



CITY OF MILWAUKEE

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Derogatory comments aimed at Milwaukee miss the mark

Joint statement from members of the Milwaukee Common Council: Alderwoman Chantia Lewis, Alderman Nik Kovac, Alderwoman Nikiya Dodd, and Alderman Russell W. Stamper, II

It seems State Representative Sanfelippo is too focused on being derogatory and disrespectful to Milwaukee, and not focused enough on his New Berlin district. His recent comments about Milwaukee in which he stated our city was a “warzone-like setting” – as well as him saying he prefers that the National Guard take over patrolling Milwaukee – are aimed at pleasing the base and signal his deep bias against Black people.

But we’re glad to see that Representative Sanfelippo has finally taken an interest in Milwaukee, considering many pieces of legislation he and his colleagues have passed seem to exist in contradiction to his expressed concern.

These include items such as discontinuing unemployment benefits added during the pandemic; not allowing a local referendum to institute a sales tax; and past pieces of legislation such as ending the residency requirement for sworn personnel (and eventually all city employees), among others.

The unfortunate truth is these items, along with others, have only exacerbated the strain our community is under. Despite all of these items, however, our great city – the economic engine of the state – continues to show its resiliency and its brilliance. Milwaukee Tool would concur (they are moving their world HQ to downtown Milwaukee!), as would the many other great companies and organizations that call Milwaukee home.

We welcome Representative Sanfelippo’s newfound concern for Milwaukee, and his desire to better our community. A simple first step in which he can show his support is by increasing shared revenue payments to Milwaukee, which have not seen an increase in 20 years. He could champion growing our city by allowing us to have the tools necessary to raise additional revenue so we may properly fund prevention initiatives (so we don’t have victims in the first place) and ensuring safety for all. Data shows more police don’t equate to a safer community, but prevention does.

While we are on the topic of public safety, we could also use some additional funding to help us invest in community-oriented safety strategies.

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Page 2

We are continuing to work daily toward the goal of making Milwaukee a safer, healthier community for everyone. While the National Guard is in no way the answer to this issue, we look forward to Representative Sanfelippo's partnership moving forward.

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