

## **COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS**

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- Public Safety

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- Public Works
- Steering and Rules
- Anti-Graffiti Policy



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ALDERMAN, 8TH DISTRICT

# **Let's get to the root of the problem**

**Statement from Alderman Bob Donovan**

**May 20, 2016**

People will often say “Let’s get to the root of the problem.” It’s a saying I can identify with as a public official who has been fighting for years for better public safety in the City of Milwaukee.

Well, today I can draw on that often chimed saying by talking about two key issues that have been impacting our public safety in a big way in recent years: auto theft and out of control juvenile crime.

First, let me say that hearing Chief Flynn say that larger-scale car thefts from auto dealers are a “new” thing is troubling. Where has the chief been? This is NOT a new problem, and it only seems to be getting worse across the city and region.

My hope is that the chief and other law enforcement partners can come up with some strategies to keep these vehicles from being taken right off the lots, and right out from under their noses.

Second, it seems that no amount of arrests of juveniles for vehicle thefts and carjackings is going to put the brakes on this huge problem. Just as soon as we arrest one car theft crew, another one pops up to take their place. This is sad, but to me it’s not surprising, because we are seeing the effects of kids who have no moral compass, who are being raised without values, without any sensitivity about their victims, and seemingly without concern about their future.

And the juvenile crime problem in Milwaukee only seems to be escalating.

Take, for instance, the teen who made the news when the teacher’s aide snapped at Bay View High School, grabbing and pushing the kid to the floor in a classroom. Yes, the teacher’s aide was way out of line, and yes he deserves to be punished. But without discipline there can be no education, and it seems to me that disruptive students are robbing the good students who are there to learn.

Good teachers end up babysitting the unruly kids, kids who apparently have no sense of discipline from the home or the family. Let’s get real folks – this simply can’t continue, and we need to put in place tougher policies to get those kids in line or out altogether!

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And I've learned that that same kid at Bay View was recently arrested for auto theft AGAIN! But there the kid was at the school and not locked up (and causing problems), and not seeing consequences for his actions. He is just one of many who are not being well served by our broken juvenile justice system.

My heart goes out to that teacher's aide, whose career in education is likely over. But in my view, the real "child abuse" – and the real root of the problem – is raising children we don't teach values to, and who we don't hold accountable.

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