

Milwaukee Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression: Statement condemning MPA's temporary injunction against the FPC

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[MILWAUKEE,WI] – Following a historic victory in favor of accountability and transparency at last night's Fire and Police Commission (FPC) meeting, the Milwaukee Police Association (MPA) has filed for a temporary injunction with the Milwaukee County Circuit Court. This is to prevent the implementation of Standard Operating Procedure 575 (SOP). The SOP being challenged would require MPD to publicly release video footage pertaining to critical incidents within 15 days. It would also grant the victim's next of kin access to the footage within 48 hours of the incident. The Milwaukee Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression firmly rejects the MPA's attempt to file for temporary injunction.

The MPA describes the FPC's adoption of the SOP as "reckless," "illegal," and "dangerous." They also claim that the FPC "failed to hear the concerns of the Law Enforcement professionals." Claiming that the FPC failed to hear concerns from law enforcement professionals is a complete fabrication. At every FPC Policies and Standards Committee meeting since September, members of the MPA and/or MPD have been present and have been given significantly more time than the public to voice their concerns with the various drafts of the SOP. Executive Director Leon Todd hosted several private meetings with MPD. Police Chief Norman explicitly stated on numerous occasions that his department would comply with whichever SOP the FPC adopted.

The Milwaukee City Attorney's opinion on the SOP clearly states "that nothing per se prohibits the Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission from adopting an SOP which

dictates when MPD must release video footage of any officer-involved incidents that result in death or great bodily harm.” Repeatedly, the MPD was asked by the FPC to provide sound, legal reasoning as to why the SOP shouldn’t be adopted. Instead of providing legal arguments, they provoked irrelevant discussion as a way to delay the creation of SOP 575. The FPC saw past these tactics and adopted a legal SOP that must be upheld and cooperated with.

Wagner is clearly aware of the power involved in controlling the narrative of critical incidents. It’s a tactic they’ve used to discredit the community whenever they harm one of our loved ones. Their accusation that families are seeking to control the narrative is actually a confession of their own behavior, entirely based on projection.

The FPC has not disregarded the rules or operated in an “illegal” or “dangerous” manner. The FPC has done what it’s supposed to do. As the FPC’s website states, “The Commission sets overall policy while the chief of each department manages daily operations and implements the Commission’s policy direction and goals.” Failure to abide by this SOP, which must be implemented starting on May 1, 2023, will be reckless, dangerous, and illegal.

The Milwaukee Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression (MAARPR) campaigns against police crimes committed primarily against the poor and Black, Indigenous, and people of color. We demand the creation of a civilian police accountability council, or CPAC, to ensure that our community is in direct control of our police force.