020. “Where will that money come from? Well, it can come from over-bloated budgets in police departments, you know?”

He also held a fundraising bash with what one conservative outlet said was “a who’s who in the Madison defund-the-police movement” late last year. He once praised Minnesota Rep. Ilhan Omar, who favored dismantling Minneapolis’ Police Department, as “brilliant.”

[...]

Not everyone thinks Barnes is being straight with the voters on these issues.

Anna Kelly, spokeswoman for the state Republican Party, accused Barnes of undergoing a “convenient” election-year conversion on the issues.

“Mandela Barnes clearly plans to duck, dodge and waffle his way through his campaign as he tries to both appease his far-left base while avoiding committing political suicide by publicly acknowledging his fringe views against law enforcement,” Kelly said.

Barnes’ statements putting distance between him and the two left-wing movements come as both have lost steam nationally.