

## COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

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ALDERMAN, 8TH DISTRICT

# **We are and must remain a nation of laws**

## **Statement from Alderman Bob Donovan October 2, 2019**

When the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office made the decision to no longer cooperate with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents in their pursuit of those in the country illegally, it was certain there would be consequences.

We all saw those consequences last week when video surfaced of Milwaukee Police Officers participating in the arrest of an individual wanted by the Department of Corrections for a probation violation, but also by ICE agents.

The men and women of the Milwaukee Police Department find themselves between the Devil and deep blue sea. On one hand, the federal government has for decades proved itself incapable of coming up with a comprehensive, enforceable immigration strategy that ensures the security of our national borders while at the same time providing a path to citizenship for those willing to obey the law. On the other hand, this video has sparked calls from some in the community for radical changes to the Department's policies relating to immigration. All this leaves front-line officers uncertain what to do.

If the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* has the story right, the recommended changes include "...that police will not assist in ICE raids, will not use resources for immigration enforcement and not share information with ICE." Further, there is a demand "...that police not comply with warrantless requests from ICE to detain someone or transfer someone to custody." So much for the notion that local, county, state, and federal agencies should collaborate and cooperate with each other.

These recommendations are a long walk from the more reasonable proposals made by Chief Morales and cited in the same *Journal Sentinel* story which would prohibit proactive immigration enforcement by Milwaukee Police Officers but would not prohibit collaboration with ICE agents upon request or the sharing information when a threat to public safety is perceived. Likely to irritate some on the Left and the Right, they seem born less of politics than sound police practice.

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One of the great attractions of this nation throughout its history is that we have been a nation of laws and not mobs. However loud the shouting, the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners should insist that police officers enforce the law and that the Milwaukee Police Department cooperates with all levels of our government. I can remember a time, not too long ago, that this would have been self-evident.

This done, it should move on to more pressing business.

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