



Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Supervisor Russell Antonio Goodwin, Sr., 18th District

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Supervisor Goodwin Statement on Murder of Mr. George Floyd of Minneapolis

MILWAUKEE – Supervisor Russell Antonio Goodwin, Sr., released the following statement regarding the death of Mr. George Floyd:

I offer my most sincere condolences to the family of George Floyd, who did not deserve to be modern-day lynched in the streets of America. Mr. Floyd’s murder has led to the upheaval of the entire country, and many American hearts are bleeding into the streets with hurt, anger, and fear.

Everyone wants to know: “When will racism in America end?” I believe racism will only end when we all, regardless of skin color, go beyond the Golden Rule and embrace the Platinum Rule, which states, “Treat others how they want to be treated.” Boxing legend and activist Muhammad Ali said, “Hating people because of their color is wrong. And it doesn't matter which color does the hating. It's just plain wrong”.

I will never forget the night of my Shorewood High School Class of 2000 Senior dance: My date and I, who by boundaries were traveling in Whitefish Bay on Santa Monica Blvd., after making a left turn onto Hampton Ave., were oddly pulled over by an out-of-jurisdiction Glendale police officer who was curiously lurking in the shadows of Whitefish Bay. I signaled a left turn as I approached a flashing stoplight, came to a complete stop at the light, looked left and right, and then proceeded to make the left turn onto Hampton Ave.

Suddenly, sirens were flashing behind me. Very quickly, the situation escalated from one squad car into three Glendale police squad cars behind me - in Whitefish Bay, not Glendale - and multiple white officers were searching my parent’s car despite no probable cause for a search and for no reason - other than me being Black. I couldn’t call my parents for a lifeline because cell phones weren’t very popular back then. They couldn’t come to my rescue and save us. So there we were, my date and I, two young African American high school students, having to face a mob of white officers.

The officer who pulled me over accused me of running the flashing stop light, and I told him, "Sir, that is untrue - I stopped." I asked, "Why are all these cars here for a stoplight that I didn't run?" He said, "You stopped, but you did a rolling stop." After detaining me and my date - who was shaking with fear - for about an hour, the officers let us go with no ticket. And as for my plan to take my beautiful date to Denny's that night, it was canceled because I couldn't understand why they pulled me over for Driving While Black.

A night that was supposed to be full of making fond high school memories ended in a nightmare at the hands of racist police officers. It ruined the Senior Dance for me and my date. But I did not despair, I took action: I wrote a letter to then-Congressman Tom Barrett, explaining the racial profiling that happened to me, and he wrote me back a letter condemning racial profiling.

What is really sad to me is that 20 years later racial profiling is still here, terrorizing and traumatizing the Black community. Racial profiling in America must stop and it must stop in the State of Wisconsin. This is 2020! We should be beyond the prejudices of skin color. Racism and hatred are a sickness that can only be cured through love.

The Honorable Thurgood Marshall said, "I wish I could say that racism and prejudice were only distant memories. We must dissent from the indifference. We must dissent from the apathy. We must dissent from the fear, the hatred and the mistrust...We must dissent because America can do better, because America has no choice but to do better".

Russell Antonio Goodwin, Sr. represents the 18th District on the Board of Supervisors and was first elected in April 2020.

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