

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

VICE CHAIR

- Community and Economic Development
- Judiciary and Legislation

MEMBER

- Public Works Committee
- Administrative Review and Appeals Board
- League of Wisconsin Municipalities
- Redevelopment Authority - City of Milwaukee



CAVALIER JOHNSON
ALDERMAN, 2ND DISTRICT

Not so special session illustrates need for non-partisan redistricting

**Statement of Alderman Chevy Johnson
November 14, 2019**

Last month, Governor Tony Evers scheduled a special session for the Legislature to take action on two bills relative to guns. This is important because in urban areas of our state, access to guns has resulted in too much bloodshed on the streets (and in rural areas), where suicide by gun has erased too many lives. After the Marquette University Law School poll showed that 80 percent of Wisconsin residents are in favor of action on guns like background checks for all sales and a red flag law that would allow for a cool down period if someone is expected to use a firearm in order to harm themselves or others, many were hopeful that the leaders in the Legislature would act accordingly.

They didn't.

Just as soon as the special session began one week ago today, it was gavelled out of session without even addressing the issue at hand — even though residents of this state are dying because this state's legislative leadership has decided to dig in their heels. With 80 percent of voters in Wisconsin backing these sorts of policies and a reaction like this from our leaders in Madison, it's difficult to say that the interests of the people are being served. In my opinion, this response from Madison wasn't only disappointing, it was expected. I didn't expect this response simply because of my personal, philosophical, or political differences with the majority in the Capitol.

I expected this response because their previous actions indicated that they would behave precisely as they did.

In August, someone trespassed on my property and fired shots, one of which struck my personal vehicle. In that time I held a press conference on guns with no response from the leadership in Madison. I published an op-ed in local Milwaukee media with no response from leadership in Madison. I published an op-ed in a Madison area media outlet with no response from leadership in Madison. I sent letters directly to Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald and Assembly Speaker Robin Vos (**attached**) with no response from leadership in Madison.

-More-

Page 2

A clear and vast majority of people in Wisconsin want common sense gun reform to be taken up by the Legislature. The issue isn't even close but, the failure of legislative leadership to act indicates a failure of democratic control. This is why I'm calling for non-partisan redistricting because what we're seeing now is willful and disregards the will of voters in Wisconsin.

A reminder that voters in Milwaukee will be able to weigh in on the non-partisan redistricting issue as there is a ballot referendum on April 7, 2020 (Spring General Election).

-30-

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

VICE CHAIR

- Community and Economic Development
- Judiciary and Legislation

MEMBER

- Public Works Committee
- Administrative Review and Appeals Board
- League of Wisconsin Municipalities
- Redevelopment Authority - City of Milwaukee



CAVALIER JOHNSON
ALDERMAN, 2ND DISTRICT

September 23, 2019

The Honorable Robin Vos
Wisconsin State Capitol Room 217 West
Post Office Box 8953
Madison, Wisconsin 53708

Dear Speaker Vos —

On Tuesday August 20th, an unfortunate event happened just steps outside of my front door. An armed person fired shots on my property while I was home with my three children: two one-year-old daughters and a nine-year-old son. Fortunately, my daughters were down for an afternoon nap and were not startled by the sound of the gunfire but my son was all too aware of what happened.

Afraid, he rushed by my side with fear in his eyes as he hit the floor. In that moment, someone who should not have had their hands on a gun in the first place made my innocent son feel unsafe in his own home and in his own neighborhood. In a moment, my son was afraid to go outside to ride his new bike that he had gotten for his birthday earlier in the month. He was afraid to play catch, use sidewalk chalk, or run around. I hope that he'll be comfortable playing in leaves this fall and jumping in the snow as I work to clear a path.

Besides emotional trauma, I'm glad that no one was physically hurt. Only my personal vehicle was damaged with a bullet hole identified to me after an investigation by the Milwaukee Police Department.

I think that we can agree that a person who brandishes a firearm on someone else's property, discharges it, doesn't alert the property owner, damages property, does not inform police, and flees from the scene is not a law abiding citizen. According to Milwaukee police, the gun used on my property had also been used at least one other time at the scene of another crime. It's safe to say that whomever has possession of this firearm should not have access to it.

But there are so many people with access to guns who should not have them in Milwaukee and across our state.

Since the incident at my home, a beloved community activist was slain by gunfire. Since then, two mothers have been slain by gunfire. Since then, children have been wounded or killed by gunfire. Since then, a Wisconsin Department of Corrections employee was killed while teaching

her teenaged son to drive. As I write this letter, I'm receiving word that a 17 year-old was shot after a minor traffic accident only blocks away from where the State employee was killed.

This has to stop and people all around our state agree.

I'm certain that you've heard by now that a Marquette University Law School poll found that 81 percent of our fellow Wisconsinites agree that there should be expanded background checks and, 78 percent of gun-owning households agree. Recently, Governor Tony Evers, Attorney General Josh Kaul and even President Donald Trump have also called for red flag laws so that people who may be a danger to themselves and others don't have access to deadly weapons.

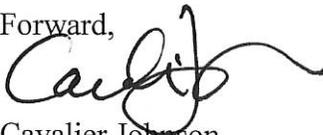
I believe that there is no mutual exclusivity in protecting one person's second amendment rights and the next person's life and liberty. And, if we want to allow law abiding citizens to arm themselves in order to protect their families and their property, that's fine too. A major problem that we have in Milwaukee and in Wisconsin is that we don't do nearly enough to make sure that people are not put in a position to have to pull the trigger on a gun in the first place.

That's leadership that can only come from Madison.

Again, my son was not hurt and neither was I. He'll get to see his dad for a long time to come. But the children of the recently slain mothers will have to endure the rest of their lives knowing that there are adults who could act to make their communities safer but they haven't — at least not yet. The families of farmers and others losing loved ones to suicide by gun elsewhere in Wisconsin will have to endure the same hardships as well.

I would welcome the opportunity to speak with you to learn about your plans to address the statewide issue of gun violence. My email address is cavalier.johnson2@milwaukee.gov and my phone number is 414-286-3787.

Forward,



Cavalier Johnson
2nd District Alderman

Cc: Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald

