

# Changing the system of policing

*“Things are not getting worse, they are getting uncovered. We must hold each other tight and continue to pull back the veil.”*

— Adrienne Maree Brown

I read a lot of comments from friends and folks saying it feels like the world is getting scarier, more violent, more out of control. I understand this feeling and have it myself sometimes. But a whole world is difficult, if not impossible, to quantify like that. And the quote from Brown — a writer, scholar and activist — probably is the more accurate take on the matter.



Emily Mills

Give communities more control over policing.

The world is no more and no less scary or terrible than it has ever been; we are just finally able to more fully see what's been happening all along to people in different parts of the world, or from backgrounds

different from our own. More voices are calling the ugliness out of the shadows, forcing more of us to confront it for the first time.

The tragic and unnecessary killings of Philando Castile and Alton Sterling were just the latest in a long line of tragic and unnecessary deaths of black people in this country. They sparked renewed protests in cities across the nation, renewed debate about racial bias in policing.

And then more senseless death: five law enforcement officials gunned down during an otherwise peaceful Black Lives Matter demonstration in Dallas by a lone shooter who said he was angry about those recent black deaths and wanted to retaliate against cops.

And then people who were intent on demeaning BLM protesters and trivializing the debate about racial inequality and police tactics had a convenient boogeyman: See! Black Lives Matters protesters just want to kill cops!

Of course, that lone gunman was not part of BLM and did not and does not represent the discourse or intention of that movement. Once again, reactionaries looking to prop up the status quo that benefits them are very happy to take the actions of one person and use them to paint an entire swath of the population with the same brush.

Every life lost is a tragedy. But we say Black Lives Matter not to exclude but to highlight that one particular group has been disproportionately written off as disposable — has suffered disproportionately at the hands of a law enforcement apparatus designed to perpetuate inequality. There are many, many good, well-meaning officers, but in places like Baton Rouge, where Alton Sterling was killed and where the force has been directed to respond to protests with draconian and often illegal tactics, those good officers are part of a corrupted system.

That's what the discourse is about — changing that system. It can be done. It has been done. Madison's own former police chief David Couper literally wrote the book on the idea of community policing, where the badge represents building real relationships with the people it exists to serve and protect.

President Barack Obama, in his speech at the memorial service for the slain Dallas law enforcement officers, made a plea for us to come together as a nation to deal with our problems. To eschew violence in favor of discourse. I respect most of what he said but there was one point where I felt he missed an opportunity.

We know there is evil in this world, he said. It's why we need police departments.

And yet, to paint any human as inherently evil plays into the idea that police exist to judge and punish those people. All humans are fallible and making that kind of judgment about who is deserving of mercy and second chances (the good) and who is not (the evil) is best not left to mere mortals. Behavior can be harmful. Ideas can be hurtful. And yes we need ways to punish and put a stop to those things that cause real harm. But if we set our police to battle mode within their own communities the results will be heart-breaking.

Allowing communities more control over how they are policed — and ensuring that law enforcement is free from militarized tactics and ideas of good vs. evil — will help to reduce the chances that someone is more likely to be killed simply for being black or mentally ill or for having a bad day. And it will go a long way toward lowering the chances of officers themselves becoming targets.

We have to pull back the veil together, and be unafraid to confront and address what we find underneath no matter how ugly.

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JOURNAL SENTINEL FILES

UWM: Adequate funding of the city's UW campus could be beneficial to the entire state.

# Investment in UWM is an investment in state's future

Thanks to Marc Eisen for his July 10 Milwaukee Journal Sentinel commentary, “Empowering UWM will empower the state,” advocating investment in the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee as the pathway to a prosperous future for Wisconsin.

Milwaukee is Wisconsin's urban center, with unique concentrations of industry, culture, ethnicity, finance, and population that are crucial for the state's prospects. Widespread access to higher education among Milwaukee's citizenry including minority groups is a necessity. Equally important are broad, deep and effective research resources that support economic and societal development. In this context, Milwaukee and the urban corridor of eastern Wisconsin need and deserve a world-class public university as their partner in moving successfully into the future knowledge-based global economy.

Eisen recommends that UWM become a top-tier research university, but in many ways it already is. UWM recently has been named a top tier Research 1 (R1) research university according to the gold standard Carnegie classification of American colleges and universities. Like UW-Madison, the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, the University of Illinois-Chicago, the University of Michigan, Harvard and MIT, we are among the 115 best research universities in the nation. While Milwaukee

has several excellent institutions of higher education, only UWM has R1 status.

UWM's rise to R1 status has occurred without much recognition or fanfare outside of Milwaukee, so it is no surprise Eisen does not know about this. It also occurred without much dedicated state support for UWM's dual research and access mission. Even now, UWM receives less than half the state support per student provided to UW-Madison, while other Midwestern states such as Michigan give parity in funding to their urban universities. UWM's 27,000 students deserve better.

