

My name is Monica Cail, and I am the Director of Racial Justice Litigation and Advocacy at Legal Action of Wisconsin. I want to be sure some very important facts related to race do not get lost today. People of color, and especially Black people, experience disproportionate police scrutiny and contact in Milwaukee. This results in more criminal cases, more citation cases, more stop and frisks, and more court debt for Black people, who are also historically economically disadvantaged by systemic racism. Here are some facts:

- As of the last report released by Milwaukee Municipal Court in 2016, 73% of court debt in was owed by Black people, most likely living in zip codes with the highest rates of poverty.
- Because of several of Milwaukee Municipal Court judge's automated debt-collection sanction policies, the high rate of municipal court debt against Black people leads them to have more driver's license suspensions and warrants. Warrants and driver's license suspensions are barriers to employment, and therefore make it harder to pay debt. It also makes it more likely folks will have additional police contact.
- Over the last 20 years, 80% of the people served by JusticePoint's Municipal Court Alternatives program have been Black.
- In the last year, 82% of people served by Legal Action of Wisconsin's Milwaukee Municipal Court Defense Project were Black.

Black people are disproportionately harmed by our legal punishment systems and will be disproportionately harmed by a loss, gap, or substantial change in the services currently provided so well by JusticePoint's Municipal Court Alternatives Program. Programs like JusticePoint's Municipal Court Alternatives Program and Legal Action of Wisconsin's Milwaukee Municipal Court Defense Project address some of the harms caused by systemic racial oppression in Milwaukee and should be seen as a value by the community and any problems raised in a system with these effects should be taken seriously by the community.