



JAMES N. WITKOWIAK
ALDERMAN, 12TH DISTRICT

Graffiti Laws Need State-Level Attention

Statement of Alderman James N. Witkowiak

June 21, 2010

Alderman Jim Witkowiak is calling for a change in state legislation related to graffiti. The recent arrest of two Chicago area students who vandalized property on Milwaukee's near south side lends evidence to an inter-state disparity in prosecution and punishment of graffiti crimes.

“We are facing an increase in vandalism on buildings, rail cars, houses, garages and more and our hard-working community is fed up and ready to take action. That these two young men traveled to Milwaukee to do their damage—a state where they faced far less rigorous punishment than in Illinois—just adds insult to injury,” Ald. Witkowiak said.

According to Department of Neighborhood Services authorities, had these men been caught in their home state, they would face 8 felony charges instead of the reduced charge of misdemeanor here in Wisconsin.

Alderman Witkowiak's office encourages all who agree that the law must be changed to contact their state level representatives. “This is law that must be adjusted at the state level and it has become clear that the City of Milwaukee alone cannot thwart the rapid increase in graffiti and other acts of vandalism. When our laws are weak in comparison with the region, we become an even bigger target for criminals,” Ald. Witkowiak said.

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