



Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors *Supervisor Shawn Rolland, 6th District*

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County Board Proposal Urges Governor and Legislature to Make Racist 911 Calls a Hate Crime

Supervisor Rolland also calls for national neighborhood watch and police dispatcher reform to reduce “living while Black” police responses

MILWAUKEE – As part of Milwaukee County’s ongoing work to achieve racial equity, Milwaukee County Supervisor Shawn Rolland is introducing a resolution calling on Governor Tony Evers and the Wisconsin State Legislature to reclassify false police reports on any member of a minority group as a hate crime, mirroring [legislation](#) that’s been introduced in the state of New York. The resolution is co-sponsored by Supervisors Ryan Clancy, Joseph Czarnezki, Felesia Martin and Liz Sumner.

*“People with hate in their hearts who call the police to harass minorities don’t deserve cute internet nicknames—they deserve significant fines and time in jail,” said **Supervisor Shawn Rolland**. “For every George Floyd, there are probably 10,000 Christian Coopers and Isiah Holmes. Let’s pair police reform with community conversations about the right and wrong times to call the police.”*

Supervisor Rolland’s resolution also calls on counties, cities and police departments to take three additional actions:

Work together with neighborhood watch groups to develop educational campaigns to clarify what suspicious behavior is and is not.

*“We need communities to launch an unprecedented community outreach campaign to end this collision course between police and innocent members of minority groups,” said **Supervisor Rolland**. “It’s clear that some citizens are calling the police when they shouldn’t be. These calls to police harm our neighbors, divide our community, create unrest in our streets, and take our law enforcement officers away from their core role—protecting and serving our community.”*

Implement a credible approach to track and demographically-desegregate police response data, and annually create measurable goals relating to reduce “living while Black” police responses.

*“Organizations care about the things that they measure,” said **Supervisor Rolland**. “If our police departments measured ‘living while Black’ police responses and set clear annual goals to reduce them, I’m certain that they would be successful.”*

Implement police dispatcher reform to end harmful “living while Black” police responses.

*“Dispatchers should be empowered to determine when to authorize a police response due to reported suspicious behavior and when to deny a police response based on racial bias alone,” said **Supervisor Rolland**.*

[Amy Cooper](#) made national headlines last month after she called New York City police to report “an African-American man threatening my life” in retaliation over birdwatcher Christian Cooper’s ask for her to follow the law and put her dog on a leash while walking in Central Park.

One year earlier, Wauwatosa East High School graduate [Isiah Holmes testified in front of the City of Wauwatosa’s Government Affairs Committee](#), sharing his frustration about being stopped by local police 23 times in just one summer while innocently walking down North Avenue. “I felt hunted,” Holmes said. In a [letter](#) dated June 6, 2020, Wauwatosa Police Chief Barry Weber stated that, “Police officers do not choose which service calls they respond to.”

In 2018, [CNN reported](#) that police were called on African Americans for mundane activities like operating a lemonade stand, moving into an apartment, shopping while pregnant and more.

On the Milwaukee County Board, Supervisor Rolland represents District 6—with neighborhoods in Wauwatosa, West Allis and Milwaukee’s west side.

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3
4 **A RESOLUTION**

5
6 Proposing practical reforms to Wisconsin hate crimes statutes and giving false
7 information to police officers on the basis of race, religion, color, disability, sexual
8 orientation, national origin, or ancestry of a person; proposing additional guidelines to
9 the National Neighborhood Watch Program to mitigate instances of unconscious racial
10 bias, and proposing efforts to enable police departments are able to screen for and
11 reduce “living while Black” racially-motivated calls for police service
12

13
14 WHEREAS, the murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, a Black man in
15 Minneapolis, due to the actions of four police officers who have since been criminally
16 charged, has galvanized racial tension and festered the wounds of America’s racial
17 divide and police-community relations; and
18

