



**Willie L. Hines, Jr.**  
*City of Milwaukee Common Council*

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## Prosecutors miss the mark in Williams decision

### **Statement of Common Council President Willie L. Hines, Jr. May 28, 2013**

I appreciate the willingness of the Department of Justice, the U.S. Attorney and the FBI to examine the Derek Williams case. I commend them on a thorough investigation and the attention they paid to this disturbing case.

I am, however, disappointed with their overall findings. Prosecutors say that this investigation did not reveal evidence that the officers involved were aware of Mr. Williams's medical condition. This in spite of the fact that Mr. Williams communicated his distress to officers before his death, only to have his cries for help rudely dismissed.

This is truly unacceptable. It lends the appearance that the officers' failure to respond contributed to Mr. Williams's death.

Officers take a sworn oath of office to protect and to serve. Yet these officers failed to render aid while a citizen begged for help, gasped for air and clung to life, ignoring his pleas in a direct contravention of the oath they swore. It should not take a citizen's loss of consciousness to get police officers to do their jobs, because by then, as may very well have been the case with Derek Williams, it can be too late.

Prosecutors may have closed their books on the Derek Williams case, but there is work yet to be done. The Milwaukee Police Department must continue to improve its policies to prevent another tragic incident like this from happening ever again.

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