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ALDERWOMAN, 8TH DISTRICT

Joel Acevedo deserves justice

Statement of Alderwoman JoCasta Zamarripa September 3, 2020

When Joel Acevedo was put into a chokehold and killed by Officer Michael Mattioli earlier this year, the Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) failed him.

When the Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission (FPC) took over the investigation into Mattioli – only to give it back to the MPD this week to conduct their own investigation – the FPC failed Joel Acevedo.

But perhaps most significantly, Joel has been failed by the Wisconsin State Legislature, who via state statute allows disgraced police officers, like Officer Mattioli, who have been charged with something as heinous as murder, to continue to draw a paycheck and all of the benefits and prestige of maintaining their position, their title, their pension and more.

And so even the great state of Wisconsin has utterly failed this young man who had so much life left to live.

And I am beside myself with anger and frustration.

Mattioli, a sworn law enforcement officer, killed Joel Acevedo. And we have a police department and a civilian oversight commission playing “hot potato” while a state and city struggle with the issue of police brutality, while a family mourns, and while a cop continues to get paid after being charged with murder.

As the only Milwaukee alderperson who also holds a seat in the Wisconsin State Assembly, I have drafted a bill to repeal the infuriating practice of allowing law enforcement to continue to be compensated and employed after being suspended and charged for a felonious act like homicide.

I implore my legislative colleagues to sign on and pass it into state law as soon as possible.

And I call on my city colleagues to continue to push for reform at City Hall and beyond. The status quo is unacceptable.

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