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Sen. Taylor Frustrated at Doing Nothing...Again

(MADISON) – Today, Senator Lena Taylor (D-Milwaukee) released the following statement, regarding the political theater surrounding the special session called by Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers, to address police accountability following the shooting of Jacob Blake:

“The recent shooting of Jacob Blake has presented an opportune time to debate and enact legislation that could positively affect the interaction of Wisconsin law enforcement and communities of color. While these conversations are long overdue, and should not be confined to police accountability, Republicans have once again kicked the can down the road, with their inaction. We have to stop “acting” like legislators and “be” legislators. Today, we must ask, if not us, then who? If not now, then when?”

“The issues facing our communities are cyclical and interconnected. In just about every system we have, inequity and challenges exist. There is a problem when a man is shot multiple times in the back by law enforcement. There is a problem when property is destroyed and businesses are lost during protests. There is a problem when some adults condone a 17-year old teenager wielding an AR-15 style weapon in the midst of a crowd. There is a problem when we lose lives on local streets.”

“However, there is also a problem when Wisconsin can be ranked the worst place in the world to raise a black child. There is a problem in health, wealth, and educational disparities. There is a problem in access to transportation and employment. There is a problem in fair representation, over incarceration and the polarization of the African-American community. We have problems and they impact the way we see and treat one another. We have historical wounds and divisions that have again been laid bare and threaten to destroy us. As Dr. King said, “Hate begets hate; violence begets violence; toughness begets a greater toughness.”

“Today, I found it difficult to be in the same place as Dr. King and those who marched on Washington, some 57-years ago. We are still asking to be treated like our lives matter. Today, I could not symbolically breathe, when I realized, as a legislative body, we would do nothing....again. It has become a pattern and practice: nothing on COVID-19, nothing on changes to voting during the pandemic, nothing on unemployment, evictions or health care. We can’t continue to let the partisan divide be bigger than the desire to help our communities. We are so much better than this.”