



Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors *Supervisor Ryan Clancy, 4th District*

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Supervisor Clancy Calls for Budget to Reflect Community Priorities

MILWAUKEE – Supervisor Ryan Clancy issued the following statement regarding County Executive David Crowley’s proposed 2021 Milwaukee County budget.

“The people have spoken: our budget should reflect that.

“The people of Milwaukee County have clearly demanded a budget which moves money away from the Sheriff's Office and towards human needs. Organizations have made their demands explicit: Black Leaders Organizing for Communities, African-American Civic Engagement Roundtable, Black Educators Caucus MKE, Milwaukee DSA, Black Socialist Caucus of Milwaukee, Milwaukee Area Service & Hospitality Workers Organization, Veterans For Peace and more have asked specifically for a 25% cut to the Sheriff's budget and an increase to social services.

“The first demand of The People's Revolution - the folks who have marched in the streets for the last 125 days - is to defund law enforcement and to refund the community.

“Early budget listening sessions and open houses have been clear, too. The overwhelming number of written and oral arguments show that cuts to the Sheriff's Office budget are a top issue of concern and that nearly every person addressing them is in favor of significant cuts.

“Even the County Executive's own "Balancing Act" budget survey tool is clear: a staggering 69% of respondents want the Sheriff's budget cut through the jail, and 60% want it through operational cuts. That same tool speaks to the bigger picture, too: even faced with a 42.5 million dollar budget gap, the people of Milwaukee County asked for increases to the budgets of Parks, Housing, Economic Development and Mental Health Services. They know that supporting people through social services, not over-policing, makes us safer and makes Milwaukee a better, healthier place to live. In these challenging times, increased demands on public spaces and services show how important these priorities are. Every unnecessary item in the Sheriff's budget means a closed pool, a neighbor without shelter, a shuttered small business or someone without access to mental health services.

“The proposed budget released today by the County Executive's Office, though, seems not to hear any of this. A paltry 2.7% cut in the face of overwhelming support for 25% simply does not reflect the will of the people. Even the Parks Department - the priority selected by the most respondents as needing increased funding in 2021 - had a larger percentage cut than the Sheriff's budget. We made the residents of Milwaukee County a promise: to invest in equity and to provide resources upstream, to support folks to reduce the likelihood of interactions with law enforcement. We need to make good on that promise.

“Fortunately, the budget before us today is only a first draft. We have weeks of work ahead of us in which we can - and should - bend this budget to better reflect the will of our community. I urge you to contact the Board of Supervisors and to demand that we be as bold in action for the community as you are in advocating for it.”

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