



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Rep. David Bowen
(608) 266-7671

Rep. Bowen Statement on Passing of Former Secretary of State Gen. Colin Powell

Powell Served as Role Model to Rep. Bowen, and Millions More

MILWAUKEE - In response to the news of the passing of General and Former Secretary of State Colin Powell after complications from COVID-19, State Rep. David Bowen (D-Milwaukee) released the following statement:

“I was truly saddened to hear of the news yesterday of former Secretary of State Colin Powell’s passing. Although our political perspectives differed but also aligned in many ways, I greatly respected and looked up to General Powell not only as a public servant, but as an undeniable example of American excellence from Jamaican descent. A stellar example of Black leadership at the highest levels.”

Colin Powell was born in 1937 in New York City to Luther and Maud Powell, both immigrants from Jamaica. In 1958, after graduating from the City College of New York, Powell enlisted in the US Army, where he would serve as a professional soldier for 35 years, eventually attaining the rank of General. In 1987, Powell was appointed by President Reagan to serve as National Security Advisor, becoming the first Black man to hold that position. In another first for a Black American, in 1989 Powell was appointed Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff by President George HW Bush, a position he would continue to hold under President Clinton until 1993. In 2001, after many years of distinguished public service, Powell was named and unanimously confirmed as United States Secretary of State under President George W. Bush, becoming the first Black person named to that position and the highest-ranking Black American in government until the election of President Barack Obama seven years later who he even endorsed as one of the biggest signs of bipartisanship in our current political era.

“In addition, the fact that General Powell passed away from complications related to COVID-19 serves as a stark reminder that this pandemic is not over, and that we *all* need to do everything we can to protect our community members from this virus. Although General Powell was vaccinated, he was also immunocompromised due to cancer treatment, leaving him vulnerable to the virus and breakthrough infections from exposure to unvaccinated individuals. We have lost too many elders and role models to this horrible disease, and we must do everything we can to protect those who remain with us.”
