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Ald. Ashanti Hamilton  
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## Supreme Court Ruling On Juvenile Questioning Praised

*Ald. Ashanti Hamilton Applauds Ruling On Interrogation Process*

Milwaukee Ald. Ashanti Hamilton says last week's state Supreme Court ruling that law enforcement agencies must electronically record juvenile interrogations in both felony and misdemeanor cases is an excellent decision, one that will protect children and police from false accusations.

The decision involved the appeal of a 14-year old Milwaukee County boy, found guilty in a fast-food restaurant robbery. The youngster denied being involved, was reportedly handcuffed to a wall in the interrogation room and refused requests to call his parents, but after hours of questioning signed a confession. The Supreme Court decision found that the boy's confession had been coerced and that he was "uncommonly susceptible to police pressure" and was of "low-level intelligence."

Several months ago Ald. Hamilton called on the justice system to closely scrutinize the questioning of juveniles, especially those with learning disabilities. His comments came in the wake of the beating death of David Rutledge on July 4, 2004 by a gang of juveniles and adults. The confession of another 14-year old boy was thrown out in that case by a Milwaukee County judge who noted the child had denied involvement and had been questioned by police for close to 15 hours before he signed a confession he later recanted. Police denied any misconduct or coercion.

"Kids will sign confessions because they are kids, believing they'll be able to go home if they confess," said Ald. Hamilton. "Electronic recording tackles the false confession issue head-on and will in the future protect our youth from confessing to crimes they did not commit. The decision is a correct one, and I applaud the high court for bringing justice in the case."

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