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**ROBERT G. DONOVAN**  
Alderman, 8th District

# **Crime and disorder forcing businesses to close**

*The real story behind the closing of Mama Mia's*

**Statement from Alderman Bob Donovan  
April 22, 2015**

I cannot imagine what it would be like to close a longstanding family-owned business because of out-of-control crime.

But that's exactly what Tony Pipito, owner of Mama Mia's pizza restaurant, 7718 W. Burleigh St., did earlier this week. The closing means 37 people – hardworking neighborhood and Milwaukee residents – are out of a job.

Tony said crime in the neighborhood surrounding Mama Mia's is so bad, loyal customers simply no longer thought it safe to venture to the restaurant after dark.

It is a truly sad state of affairs when it comes to crime in Milwaukee:

- We have 48 murders so far this year – an explosion far beyond anything seen before.
- We just recorded NINE armed or strong arm robberies on the east side near UW-Milwaukee.
- We just had a reported sexual assault near UW-Milwaukee.
- We just saw video released of two robberies and a knifing by a suspect on a Milwaukee County Transit System bus.
- A woman was shot in the face during a car theft near N. 50<sup>th</sup> and W. Locust St.

So now one gets the sense of what Tony and too many other small business owners are up against in our city! For Tony, Mama Mia's had the reputation of being an institution in that community for decades, but it was no match for criminals who own the streets and keep good people from even going out for a meal, or from patronizing other businesses in that commercial area.

So again, I turn to our mayor to ask THE key question: Where's your plan?

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It is your administration's policies (or lack thereof) that has led us to our current state of affairs. Is it so difficult to comprehend – given the level of crime in Milwaukee – that the current level of police staffing is not sufficient? Our officers are working their asses off, but they simply can't keep up with the level of crime and disorder.

We need hundreds of new officers, and without them I fear we'll continue to see the crime rate escalate.

Residents are asking about the continued slow response times (to very legitimate calls for service) by officers. Daily they are seeing speeding, reckless driving, red light running and other problems because traffic control and enforcement are non-existent, which contributes to our disorder.

The MPD's pursuit policy has triggered a new wave of young people who joyride and run amok, knowing that police won't chase them (while they are putting their lives and the lives of innocent citizens at risk).

And that reminds me, mayor, where's your plan to fix our broken juvenile justice system?

We would all really appreciate some leadership, some responsibility, and action, mayor. Try that, please, instead of blaming everyone from the NRA, to the Governor, to Daffy Duck!

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