



Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

Supervisor Khalif Rainey, District 2

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SUPERVISOR KHALIF RAINEY IS CRITICAL OF JAIL VIDEO VISITATION PROBLEMS

Long Lines, Poor Communications System Decrease Jail Morale, Make Conditions Dangerous

Milwaukee County Supervisor Khalif Rainey said today that the frequent breakdown of the video visitation system at the Milwaukee County Jail was “unacceptable,” and he urged Sheriff David A. Clarke and County Executive Chris Abele to take immediate action to resolve the problems.

According to a document submitted to the County Board by Inspector Richard Schmidt of the Sheriff’s office, the 12-year-old Video Visitation System is “frail and there are no guarantees for its continued functionality and there are no options for repair.”

Schmidt’s report said the company that installed “Prison Vision” system used by the jail has gone out of business and that the system began failing shortly after it was installed. Schmidt’s report said that the hardware used to fix the system has become obsolete and is no longer available.

“This situation is totally unacceptable,” Rainey said. “It is inhumane for inmates to be unable to visit with their loved ones. The system is already faulty, and system failures make it difficult if not impossible for visitation to take place.

“This situation not only decreases jail morale, it creates a dangerous situation for jail staff as inmates become frustrated with a system that does not allow them to keep in touch with their loved ones.”

Rainey, who is a member of the Judiciary, Safety and General Services Committee, said that the situation required immediate attention because of the hazards of preventing inmates from visiting their families and friends.

“The Sheriff and the County Executive need to sit down to resolve this situation as soon as possible,” Rainey said. “Isolating inmates causes regression in the rehabilitation process and also subjects the families to undue hardships.”

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