Eisen's article compares Milwaukee with Minneapolis, Austin and Seattle, and suggests that a stronger UWM could help the city hum like our neighbor to the north and other major cities around the nation. We agree.

Think about what Minnesota, Texas, and Washington have invested in their respective R1 institutions, the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, the University of Texas-Austin, and the University of Washington-Seattle, to serve as intellectual drivers of those cities and their surroundings. Each has about three times as many faculty in the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) areas as we have at UWM. Imagine what comparable resources for UWM would have done for Milwaukee and Wisconsin's urban corridor and what they can do in the future.

UWM also is classified by the

Carnegie commission as a major community-engaged university that has partnered intensively with Milwaukee's communities and businesses for decades. As the UW-System's “access” university, 30% of our undergraduate students are minorities and 40% are first-generation university students. Our graduates populate the large and small businesses of Milwaukee and UWM's professors conduct collaborative applied research with them to enhance their competitiveness. Similarly, faculty work hand-in-hand with community organizations to address the multitude of urban issues of education, health and social justice.

Ninety percent of our undergraduate students come from Wisconsin, and 75% of them stay in the state to live and work. We achieved R1 status largely on our own, but now Wisconsin stands at a crossroads. Will we become more like states that invest in the future, or like others that have disinvested and seen their fates wither? Investing now in UWM will build on a remarkably strong foundation of first-rate research, teaching and community engagement, and is truly an investment in Wisconsin's future.

*This commentary was submitted on behalf of University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee faculty members Margo Anderson, Nadya Fouad, David Paterling, Merry Wiesner-Hanks, Swarnjit Arora, Michael Brondino, Sandra McLellan, Kristian O'Connor, John Reisel and Robert Schwartz.*

# Leave road taxes at the curb

By ERIC BOTT

After years of debate over whether to raise taxes to cover transportation projects, Wisconsinites still have good reason to watch their wallets. State legislators continue beating the drum to spend more of our money on roadwork.

But not all politicians expect a taxpayer-funded free ride. In a recent open letter to Wisconsin Department of Transportation Chairman Mark Gottlieb, Gov. Scott Walker laid down new ground rules for road projects. Most important, they must be financed using existing funding sources, with any new fees offset by decreased costs elsewhere, rather than costly new demands on taxpayers.

This is a refreshing change of pace for hard-working families and motorists. Madison officials have spent too long trying to raid our pockets to pay for infrastructure projects. There are better ways to keep traffic flowing smoothly than by reaching deeper into our pockets.

Lawmakers demanding more spending on roads is nothing new. On the heels of the last state biennial budget in 2014, the state Department of Transportation tried to push through \$750 million in tax increases.

This would have included new registration fees for motorists, an increase in our state gas taxes and even new annual fees for owning an electric car.

Current proposals are advocating much of the same. All of this would fall on top of

the already substantial fees we pay to maintain our road system. Wisconsin's gas taxes are some of the nation's highest: we fork over 30 cents to the state on every gallon purchased. Coupled with the federal gas tax, our tax bill comes to over 50 cents per gallon.

Some legislators and state transportation planners want you to think this isn't nearly enough to keep our roads intact, but the facts say otherwise. The Department of Transportation's own analysis indicated that the vast majority of state and local roads or highways are in functional condition or better.

Even if there is roadwork that absolutely must be performed, pulling in more taxpayer money isn't the way our government should pay for it. The first step is to do more with the ample road funding our officials already have. As Walker noted in his letter, finding a more cost-efficient design for the renovation of the Zoo Interchange between Milwaukee and Madison saved taxpayers \$580 million.

Every road project should be scrutinized with an eye for delivering the most value for taxpayers at the least cost.

Another way to guarantee more efficient roadwork is to stop overpaying for construction, which we've been doing for years. This is thanks to our state's prevailing wage law, which is little more than an inflated minimum wage for government projects. These laws require that construction contractors working on state projects be paid using a spe-

cial formula to calculate rates, usually similar to the union rate for similar work. In Wisconsin's case, this means we pay 23% higher-than-market prices for road and construction projects.

It just isn't fair to saddle us with higher taxes to pay higher fees to well-connected construction businesses under government contracts.

Wisconsin repealed the prevailing wage on local road projects last year, but the prevailing wage for state-run roads remains in effect. An analysis by the Wisconsin Taxpayer's Alliance suggests that repealing the state prevailing wage could have saved \$300 million on state construction projects in 2014 alone — a worthy consideration than simply raising taxes.

This level of prudence and careful cost-cutting is exactly what we should expect from our leaders. Unfortunately, there's no telling whether the Department of Transportation will follow Walker's guidance, or whether state legislators will acknowledge the need to spend more wisely on our roads.

