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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 15, 2012

Setting the Record Straight on Dignitary Protection

Milwaukee, WI – While it is generally not an accepted practice to discuss the planning and execution of dignitary protection, today's media discourse necessitates a response. The Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office participated in dignitary protection planning with the Secret Service, State Patrol and other local agencies well in advance of the president's visit to Milwaukee today. SWAT teams, K9 sweeps and motorcade/mobile aspects of security remain in place, particularly at General Mitchell International Airport.

The county budget forced the State Patrol to step in to handle the manpower needed for the large number of ramp closures along the freeway route, a function that has always been handled by MCSO. County Executive Chris Abele's budget specifically removed the substantial funding for dignitary protection in 2012. The County Board of Supervisors approved these cuts, against the advice of Sheriff Clarke.

Typically, the Sheriff's Office has budgeted a set amount for dignitary protection each year, based on experience. In presidential election years, that amount is increased. The county executive and county board decided to eliminate the funding entirely. They now seek to distance themselves from their ill planning.

County Executive Abele's budget specified that dignitary protection is "not a core service and can be provided by municipalities." Despite that, the Sheriff's Office continues to provide the necessary security, as determined by planning with the Secret Service, to ensure the safety of the president.

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