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Alderman, 8th District

Facebook can't solve our infant mortality problem

**Statement from Alderman Bob Donovan
September 16, 2014**

We learn this morning that the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office is investigating yet another co-sleeping death of an infant – this time a four-month-old boy. Reports are that he died while sleeping with his mother.

It is very sad and tragic, and my thoughts and prayers are with the family and loved ones.

This news comes just as we are seeing the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* article detailing the mayor's reformulated "Strong Babies" initiative, designed to help improve our city's unacceptably high infant mortality rate. The big change to the effort, apparently, is to move the marketing campaign for the initiative from billboards to Facebook, to increase awareness and visibility.

My advice to the mayor is that we are going to need a hell of a lot more than just billboards and Facebook to solve this problem!

Our infant mortality rate is worse than that of many third world nations, and a related *MJS* article suggests Milwaukee take a look at what is being done in places like Rwanda, Laos and Bangladesh to bring us to where we need to be.

Really?! Apparently, things have gotten so bad that Milwaukee's last great hope is to seek advice from Laos, Cambodia and Rwanda.

Again, I call for parents in Milwaukee and Milwaukee County to be arrested and charged when appropriate in cases of co-sleeping death if it is determined that alcohol and/or drugs were involved.

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It is my understanding that Kenosha requires drug and alcohol testing in co-sleeping cases; why isn't this happening in Milwaukee County?

Last, we can't wait for the mayor to come up with any solid solutions here. In fact, the mayor's idea of "new" and "innovative" when it comes to addressing infant deaths in Milwaukee is rehashing the 2011 Strong Babies campaign, so it goes from billboards to social media.

Really?!

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