



# WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 8952 • MADISON, WI 53708

Council Member Ashanti Hamilton  
200 East Wells Street  
Room 205  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

03 October 2019

Dear Council Member Hamilton,

We write today to express our concern over Mayor Barrett's proposal for Milwaukee's operating budget in the next fiscal period. We were shocked to discover that the proposed budget will reduce the Milwaukee Police Force by three percent, eliminating approximately sixty officers from the department. For this purpose, we write to strongly urge against enactment of this budget proposal.

In a city like Milwaukee, which is consistently ranked above Chicago as the fourth or fifth most dangerous city in the United States, such a vast reduction in the police force is untenable. In the past weekend alone, thirteen people were shot in the city, with two tragically killed from gunshot wounds. In 2017, the Milwaukee Police Department's average response time to a violent crime was twenty-four minutes; our brave police officers already suffer from a lack of resources and this proposal will only make their life-saving work more difficult. The proposed reduction in the police force budget would not only deplete Milwaukee's scarce law enforcement resources but it would also endanger the safety of all of the city's residents.

The Milwaukee Police Association, who represent the brave men and women charged with keeping Milwaukee safe, released a statement declaring that such a large cut to the police force will certainly result in "more loss of life." Enactment of this budget, and thereby endorsing the reduction of the police force, sends the message that the safety of Milwaukee's citizens is not among your priorities. As representatives in the Wisconsin State Legislature, it is incumbent upon us to speak out for the safety and security of our constituents. Not only will this proposed budget make all Milwaukee citizens less safe, it will also have the adverse effect of driving businesses and investment away from the city, further worsening the city's economic issues. Milwaukee needs bold leaders to help turn the city around, this budget proposal bears no resemblance to the bold leadership for which Milwaukee so desperately yearns.

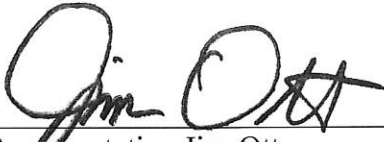
Again, we urge you against making matters worse for Milwaukee and its residents by drastically reducing the police force. Milwaukee's citizens have entrusted to you a great responsibility; it would be a dereliction of your duty as a public servant to endanger your constituents and worsen your city by passing the proposed budget.

Sincerely,

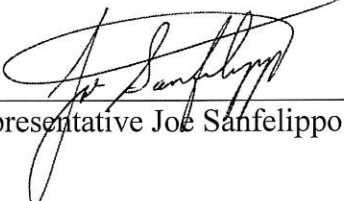
  
Representative Janel Brandtjen

  
Senator Dale Kooyenga

  
Representative Mike Kuglitsch

  
Representative Jim Ott

  
Representative Chuck Wichgers

  
Representative Joe Sanfelippo

  
Representative Rob Hutton