

Statement of Common Council President Willie L. Hines, Jr.
April 6, 2005

I do not support discrimination of any kind, perpetrated by anyone. I believe that individuals are entitled to file claims and seek redress when they believe their rights have been violated. However, I disagree with both the decision and the penalties levied by the federal jury in the discrimination lawsuit against the City of Milwaukee, Fire & Police Commission and former Police Chief Arthur Jones. It appears that Chief Jones *the person* was on trial and not the Office of the Chief, or the process in which promotions occur. Although Chief Jones promoted captains in a method identical to previous City of Milwaukee Police Chiefs, he was the only one to be charged with discrimination.

The promotion of Lieutenants to Captain, as explained to me by staff of the Fire and Police Commission, is not a tested promotion but is at the discretion of the Chief of Police. The jury not only failed to focus on the promotion practices of the Chief's office but they also chose not to give Chief Jones the same latitude.

I am very disappointed with both decisions. The decision and penalty will not only cause financial harm to the City of Milwaukee, but will also damage race and gender relations within the police department and the broader community.

The Common Council will sit down with City Attorney Grant Langley to discuss the city's options in this matter. We cannot afford to view this decision as one that is purely monetary. We are obligated to assess this decision in a much broader manner, one that considers its long-term and overall impact on the City of Milwaukee as a whole.

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