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ALDERMAN, 12TH DISTRICT

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# **Aldermen Pérez voices disappointment in Mayor Barrett's veto decision**

## **Statement by Aldermen José Pérez**

I am very disappointed in Mayor Barrett's decision to veto the resolution, passed by the Common Council just yesterday, asking the State of Wisconsin to let the Council remove a chief of police from office with a super-majority vote.

Given the remarkable speed with which this veto was issued, I would have thought his rationale for it would have been some obvious flaw in its drafting or logic. Instead, however, he offers a poor defense of his decision arguing that this change would inappropriately reduce the authority of the Fire and Police Commission and politicize the management of the Milwaukee Police Department.

If the Mayor can be taken at his word, he's late in developing this level of respect for the Fire and Police Commission. The Mayor publically supports the Commission, yet only offers it minimal funding when it comes to budget time. He undermined its authority during the process for hiring Chief Flynn and did not wait for a new executive director of the Commission to be hired prior to pushing through the most recent renewal of the Chief's contract. Moreover, he has never asked to be relieved of the veto he wields over any directive issued by the Commission to the Chief. On the contrary, he openly considered using it when the Commission directed the Chief to alter the department's pursuit policy.

As for politicizing the management of the department, I hope the Mayor does not think the public so ill-informed as to think politics plays no role in the management of the Milwaukee Police Department. The Chief's decision to embrace the new pursuit policy, as well as traffic safety, generally came from no data-driven analysis. His decision to implement recommendations from the draft collaborative reform report he labored mightily to discredit was the result of neither sudden conversion nor deep reflection.

The Common Council's resolution seeks only to hold the Milwaukee Chief of Police – this Chief or any Milwaukee Chief – accountable. The Mayor should have understood and supported this instead of issuing his ill-considered veto.