



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Rep. Bowen Statement on Joseph Mensah Resignation from Wauwatosa Police Department

“This is Proof of the Power of Peaceful Protest and the People; But Work Remains”

MILWAUKEE - In response to the recent news that Wauwatosa Police Officer Joseph Mensah has resigned from the Wauwatosa Police Department, State Rep. David Bowen (D-Milwaukee) released the following statement:

“First things first - I am glad that Joseph Mensah will no longer keep his Wauwatosa Police Department job and badge. This separation was long overdue, and the people of Wauwatosa and the greater Milwaukee area are safer now, knowing that a walking liability like Joseph Mensah is no longer patrolling the streets. I want to sincerely thank the resilient families of Alvin Cole, Jay Anderson, Jr., and Antonio Gonzales, as well as the dedicated protesters who insisted that Black and brown lives matter, kept up the pressure on the City of Wauwatosa, and made it absolutely clear that Mensah had to go. This resignation is proof of the power of peaceful protest and the power of the people.”

During the evening of November 17, Wauwatosa Police Officer Joseph Mensah and the Wauwatosa Common Council entered into a separation agreement that will see Mensah leave the police force effective November 30. Over the last five years, Mensah has killed three individuals in the line of duty as a Wauwatosa Police Officer - 29-year-old Antonio Gonzales in July 2015, 25-year-old Jay Anderson, Jr., in June 2016, and 17-year-old Alvin Cole in February of this year. Charges were not filed against Mensah in any of those shootings, though he has been under suspension from the Wauwatosa Police Department since July 15, pending investigation by the Wauwatosa Police and Fire Commission of a citizen complaint relating to Mensah’s fatal shooting of Anderson in 2016. This exposes the unfortunate side of this development.

“But while I am happy that Joseph Mensah will no longer wear the badge in Wauwatosa, it is clear that we still have a long way to go when it comes to meaningful police accountability reform and justice for families of murdered loved ones. The fact that Joseph Mensah was allowed to *resign*, with a separation agreement & hush payment, rather than being removed from his position by Chief Weber or the Police & Fire Commission on urging of Mayor McBride, creates the possibility that he will simply be able to move to a new jurisdiction and continue his career as a law enforcement officer, despite his deadly track record. I am committed to working with partners both inside and outside of the State Capitol to ensure that this loophole is closed in state legislation, and I am committed to continuing the fight for justice, wherever it may lead.”
