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Mayor Barrett tells the Common Council not to politicize the Police Chief position, yet uses him for fundraising

Statement by Alderman Tony Zielinski

Recently, Mayor Tom Barrett vetoed the Common Council's resolution asking the state to empower the council to remove Milwaukee's Police Chief with a two-thirds majority vote. He claimed the change would politicize the position and the operation of the police department. Mayor Barrett couldn't be more hypocritical.

In 2009, Chief Ed Flynn headlined a \$400 a person fundraiser for Mayor Barrett at the Italian Community Center. The invite read 'Please join Mayor Tom Barrett at his Mayor's roundtable with special guest Police Chief Edward Flynn.' The Mayor had Chief Flynn deliver a speech on 'Reducing Crime; Reducing Poverty,' for his political fundraiser charging hundreds of dollars a head. Yet, he tells the council it is politicizing the position. Time to look in the mirror, Mayor.

The Mayor also appoints the Director of the Fire and Police Commission which is a conflict of interest. The Director was never appointed by the Mayor until 1988, when Mayor Norquist got the legislature to change that. Even then, the Fire and Police Commission was opposed to the change because they felt it would compromise their ability to be a neutral body.

It's time for Mayor Barrett to be honest with the public about what politicizing a position really means, and how he's used it for his own gain. The citizens of Milwaukee deserve no less.

This issue is a top concern, because on November 7 the Common Council will vote to override or sustain Mayor Barrett's veto.

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