19 WHEREAS, in today’s parlance, many persons of color would say while going
20 about their business they have been stopped by police for “living while Black,”
21 particularly in predominantly White neighborhoods and commercial areas; and
22

23 WHEREAS, on May 25, 2020, in New York City’s Central Park, a White woman
24 was recorded on camera falsely alleging Christian Cooper, a Black man, was
25 threatening her life, emphasizing his race and playing to racial stereotypes, something
26 which potentially threatened the life of an innocent man by weaponizing the police,
27 subsequently galvanized the nation; and
28

29 WHEREAS, in a June 6, 2020 letter, Wauwatosa Police Chief Barry Weber
30 wrote, “Police officers do not choose which service calls they respond to,” noting police
31 officers must respond to every call for service; and
32

33 WHEREAS, on May 1, 2019, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reported in an
34 article titled, “We’ve got the Bucks. The NFL draft. ‘Hamilton’ on the way. Wauwatosa
35 alderman questions need for inclusion commission,” former Wauwatosa East High
36 School Student Isiah Holmes told the City of Wauwatosa’s Government Affairs
37 Committee that he had been stopped by Wauwatosa police 23 times during one
38 summer vacation, and further testified that residents report to police about ‘suspicious
39 activity’ when persons of color walk or drive by when in actuality they are doing nothing
40 wrong; the Journal Sentinel reported Holmes testified, “I felt hunted.”; and

41 WHEREAS, citizens who contact police to report a “suspicious person of color”
42 instead of “suspicious behavior” harm our neighbors, divide our community, set police
43 and innocent members of minority groups on a negative collision course, waste law
44 enforcement’s time by drawing officers to nonissues, and remove law enforcement from
45 its strategic role to protect and serve; and

46
47 WHEREAS, police dispatchers must be empowered and required to
48 independently determine when to authorize a police response due to reportedly
49 suspicious behavior and when to deny a police response based on racial bias alone;
50 should a police response be deemed warranted, dispatchers should be required to
51 provide all relevant context to responding officers in advance; and

52
53 WHEREAS, in November 2014, a Cleveland police dispatcher sent officers to
54 investigate a report of “a man with a gun” on a playground without sharing vital context
55 that the individual was likely a juvenile and the weapon was likely fake, resulting in the
56 fatal shooting of 12-year-old Tamir Rice; and

57
58 WHEREAS, the National Sheriffs’ Association sponsors the National
59 Neighborhood Watch program, which has approximately 40 chapters in Milwaukee
60 County, and in its “Neighborhood Watch Manual” defines “suspicious activity” as
61 “[a]nything that feels uncomfortable or looks out of place,” which to an individual
62 unaware of his or her unconscious bias who is not accustomed to seeing persons of
63 color in his or her neighborhood, may construe the mere lawful presence of a person of
64 color in the area as “suspicious”; and

65
66 WHEREAS, Wis. Stat. § 946.41(2m)(a) specifies the criteria by which someone
67 providing false information to a law enforcement officer is guilty of a Class H Felony
68 should, “The violator [give] false information or [place] physical evidence with intent to
69 mislead an officer”; and

70
71 WHEREAS, Wis. Stat. § 939.645 outlays criminal penalties for hate crimes, or
72 “crimes committed against certain people or property” based “in whole or in part
73 because of the actor’s belief or perception regarding the race, religion, color, disability,
74 sexual orientation, national origin, or ancestry of that person...”; and

75
76 WHEREAS, giving false information to a law enforcement officer under Wis. Stat.
77 Wis. Stat. § 946.41 on the individual basis of race, religion, color, disability, sexual
78 orientation, national origin, or ancestry of a person may be charged as a hate crime
79 under Wis. Stat. § 939.645, Wis. Stat. § 946.41 could further specify the criteria of
80 Chapter 939 in its subsections; and

81 WHEREAS, while there is more work to do, Milwaukee County has made strides
82 toward improved race relations and outcomes, for example, through the:

