



**JAMES N. WITKOWIAK**  
ALDERMAN, 12TH DISTRICT

## **Statement of Alderman James N. Witkowiak December 27, 2011**

In the past week, two tragic accidents have befallen the 12<sup>th</sup> District. On Tuesday, December 20, Clementina Hernandez was crossing 6<sup>th</sup> St. with her 4-year old grandson when she was struck by a drunk driver and killed; her grandson was hospitalized as a result of the accident.

Not a full week later, Milwaukee Police Officer Frank Vrtochnick was struck outside his car at the corner of S. 17<sup>th</sup> St. and Windlake Ave. on December 25—Christmas Day—by a vehicle traveling on the wrong side of the road that jumped the curb. Officer Vrtochnick is still in critical condition and the driver in this hit-and-run accident has not yet been apprehended.

While I extend my sympathies to the families of Ms. Hernandez and pray for the recoveries of Officer Vrtochnick and Clementina's grandson, I also must ask that the Milwaukee Police Department enhance its patrols as we approach the New Year holiday this weekend.

We hear about dangerous driving on highways and the horrific numbers of deaths related to drunken driving incidents, but these two examples of pedestrians, who were safely situated on sidewalks or in spaces near their cars, suffering the same unnecessary harm brings heightened awareness to this crisis. There is a very immediate need to prosecute drunken driving cases to the full extent of the law and take all necessary actions to prevent such heartbreak and loss of life in the future.

It is a tragic moment when pedestrians must suddenly fear the road. We must all be attentive in our efforts to prevent drunk driving and the Milwaukee Police Department must redouble its own efforts to prevent any future drunk driving accidents by vigilantly patrolling and enforcing the laws in place meant to protect all members of our community.

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