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Dear Resident,

I want to explain my "no" vote at City Council this past Wednesday to ensure you understand exactly where I stand.

The Council considered Alderman Martin's ordinance aimed at prohibiting City police officers with access to sensitive locations from participating in extremist activity. I voted against it not because I oppose its intent, but because the final version fell short of what this moment demands.

Let me be clear: I have zero tolerance for hate groups, extremist organizations, or any individual who works to undermine our democracy. That conviction is non-negotiable.

When this ordinance was first introduced, it was comprehensive. It covered all City officials, including Aldermen, who engage in extremist activity - specifically defined as acts of violence or support for violence intended to subvert democratic institutions. I supported that framework then, and I stand by that standard today.

However, over a year of deliberation, the ordinance was narrowed until it applied almost exclusively to police officers. While our police must be held to the highest standard, extremism in city government is not confined to one department. Aldermen, department heads, and city workers at every level have access to sensitive locations, information, and the public trust. All of us must be held equally accountable.

A half-measure ordinance is not a solution. It is a statement about whose conduct we are willing to scrutinize and whose we are not. I refused to support that compromise.

I will continue to fight for a comprehensive ordinance that protects the people of Chicago by holding every arm of city government to the same standard. Our Democracy deserves nothing less, and neither do you.

Sincerely,

Pat Dowell
Alderman, 3rd Ward