- 83
- 84 • Creation of the Office of African American Affairs to provide “recommendations
85 for changes in programs and laws that disparately impact African Americans;
86 [develop] and [implement]...policies, plans, and programs related to the special
87 needs of African Americans; and [promote]...equal opportunities for African
88 Americans (File No. 15-636)
- 89 • Declaration of racism as a public health crisis and commitment to combatting
90 racism and achieving racial equality (File No. 19-397)
- 91 • Co-creation of the Milwaukee City-County Joint Taskforce on Climate and
92 Economic Equity (File No. 19-582)
- 93 • Creation of a racial equity ordinance to orient County policy toward equity
94 objectives (File No. 20-174 and Milwaukee County General Ordinances Chapter
95 108)

96
97 ; and

98
99 WHEREAS, Milwaukee County is striving for racial equity to become the
100 healthiest county in Wisconsin; now, therefore,

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102 BE IT RESOLVED, Milwaukee County reiterates its condemnation of racism, and
103 that Black lives do matter; and

104
105 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Milwaukee County calls upon the Wisconsin
106 Legislature and Governor Evers to pass into law a provision which adds to Wis. Stat. §
107 946.41(2m) which specifies someone who is guilty of violating Wis. Stat. § 946.41(2m)
108 consistent with Wis. Stat. § 939.645, has committed a hate crime due to the actor’s
109 belief or perception regarding the race, religion, color, disability, sexual orientation,
110 national origin, or ancestry of another; and

111
112 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Milwaukee County also calls upon the National
113 Sheriffs’ Association, Milwaukee County Intergovernmental Cooperation Council, and
114 Milwaukee County police departments and their police and fire commissions to ensure
115 the implementation of unconscious bias trainings to launch an unprecedented
116 community outreach campaign to educate local Neighborhood Watch groups and others
117 that the mere presence of a person of color is not by itself inherently suspicious; and

118
119 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Milwaukee County further calls upon the
120 Milwaukee County Intergovernmental Cooperation Council, Milwaukee County police
121 departments and their police and fire commissions, to ensure implementation of a

122 credible approach to demographically track police response data, and annually create
123 measurable goals relating to reducing “living while Black” police responses; and

124

125 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Milwaukee County calls for the Milwaukee County
126 Intergovernmental Cooperation Council, Milwaukee County police departments and
127 their police and fire commissions, to ensure implementation of systems and procedures
128 empowering police dispatchers to screen for, mitigate, and inform police response to
129 calls for service instigated by racial bias when in actuality there is no incident to respond
130 to; and

131

132 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Office of Government Affairs staff is authorized
133 and requested to communicate the contents of this resolution to the National Sheriffs’
134 Association, all Milwaukee County police departments, all Milwaukee County police and
135 fire commissions, and State policymakers, and support legislation that achieves the
136 criteria outlined in this resolution; and

137

138 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Milwaukee County requests the County Clerk
139 provide this resolution to the National Sheriffs’ Association, all Milwaukee County police
140 departments and police and fire commissions, Governor Evers, legislative leadership,
141 and State policymakers who represent any part of Milwaukee County.

MILWAUKEE COUNTY FISCAL NOTE FORM

DATE: June 29, 2020

Original Fiscal Note

Substitute Fiscal Note

SUBJECT: A resolution proposing practical reforms to Wisconsin hate crimes statutes and giving false information to police officers on the basis of race, religion, color, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, or ancestry of a person; proposing additional guidelines to the National Neighborhood Watch Program to mitigate instances of unconscious racial bias, and proposing efforts to enable police departments are able to screen for and reduce “living while Black” racially motivated calls for police service

