



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Legislators Decry Racially Insensitive Actions at Wauwatosa Anytime Fitness

MADISON - State Senator Lena Taylor (D-Milwaukee) joined by State Representatives Robyn Vining (D-Wauwatosa) and LaKeshia Myers (D-Milwaukee), issued the following statement regarding the “I Can’t Breathe” workout regimen posted by Anytime Fitness’ Wauwatosa location:

“As elected officials representing Wauwatosa, WI, we denounce Anytime Fitness’ “I Can’t Breathe” workout regimen. For the last fourteen days our nation has protested the death of Mr. George Floyd, whose inability to breathe led to his death. Mr. Floyd’s murder has served as a catalyst for change throughout our state, country, and the world. The symbolism of the breath stolen from George Floyd as he begged for his life while pinned to the ground, is not something we take lightly and most definitely not something that should have been used to promote an exercise program.

In the wake of Mr. Floyd’s death, many residents—including those living in Wauwatosa—have taken to the streets to protest disparate treatment of people of color. Wauwatosa’s residents have collectively amplified their voices to empathize and begin to reevaluate practices that perpetuate systemic racism in our community. Nothing about the past fourteen days should have given anyone, let alone a business owner, the inkling that this workout was appropriately named.

So, as state legislators representing Wauwatosa, we call on Anytime Fitness to commit to doing the work necessary to weeding out any undercurrents of racism and/or ethnic insensitivity to prevent actions like this from ever happening in one of your facilities ever again.

Anytime Fitness’s franchise owner and corporate office have issued an apology to their employees, members, and owners. However, for many, the words rang hollow. The harmful impact of such an offensive act, extends to all of us. An apology was owed to everyone. We will not tolerate the glorification of death, the perpetuation of systemic racial violence, or engagement with racism in any way other than complete and total condemnation.

Across Wauwatosa we have seen our community come together, we have marched, we have committed to creating a better world. We wish to move forward together.”

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