

Fire and Police Commission proposed additional changes to the the MPD vehicle pursuit policy

Good day -

My name is Jeanne Lupo. I am writing you today on behalf of Enough is Enough – A Legacy for Erin. Our mission is to eliminate criminal reckless driving that results in innocent injury or death. Our primary work is Court Watch in Milwaukee County, where we observe and report on the sentencing outcomes of fleeing and reckless driving cases. We appreciate the positive feedback and encouragement from the Public Health and Safety committee regarding the service we provide toward transparency in government. We also do work to influence and support legislative efforts after the same goal - such as the towing bill allowances passed late last year.

I question the intent and necessity of additional changes to the pursuit policy. The Police Department has already announced and implemented changes and presented them publicly alongside Director Todd. Further revisions create confusion—for citizens, for officers, and for offenders. Instability in policy sends a dangerous message. When rules appear fluid or contested between governing bodies, it undermines clarity and can embolden lawlessness.

We must remember: reckless driving, fleeing, and endangering safety are choices made by drivers. The criminal—not the officer—is the source of danger. The vast majority of citizens stop when police signal them. That message must remain clear and consistent: Stop for the police.

We often forget that these men and women, who are fathers, sisters, mothers, and spouses risk their own lives daily to keep the rest of us safe in our communities.

Upon reviewing the proposed changes, I am concerned about unintended interpretation. If officers cannot initiate stops for speeding alone, are we signaling that speeding is acceptable? Speed is the foundation of nearly every reckless driving case we see in court. Many defendants would have received a traffic citation had they simply stopped. Instead, they now carry felony convictions—one of which cannot be expunged. That is life-altering and often the result of a short-sighted decision to flee. This new policy encourages people to flee away after stopping and directs them down the path of a felony charge should they be apprehended later. Vision Zero funded a whole campaign about "Speeding we can live without it". Does this change dismiss and thwart all of their efforts?

I am also concerned about language suggesting that if continuation of a pursuit increases danger, it must be terminated. If fleeing drivers learn that certain reckless maneuvers automatically cause officers to disengage, we risk incentivizing exactly those behaviors. Policy must allow for reasonable, common-sense discretion by trained officers on the street. Many of the defendants we see, who have admitted guilt for their actions via a plea agreement, were LUCKY to not have hurt anyone in the commission of their crime. They are NOT good drivers that should be encouraged to perform certain maneuvers so the police call off their pursuit.

Research from the National Institute of Justice emphasizes that the certainty of being caught is a stronger deterrent than the severity of punishment. Effective policing—swift and certain—prevents crime. Limiting officers' ability to intervene reduces deterrence. The greatest public safety message we can send is that fleeing will not succeed.

Most importantly, there should be equal—if not greater—effort devoted to public education. A traffic stop is temporary. A felony conviction is permanent. Compliance is always the better choice.

Thank you for your time and for carefully considering whether further policy changes enhance or undermine public safety as well as the effectiveness of our police to ensure it.

Respectfully,

Jeanne Lupo

President

Enough is Enough ~ A Legacy for Erin

ene4erin.org

ene4erin@gmail.com