FISCAL EFFECT:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Direct County Fiscal Impact
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Existing Staff Time Required
<input type="checkbox"/> Increase Operating Expenditures
(If checked, check one of two boxes below)
<input type="checkbox"/> Absorbed Within Agency’s Budget
<input type="checkbox"/> Not Absorbed Within Agency’s Budget
<input type="checkbox"/> Decrease Operating Expenditures
<input type="checkbox"/> Increase Operating Revenues
<input type="checkbox"/> Decrease Operating Revenues | <input type="checkbox"/> Increase Capital Expenditures
<input type="checkbox"/> Decrease Capital Expenditures
<input type="checkbox"/> Increase Capital Revenues
<input type="checkbox"/> Decrease Capital Revenues
<input type="checkbox"/> Use of contingent funds |
|--|--|

Indicate below the dollar change from budget for any submission that is projected to result in increased/decreased expenditures or revenues in the current year.

	Expenditure or Revenue Category	Current Year	Subsequent Year
Operating Budget	Expenditure	\$0	\$0
	Revenue	\$0	\$0
	Net Cost	\$0	\$0
Capital Improvement Budget	Expenditure	\$0	\$0
	Revenue	\$0	\$0
	Net Cost	\$0	\$0

DESCRIPTION OF FISCAL EFFECT

In the space below, you must provide the following information. Attach additional pages if necessary.

- A. Briefly describe the nature of the action that is being requested or proposed, and the new or changed conditions that would occur if the request or proposal were adopted.
 - B. State the direct costs, savings or anticipated revenues associated with the requested or proposed action in the current budget year and how those were calculated. ¹ If annualized or subsequent year fiscal impacts are substantially different from current year impacts, then those shall be stated as well. In addition, cite any one-time costs associated with the action, the source of any new or additional revenues (e.g. State, Federal, user fee or private donation), the use of contingent funds, and/or the use of budgeted appropriations due to surpluses or change in purpose required to fund the requested action.
 - C. Discuss the budgetary impacts associated with the proposed action in the current year. A statement that sufficient funds are budgeted should be justified with information regarding the amount of budgeted appropriations in the relevant account and whether that amount is sufficient to offset the cost of the requested action. If relevant, discussion of budgetary impacts in subsequent years also shall be discussed. Subsequent year fiscal impacts shall be noted for the entire period in which the requested or proposed action would be implemented when it is reasonable to do so (i.e. a five-year lease agreement shall specify the costs/savings for each of the five years in question). Otherwise, impacts associated with the existing and subsequent budget years should be cited.
 - D. Describe any assumptions or interpretations that were utilized to provide the information on this form.
-
- A. Approval of this resolution would call upon the State of Wisconsin to explicitly make it a hate crime in hate crime statutes should someone mislead a law enforcement officer based on several identities including race. The resolution further calls upon the National Sheriffs' Association to implement unconscious bias trainings to local Neighborhood Watch groups and others. Locally the resolution calls for the Milwaukee County Intergovernmental Cooperation Council and all Milwaukee County police departments and their police and fire commissions to likewise implement unconscious racial bias trainings to Neighborhood Watch and other groups, but also to ensure police departments are capable and empowered to mitigate negative outcomes derived from non-emergency, non-issue racially biased calls for police service.
 - B. There are no direct costs associated with this resolution. Existing staff time would be needed to communicate the contents of the resolution to Wisconsin policymakers, the National Sheriffs' Association, the Milwaukee County Intergovernmental Cooperation Council, and all Milwaukee County police departments and their police and fire commissions.
 - C. No budgetary impacts are expected in this or subsequent years. The resolution would not authorize the expenditure of any additional funds.
 - D. No assumptions were made.

Department/Prepared By Ken Smith, Research Services Division, Office of the Comptroller

Authorized Signature *Ken Smith*

Did DAS-Fiscal Staff Review? Yes No

Did CDBP Review?² Yes No Not Required

¹ If it is assumed that there is no fiscal impact associated with the requested action, then an explanatory statement that justifies that conclusion shall be provided. If precise impacts cannot be calculated, then an estimate or range should be provided.

² Community Business Development Partners' review is required on all professional service and public work construction contracts.