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ALDERMAN, 8TH DISTRICT

# **Will the D.A. and MPD approach to prostitution make a difference? I have my doubts**

**Statement from Alderman Bob Donovan  
July 13, 2017**

For years I've said I would support any proven approach to tackling our prostitution problem, but what came forward today (during a news conference) from Assistant Police Chief Harpole and District Attorney Chisholm is not promising.

In fact I'm not optimistic that it will make any difference whatsoever.

Taking prostitutes to a drop-in center is not going to seriously make an impact on the problem. The prostitutes' issues are complex and involve drug addiction, violence and abuse from controlling pimps, trauma and in some cases mental health problems. A drop-in center will never be an effective solution, and police sources tell me that a drop-in center on the north side isn't even utilized by officers because it's largely ineffective.

I wasn't invited to the press conference but if I had been I would have asked Assistant Chief Harpole and DA Chisholm – on behalf of my constituents – why have we been using outreach programs to “help” the prostitutes?

Giving them free needles, free condoms, free clothing and sandwiches is NOT solving the problem. As residents in the impacted neighborhoods know all too well these efforts are definitely NOT eliminating the problem and are actually enabling the prostitutes!

At today's news conference much was made of law enforcement efforts to treat the prostitutes with dignity and respect, and I agree that is proper.

But where's the dignity and respect shown to our beleaguered citizens who are watching pimps, zombie-like prostitutes and drug dealers take over their neighborhood? The police are sworn to maintain order and enforce all laws in order to ensure public safety, and by God that's not occurring as it should be in some neighborhoods and it's forcing many residents to become shut-ins for fear of going outside or down the block.

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I am a firm believer that police cannot be called upon to solve all problems, however I do believe the police must maintain order and stability AND enforce all laws fairly, equally and without prejudice.

Milwaukee police are failing us on the prostitution front folks.

The MPD's vision and mission statements are as follows:

### **VISION**

A Milwaukee where all can live safely and without fear, protected by a police department with the highest ethical and professional standards.

### **MISSION**

In partnership with the community, we will create and maintain neighborhoods capable of sustaining civic life. We commit to reducing the levels of crime, fear, and disorder through community-based, problem-oriented, and data-driven policing.

Is it safe when prostitutes are propositioning priests and individuals on their way to church? Is it safe when used needles and condoms are strewn across areas frequented by children?

Is there "order" when pimps are stopping traffic so prostitutes can walk up to vehicles and proposition? Is there "order" when prostitutes are engaging in sex acts in public in plain view?

We should be looking at safe housing sites that get the prostitutes away from the pimps and the drugs. There must be a way of diverting the prostitutes to places where they are safe and not in our neighborhoods turning tricks and shooting up.

There must be a better answer than simply shuttling Milwaukee's prostitutes off to a drop-in center.

We need some real solutions from MPD and the D.A.'s office and we need them now.

But until then – at the very least – enforce the laws and prosecute the criminals!

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