



CITY OF MILWAUKEE YOUTH COUNCIL

*Committee on Public Safety and Committee on Communications*

22 July 2012

Rick Frenette and John Yingling  
Wisconsin State Fair  
640 South 84th Street  
West Allis, WI 53214

Dear Mr. Frenette and Mr. Yingling,

On behalf of the City of Milwaukee Youth Council, we would like to genuinely thank you for agreeing to participate in our joint news conference with Mayors Barrett and Devine calling for a safe State Fair in 2013. The City of Milwaukee Youth Council is the city's youth commission that represents the views of youth to elected officials and the greater community. As you may know, after the isolated incidents of youth violence last summer, including the events at the opening of the Wisconsin State Fair, the Youth Council brought together a variety of youth organizations around the city for a press conference highlighting the positive youth actions occurring in the community. This press conference aimed to contrast media reporting that created fear of youth, specifically persons of color, and overshadowed much of the positive work that youth were doing, and continue to do, in the greater Milwaukee area.

We understand the State Fair's need to create a curfew for this year's State Fair. Indeed, the group of youth that caused last year's event caused a stir within our community and negatively impacted the Fair. We understand that there have been months of safety preparations in advance of this year's State Fair. However, we also believe that tens of thousands of youth under the age of 18 should not suffer because of the actions of less than a tenth of a percent of Milwaukee's youth. Youth have very little places to safely enjoy themselves in our communities—we have been shut out of malls, movie theaters, and recreation facilities.

We would, therefore, ask that you look into the possibility that *if* there are no incidents of youth violence at this year's State Fair, the State Fair reconsider its curfew policy for 2014. While we know that youth below 18 may not be the largest consumers that attend the State Fair, we believe that the youth should be provided adequate access to our state's annual public event.

We respect the decision you will make. Please know that your decision regarding this issue will not affect our holding of the joint news conference on July 30th, 2012. Regardless of your decision, we will continue to publicly promote the importance of a safe State Fair.

Please respond at your earliest convenience by email to [tblack@milwaukee.gov](mailto:tblack@milwaukee.gov).

Sincerely,  
The Committee on Public Safety and the Committee on Communications  
of the City of Milwaukee Youth Council