

Milwaukee Alliance: Protesting is not a crime: Justice for the Tampa 5!

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[Milwaukee, WI] – A joint rally between the Students for a Democratic Society at UW-Milwaukee, Milwaukee Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, and Freedom Road Socialist Organization will be held on **Wednesday, July 19th, 5pm at 941 E Wisconsin Ave.** The event was originally scheduled for last week as part of a national day of action called by National Students for a Democratic Society and the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, but it was postponed due to the weather. The demand is that all charges be dropped against the Tampa 5.

On March 6, 2023, Students for a Democratic Society at the University of South Florida held a rally to defend diversity in higher education when they were suddenly and violently assaulted by USF police before later being arrested. The Tampa 5 are now facing up to 10 years in prison despite doing nothing wrong. This comes amidst an increase of attacks against diversity, equity, and inclusion in classrooms across the US with threats of defunding, delegitimizing and even full bans.

Republicans and their Democratic collaborators in the state government have already taken aim at DEI programs, with the most recent and successful example coming in the form of the new Shared Revenue bill (now known as Article 12). With the passage of Article 12, Milwaukee, Wisconsin's most diverse community, is unable to utilize any of the new funds from the state to expand DEI programs.

Furthermore, we need not look any further than AB 70/SB 96 – a “riot bill” which would make protesting a felony – than to get a sense of what Republicans have in store for those seeking progressive change through organizing here in Wisconsin. The bill passed the State Assembly in April and has yet to make its way through the State Senate.

The struggle against racist and political repression extends to cities and states across the country. Further evidence of this is the recent decision by the Supreme Court which all but ends affirmative action in colleges and universities. We expect to see a rise in these types of attacks from the right as conditions in our society continue to sharpen and become more polarized, and we are prepared to meet them in the streets whenever they arise.