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CAVALIER JOHNSON
COMMON COUNCIL PRESIDENT
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FPC action to encourage residency for police officers and firefighters a positive for Milwaukee

**Statement of Common Council President Cavalier Johnson
January 22, 2021**

During Thursday's meeting of the Fire and Police Commission (FPC), the commission voted to approve a resolution that awards preference points for city residents applying for promotions within the fire and police departments. This now compliments an existing policy of offering preference points for residency to applicants for entry-level positions in the police and fire departments.

It was in 2013 when the state Legislature passed a law ending residency requirements. When it occurred, this action could only be described as an overreach, and it has had negative repercussions locally.

Many agree that having officers who live in the same city that they work increases community engagement, cultural competence, promotes diversity within departments, and supports the property tax base, among other benefits. Data shows that by 2019, only 55% of police officers lived in the city. But the impact goes beyond just police officers. In total, ending the residency requirement has cost Milwaukee thousands of employees, and has resulted in millions of dollars going to support property taxes in other communities.

Yesterday's action by the FPC is a step in the right direction. However, I still strongly believe residency should be reinstated at the state level. It is in the best interest of our communities long term.

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