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ALDERMAN, 8TH DISTRICT

Bill impacting makeup of Fire and Police Commission makes sense

Statement from Alderman Bob Donovan November 1, 2017

A bill proposed in Madison that would require two of the nine members of the Fire and Police Commission to be filled by individuals with police officer and firefighter experience makes sense.

In part, multifaceted Assembly Bill 606 would mandate that the FPC have at least one commission member with professional law enforcement experience and at least one member with professional firefighting experience. I believe these members could offer appropriate expertise in decisions requiring members to judge the conduct of officers or firefighters. They would also bring a wealth of knowledge, experience and insights civilian members might not have.

Think about this: Oversight boards for doctors have ALL doctors as members; oversight boards for attorneys have ALL attorneys. In my view it would not be out of line to ensure that the FPC have members who served as cops and firefighters, and I believe the FPC would welcome their input and that it would help the FPC serve the community even better.

Critics are saying “we need a citizen board” to handle these (protective services) matters. Well police officers and firefighters are citizens as well.

Last, let’s not forget that in the past Milwaukee has had former protective services members serve on the FPC. It’s not that unusual, folks.

Leonard Ziolkowski, a former MPD inspector, even served as chair of the FPC, and did a fine job.

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