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FOR INFORMATION CALL

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Ald. Robert W. Puente
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Private Alarm Systems Task Force Holds First Meeting

*Panel will Review Regulations, Sales and Service Practices of Private Alarm Systems;
will make Recommendations to Council for Possible Changes*

The Private Alarm Systems Task Force, a newly created city review panel charged with examining how private alarm system providers operate and how they're currently regulated, held its first meeting yesterday (February 17) at City Hall.

Alderman Robert W. Puente, chair of the task force, said the panel was formed at the behest of Common Council President Willie L. Hines, Jr. after it became apparent late last year that some private alarm companies holding city licenses were using coercive, deceptive, and unfair sales practices, and in some cases were promising customers that Milwaukee police would respond to alarm calls – a false promise because police do not respond to such calls.

“We think there are improvements to be made to our regulations and that we can outline what can and cannot be done when alarm companies are disclosing sales, installation and services,” said Alderman Puente. “The ultimate goal is to suggest improvements that will better protect our citizens who are relying on the companies for safety and security.”

One specific area of concern for several Council members has been the “absentee landlord” facet of the private alarm business, as many of the companies are located outside of the city and the state, making regulation and licensing them a challenge, Alderman Puente said.

“At the end of the day, thousands of innocent members of the public can be directly affected if a private alarm business license is suspended, not renewed or revoked,” he said.

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Alarm Systems Task Force/ADD ONE

Other members of the task force members are: President Hines; Raymond Statis of ADT; Christopher Utter of the Wisconsin Electronic Security Association; Richard Pfaff of the City Clerk's Office; Ann McCarthy (appointed by Police Chief Edward Flynn), and Dave Stanosz (appointed by City Attorney Grant Langley).

The panel's next meeting will be at 10 a.m. on Thursday, March 11 in room 102 of the Zeidler Municipal Building, 841 N. Broadway. Anyone can sign up to receive email updates on the task force by subscribing via the city's E-Notify system (at www.city.milwaukee.gov).

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