



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 8952 • MADISON, WI 53708

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Contact: Kenya Parker

608-266-5813

Rep. LaKeshia Myers Addresses Threats Received in wake of “Safer at Home” Protests

MADISON – Representative LaKeshia Myers (D-Milwaukee) released the following statement regarding threats received from the anti-Safer at Home rally held at the Wisconsin State Capitol on yesterday:

“Over the past twenty-four hours, my staff and I encountered several threats connected to my press release that denounced the lack of enforcement of the ‘Safer at Home’ order during yesterday’s rally at the Capitol. Since the release was issued, I received several threats and even had my home address listed on social media. While I have alerted the proper authorities, I remain steadfast in my thought that we need continued compliance and equity in enforcement with the governor’s ‘Safer at Home’ order.

The fact remains that under this order, enforcement has been largely inequitable. Even though Wisconsin state statute calls for citations up to \$250 or 30 days in jail for willfully breaking the order, there were no citations issued at the rally on yesterday. The rally was a clear violation of the law because the permit was denied, over ten people were present, and social distancing was ignored. However, in municipalities across our state, residents have been arrested or issued tickets with fines as high as \$500. Equity in application and enforcement of the order has been a great concern to the people of my district as well as others.

On yesterday, I described the rally and subsequent lack of enforcement as “an exercise in white privilege.” I stand by this statement. While there were people of color present at the rally, the overwhelming majority of those present were white. It is not lost on me that the response likely would have been very different had the majority of protesters been people of color. This is not speculative but based on historical facts.

As a legislator, I do not believe “Safer at Home” is a partisan issue. This is a commonsense issue; with over 5,300 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and a lack of available testing in our state, we need to continue to abide by the order. As an American, I wholeheartedly believe in our Bill of Rights. I also understand it is necessary to temporarily cede certain freedoms for the common good and public health is most definitely a common good. This was evidenced by our Founders in the Preamble of our Constitution, which states it was drafted to ‘promote the general welfare’ of our country. When the populace is at risk of contracting a virus that causes death, and we have no cure, vaccine, and a lack of adequate testing, it is not insensitive to ask that individuals refrain from engaging in non-essential behavior.

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