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City of Milwaukee Common Council

Illegal strip search charges against MPD officers a positive development

Statement of Common Council President Willie L. Hines, Jr.
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While it is always disappointing to see an officer of the law charged with an abuse of office, I am heartened and relieved to see that four Milwaukee Police officers are being charged with carrying out alleged illegal strip searches against citizens in our city.

When these allegations surfaced last spring, other Common Council members and I promised that they would not go ignored, and that justice would be done. Since then, the victims of these abuses filed their complaints, investigators looked into those complaints and the District Attorney saw fit to file charges against the officers who are alleged to be criminally responsible.

What is needed now is a quick and thorough prosecution of the four officers who are charged, and for those found guilty of having committed crimes to be held accountable for their actions. Any other officers found to have violated Milwaukee Police Department policies should face consequences as well. Our officers absolutely must adhere to the letter of the law, and to all applicable policies and procedures.

Finally, it is important that citizens realize that they have an outlet for their concerns in the city's Fire and Police Commission, or at a number of other organizations throughout the community. Residents can find a list of those groups at this link: (<http://city.milwaukee.gov/fpc/Complaints>). I would encourage anyone who believes they are a victim of an abuse of police power to come forward and report their concerns without hesitation.