

**Kyle Mirehouse Statement before the Public Safety and Health Committee of the
Milwaukee Common Council**

Thursday, July 16, 2020

Thank you and good morning Madam Chair and acclaimed members of the Public Safety & Health Committee. My name is Kyle Mirehouse, and I have the privilege and honor of being before you today as I have been nominated for reappointment to Director of Emergency Management-Homeland Security and Communications for the City of Milwaukee.

I first want to thank Mayor Barrett for his trust and confidence in my ability to lead this department. Further, I want to thank this Committee and Common Council for their consideration of me to this position. I must also thank my wife for her love and support, as she has provided me a bedrock to anchor to. Lastly, I have to thank my colleagues both within this administration and externally over the previous eight months. I want it to be clear that the success I have found in my short time here is a direct reflection of the sacrifice and dedication they have shown me. From emergency services to administrative support, the welcoming and foundation provided to me have been beyond reproach.

2020 has been a true stress test of the city's emergency management capabilities and mechanisms. Since I began eight months ago, we have operated under three different emergency declarations, experienced a mass shooter event, conducted the planning of a National Special Security Event (NSSE), and responded to a global pandemic. These events have equated to me leading, coordinating, or supporting emergency response operations for over half of the roughly 240 days I have been in this position. While we have witnessed exponential success in our response strategies and techniques, we are still faced with an active response to COVID19 as well as a continued national conversation concerning equity and equality.

Milwaukee is no stranger to this conversation, but events of recent have forced the discussion to the forefront. The record needs to unequivocally state that the Office of Emergency Management-Homeland Security and Communications is steadfastly committed to ensuring that the creation and application of its programs and policies will not only adhere to but strive to exceed societal benchmarks in their integrity and equality.

The emergency management industry is an advantageous position, and with my guidance, this department will thrive within the equity and equality realms. This is due to two primary factors—the first being facts. Facts vastly guide the programs and policies that drive my office. Leaning on facts assist me in mitigating variables such as personal bias while allowing for accurate and efficient application of programs. The second factor, which is the impetus to the emergency management profession, is the conceptual approach of the *whole community*. This concept is driven from procedural guidance from FEMA. The *whole community* approach demands incorporating citizens, businesses, governments, and community stakeholders into all aspects of emergency management. Aspects which include planning, exercising, policy

development, response activities, and recovery operations. This concept will be an integral part to the future of this department.

As I stated in my original appointment hearing, I chose to be here because I find fulfillment and motivation in sacrificing for the greater good. I've done it since joining the Marine Corps weeks after graduating high school, and I will continue doing it with my service to the city.

I value the freedom afforded to me to be here today and I ask for your support in my nomination.