

JOE DAVIS, SR.

Alderman, 2nd District

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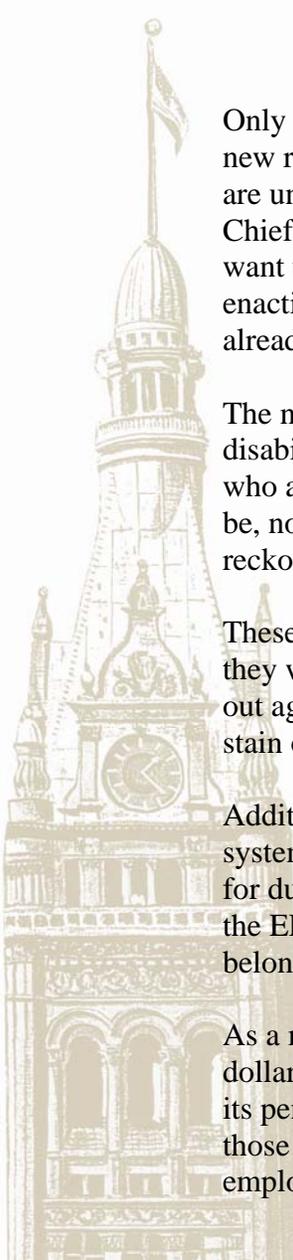
- Judiciary and Legislation Committee
- Public Safety Committee
- Steering and Rules Committee
- Milwaukee Economic Development Corporation
- National League of Cities' Board of Directors
- National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials Board of Directors

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City leaders are right to crack down on duty disability retirement abuse

Statement of Alderman Joe Davis, Sr. December 2, 2013



Only a week after the Milwaukee Employees' Retirement System board passed new rules to prevent the abuse of duty disability retirement by police officers who are under investigation for misconduct, I find it very heartening to see Police Chief Edward Flynn taking proactive steps to prevent more of that same abuse. I want to thank Alderman Michael J. Murphy and the rest of the ERS board for enacting the changes they did, and I commend Chief Flynn for speaking out already against a questionable application for duty disability.

The new rules are designed to prevent this sort of reprehensible abuse. Duty disability retirement is designed as a safety net for the deserving, heroic officers who are injured in what is undeniably a dangerous, vital job. It is not intended to be, nor should it serve as, a piggy bank for bad cops to raid when they face reckoning for their unacceptable behavior.

These officers violated the public trust once. I'm relieved that it appears as though they will not be able to do it again while the internal, disciplinary process plays out against them. I look forward to the results of that process. Their actions are a stain on a department filled with hard-working, dedicated officers.

Additionally, while these new rules will make it more difficult to abuse the system, we must not forget that there are officers who have previously qualified for duty disability retirement while they were facing disciplinary action. I share the ERS board's hope that an annual review will weed out anyone who doesn't belong in the system.

As a member of the Common Council, I take my job as a steward of the city's tax dollars and pension fund very seriously. As the city makes payments to maintain its pension fund as the most solvent in the nation, it's reassuring to know that those dollars will be used to meet our obligations to the city's hardworking employees, and not as a petty cash drawer for disgraced cops.