For that reason, hard-working Wisconsinites need to make sure their voices are heard loudest as the state transportation budget is decided over the next few months.

If you're tired of paying more to get from Point A to Point B, let's fight to make sure new taxes get stuck in gridlock.

*Eric Bott is the Wisconsin state director of Americans for Prosperity.*

# Marcoux has played a key role

Everyone recognizes and acknowledges the downtown renaissance — you can't miss it as you look across the skyline and see the cranes transforming Milwaukee. What is less recognized — but equally important — is what downtown development means for the rest of the city and the success and investment occurring in the neighborhoods throughout Milwaukee simultaneously.

City Development Commissioner Rocky Marcoux has played a key role in our city's unprecedented growth and development, and we believe he should continue to lead the Department of City Development for another four years in Mayor Tom Barrett's administration as it works to ensure that prosperity extends to every neighborhood in the city.

A healthy downtown is essential to a healthy city. The \$5 billion in new and proposed private development in and around downtown is bringing thousands of new jobs to city residents — including job training and new career paths for previously unemployed city residents — and generating millions of dollars in revenue to support essential services such as police and fire for the entire city. In addition, projects such as the Lakefront Gateway and the new arena will bring more people, more customers, more businesses, more workers, more residents and more private investment to our city — all of which will benefit all of Milwaukee, not just downtown.

Just as impressive as the development that is occurring downtown are the significant investments in neighborhoods throughout the city. A vibrant downtown and healthy, robust neighborhoods are not mutually exclusive, and, in fact, are complementary assets.

Through strategic investment and careful management, the Menomonee Valley has become a national model for how to revitalize abandoned industrial land. Over the last decade, the Valley has brought thousands of new, family-supporting jobs to city residents and transformed a blighted valley into a vibrant destination.

Building on the success of the Menomonee Valley, Marcoux and the city are working to bring the same type of development to Century City — the former A.O. Smith/Tower Automotive site. The city is working closely with neighborhood residents and investing millions of dollars in the site, attracting outside private investment, new businesses and new jobs.

All Milwaukee residents deserve to live in high-quality housing. Under Marcoux's leadership, the city has built more than 6,000 new affordable housing units across the city. The vast majority — 5,400 — were investments outside of downtown, spanning 13 of 15 aldermanic districts from 2004 to 2015. In addition, more than 1,400 building permits have been issued for new single-family and duplex developments since 2005. The department also has taken a strong leadership role in tackling the foreclosure crisis, putting 2,000-plus properties back in private hands and returning more than \$78 million in value back to the city tax rolls.

Throughout the city, you will find countless new developments that were only possible through the direct involvement and leadership of Marcoux and the department he leads. A few of the more recent examples include: Pete's Market at Martin Luther King Drive and North Ave., the Freshwater Plaza at 1st St. and Greenfield Ave., and St. Ann's Intergenerational Center at 24th St. and North Ave. The department also has invested in excess of \$1 million in each of the last three years on commercial properties spanning hundreds of sites across every single aldermanic district in the city.

We are at a critical crossroads. We are achieving once-in-a-generation development downtown and in our neighborhoods. At the same time, we all agree that more must be done to ensure that the benefits of new development and city investment extend to all parts of Milwaukee. While reasonable people may disagree on the best way to accomplish this, delays in confirmation and the absence of leadership causes investors, businesses and residents to lose confidence and seek investment and occupancy outside of the city. We strongly encourage the Common Council to reconfirm Marcoux without any unnecessary delay.

*This commentary was submitted by Peter Feigin, president, Milwaukee Bucks; Theresa Gadzik, Voluptuous Secrets; Ellen Gilligan, president & CEO, The Greater Milwaukee Foundation; Linda Goren-Levey, partner, General Capital; Gary Grunau, president, Gruco Group; Ralph Hollmon, president & CEO, The Milwaukee Urban League; Jeffrey A. Joerres, Incito Capital; John Kersey, executive vice president, Zilber LTD; Ted Kellner, executive chairman, Fiduciary Management; Michael Lovell, president, Marquette University; Sheldon B. Lubar, chairman, Lubar & Co.; David Lubar, CEO, Lubar & Co.; John McWilliam, owner, SCATHAIN; Alex Molinaroli, chairman, president & CEO, Johnson Controls; Clifton Phelps, JCP Construction; Jalyn Phelps, JCP Construction; James Phelps, JCP Construction; Tom Schneider, executive director, COA Youth & Family Centers; Grigella and Heather Smith, Daddy's Soul Food and Anile; Kyle Beenlerly, principal, Vliet Street Capital; Elizabeth Weirick, CEO, Milwaukee Downtown; Michael Weiss, partner, General Capital; and Greg Wesley, partner, MWH Law Group.*