



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Rep. Bowen Statement on Wauwatosa Peace Officers' Association Attempts
to Undermine Wauwatosa Ad Hoc Committee**

MILWAUKEE - State Rep. David Bowen (D-Milwaukee) released the following statement countering the Wauwatosa Peace Officers' Association's call to dismantle the Wauwatosa ad hoc committee on systemic inequities and policing:

"In a time of renewed civil rights activism in this country, I would sincerely hope that police officers, police departments, and police unions would show a willingness to reflect, listen to the community, and work together to advance necessary reforms and system transformation. But instead, we see responses like the temper-tantrum thrown by the Wauwatosa Peace Officers Association today. You're telling me that, because you don't care for someone's 'associations,' you're going to willfully ignore the desires of the people you're supposed to serve, and obstruct viable paths forward? In what ways are these the actions of a responsible, trustworthy organization that's supposed to represent all Wauwatosa police officers with the needs of the community at heart?"

Earlier today, the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel reported that the Wauwatosa Peace Officers Association released a statement calling for the disbanding of the Wauwatosa ad hoc committee on systemic inequities and policing, formed earlier this year by the Wauwatosa Common Council Government Affairs Committee. The goal of the committee is to enhance dialogue and engagement between Wauwatosa Police and the community, to "assign relative priority to topics and outcomes," and to shape reforms and actions related to policing and systemic racism that will be considered by the (currently all-white) Wauwatosa Common Council. The Common Council wisely appointed four community members to the committee in order to bring diverse voices to the table, and to provide viewpoints and experiences that have so far been left out of these important conversations.

"I'd just like to remind the WPOA that the ad hoc committee was formed by the duly-elected Wauwatosa Common Council, because they saw that there were issues in their city that needed fixing, and that those issues would be best addressed by working hand in hand with diverse community members. Meanwhile, the statement the WPOA released today is petty, irresponsible, and implies that they would rather ignore the community and maintain a broken status quo than be a part of the solution.

I sincerely hope that the WPOA leadership will take a long, hard look at the message that they are sending to their own officers, people of Wauwatosa, Milwaukee, and beyond, and to reconsider their obstructionist ways. Change is coming, and history has its eyes on the actions that you choose to take or not take in this critical moment."
