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FOR INFORMATION CALL

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Ald. Mike McGee, Jr.
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Racial Disparities Show City Ordinances & EBE Program Need Full Review: Ald. McGee

Ald. McGee Will Hold Meetings to Discuss Review of City's "Quality of Life" Ordinances & Emerging Business Enterprise Program

With Blacks comprising about 40% of Milwaukee's population, just under 70% of the tickets issued by police for "quality of life" ordinance violations go to Black people, Ald. Mike McGee, Jr. said.

And when it comes to publicly-funded contracts and projects, the City of Milwaukee – albeit with Blacks making up more than a third of its population – falls far short of its Emerging Business Enterprise (EBE) goals and requirements, meaning Blacks and other minorities are consistently not getting a fair slice of the pie, Ald. McGee said.

"I find it troubling that Black people and other oppressed minorities in Milwaukee are consistently shortchanged in terms of getting a fair share of city contracts and business, and that they're disproportionately issued tickets for certain ordinance violations," said Ald. McGee, who will hold two public meetings during the next week to discuss the issues. He said he'll be "proactively" looking at proposing amendments to the EBE program and changes for city ordinances found to disproportionately affect Blacks and other minorities.

The meetings to be hosted by Ald. McGee to discuss possibly amending city ordinances will be in the auditorium at North Division High School, 1011 W. Center St., at 6 p.m. on <u>Friday, March 10</u> and on <u>Tuesday, March 14</u>. The March 14 meeting will almost be entirely dedicated to looking at the EBE program. The public and media are welcome to attend.

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EBE & Quality of Life Ordinances Disparity/ADD ONE

Ald. McGee said it's clear that quality of life ordinances have the effect of targeting Blacks and other minorities. "These (arrest and ticketing) numbers perpetuate the myth that Afrikan (sic) Americans and other minorities are criminals, and further justifies the maintenance of racially insensitive legislation that we witnessed with the creation of the failed anti-gang loitering ordinance," said Ald. McGee, a member of the Council's Public Safety Committee.

Although the Anti-Gang Loitering Ordinance was narrowly defeated at the Common Council's February 28 meeting, the proposal spurred "a contentious battle" that brought clearly disproportionate MPD statistics to the fore, Ald. McGee said. "It is the Council's job to ensure that all citizens are equally protected, and that's why we need to look at the current loitering ordinance and others to make sure we're doing our due diligence," he said.

Judges in the city's Municipal Court should be required to consider alternative sentences for some violations, Ald. McGee said. "It is my prerogative to proactively amend the current quality of life ordinances such as disorderly conduct, loitering, and noise nuisances so that they reflect an opportunity for our municipal judges to hand out alternative sentencing instead of fines," said Ald. McGee.

The failed Anti-Gang Loitering Ordinance was created without asking citizens for their ideas and input, said Ald. McGee. He said he wants public input "on the front end" of the debate regarding a review of city quality of life ordinances.

"I welcome testimony, facts, and language from citizens interested in offering alternative solutions to the very broad loitering ordinance that is currently enacted, as well as other ordinances," he said.

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