



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P. O. Box 7882 Madison, WI 53707-7882

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: June 3, 2020

Contact: Representative Chris Taylor
(608) 266-5342
Senator LaTonya Johnson
(608) 266-2500

REP. TAYLOR AND SEN. JOHNSON'S RESPONSE TO SEN. WANGGAARD'S FALSE STATEMENTS ABOUT ASSEMBLY BILL 1012

Madison, WI- Yesterday, Governor Evers called for the Wisconsin legislature to pass [AB 1012](#), which sets forth common sense use of force standards embraced by our nation's preeminent law enforcement executives and experts, including the [Police Enforcement Executive Forum's \(PERF\) Guiding Principles on Use of Force](#), [President Obama's Task Force on 21st Century Policing](#) and best practices of police departments around the country who have decreased use of force incidents. The provisions in the bill also reflect Wisconsin law enforcement training standards. Rather than consider the substance of the bill, Senator Wanggaard resorts to clichés and out of touch inaccuracies. He has failed to put forward any proposals that address reforming use of force standards and has rebuffed Rep. Taylor's overtures to even meet to discuss the issue.

Contrary to Wanggaard's falsehoods, following the tragic 2015 killing of Tony Robinson by a Madison police officer who still is on the force, the authors of the bill spent several years studying current legal issues regarding use of force policies which included feedback from law enforcement, examining policies of police departments throughout the country having success in reducing use of force incidents, recommendations of some of the most preeminent law enforcement professionals and experts in the country and the latest research being done on needed police reforms and increasing public and officer safety.

It is indeed hard to fathom that anyone could be opposed to law enforcement adopting written use of force policies that include the provisions of AB 1012, including:

1. **The primary duty of all law enforcement is to preserve the life of all individuals.** This is not a "radical" idea. In fact, this principle has been incorporated by the [U.S. Department of Justice policies](#), was recommended by President Obama's Taskforce on 21st Century Policing and is in PERF's Guiding Principles on Use of Force.
2. **That deadly force should only be used as a last resort.** This principle was recommended in PERF's Guiding Principles on Use of Force.
3. **That officers should use skills and tactics, including de-escalation tactics, that minimize the likelihood that force will become necessary.** This principle was recommended by President Obama's Taskforce on 21st Century Policing, is incorporated

into PERF's Guiding Principles on the Use of Force and included in the U.S. DOJ policies.

4. **That, if law enforcement officers must use physical force, it should be the least amount of force necessary to safely address the threat.** All of the same entities listed above have recommended this principle in use of force policies.
5. **That Officers shall take reasonable action to stop or prevent any unreasonable use of force.** This principle was included in PERF recommendations.

Police departments who have adopted some of these reforms, including in Las Vegas and Philadelphia, have seen the number of officer involved shootings drop and a decrease in use of force incidents. These principles have the potential of helping to keep communities and law enforcement safer.

“AB 1012 is a common-sense proposal that includes use of force principles recommended by the foremost law enforcement experts in our country,” stated Rep. Taylor. “Wisconsin continues to have some of the worst racial disparities, including in the criminal justice system, in the country. The brutal murder of George Floyd is the latest shocking example of centuries of pernicious, persistent racial discrimination. The time for reform is now. AB 1012 is not a cure-all, but a concrete step forward. We applaud Governor Evers for taking action, something our Republican colleagues including Senator Wanggaard, have refused to do on almost every pressing issue our state is facing,” concluded Taylor.

“The pain being felt across the nation and in Wisconsin is a real and raw response to seeing yet another Black life being taken,” stated Sen. Johnson. “Four hundred years of systemic racism and discrimination has blocked Black Americans from justice, opportunity, and equity. We are tired and we are crying out for change, and that means changing the policies that allow for these injustices to occur. Senator Wanggaard's comments shed light on the priorities of legislative Republicans, who have known for years that Wisconsin continues to be one of the worst places to raise a Black child. Partisan games have no place in this discussion. Republicans must rise to the challenge of this moment, or step aside so we can bring about the change that is desperately needed.”

#