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ROBERT G. DONOVAN

Alderman, 8th District

And yes, the jury got it wrong with acquittal of suspected killer

**Statement from Alderman Bob Donovan
September 5, 2014**

This morning I had an interesting conversation with Milwaukee County Circuit Court Chief Judge Jeffrey A. Kremers, who contacted me to take issue with the joint statement issued yesterday by me and Alderman José G. Pérez (“*Again, the justice system fails Milwaukee*”).

The good judge said he believes that if we are to be critical in the case of Joel Rivera (he was acquitted last week by a jury following a felony murder trial related to the armed robbery last August at Kochanski's Concertina Beer Hall, 1920 S. 37th St. in which one of his fellow robbers was shot and killed by the tavern's owner), then we should put the blame squarely on the jury.

I have no interest in offending Judge Kremers, and so I am agreeing with him and placing the blame with the jury!

And not long after my conversation with the judge, I received a similar call from District Attorney John Chisholm! It was clearly obvious from our conversation that he also is not happy with the statement, and that he, too, is upset with the outcome of the case.

To be clear, my intent was not to attack DA Chisholm or the prosecutor in the case, Assistant DA Grant Huebner, who I have great respect for. The statement was not meant to disparage their work, their work ethic or their commitment to bring justice.

But I do want to talk about this jury. The jury is a pretty critical part of our justice system – a system that is likely better than most. But in this case, for whatever reason, the jury simply failed, and now a man also suspected of killing an innocent bar patron during a 2007 armed robbery (at Marty's Party, 3735 W. National Ave.) in my district (the case was dropped when a co-defendant decided against testifying against Rivera) will again walk our streets.

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How long before Rivera kills someone or is involved in other serious crimes? I bet we won't have to wait very long to find out.

In yesterday's statement I was merely standing up for my constituents, as they are the ones left to suffer because – for whatever reason – the system failed them in this case.

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