



DUEY STROEBEL

STATE SENATOR • 20TH DISTRICT

For Immediate Release:
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UW-Madison Director of Community Relations Wrong on Shop-lifting

Madison, WI – Recently, the Director of Community Relations for the University of Wisconsin – Madison advocated for less policing and prosecution for shoplifting crimes committed at big-box retailers and shopping malls.

Senator Duey Stroebel (R-Cedarburg) issued the following statement:

It is upsetting Mr. Mitchell feels the need to use his position at the University of Wisconsin – Madison to advocate his agenda. His comments and his defense of his comments exhibit an astounding misunderstanding of right and wrong.

Shoplifting is not a victimless crime. It weakens the very businesses he is presumably tasked with building relationships with and the costs are not simply absorbed by insurance companies – they are passed onto consumers. There is damage to society from this moral breakdown.

Mitchell stated that Target or other big box stores with insurance should not use shoplifting as a justification to start engaging in what he called “aggressive police practices.”

The suggestion that society should not prosecute certain crimes is disappointing. In Mitchell’s response, he stated “I believe the community should explore a restorative justice model in which non-violent offenders between the ages of 17 to 25 perform community service.” Mitchell forgets the non-violent offenders must first be apprehended and prosecuted in order to take part in a restorative justice program.

We are a nation of laws. The legislature passes laws to protect citizens, and as such, these laws should be followed and applied when violated.

The University should stand for a higher standard of ethics while, according to its mission, teaching “values that will help ensure the survival of this and future generations.” The University should be promoting right from wrong. If UW-Madison wishes to credibly demand more funds from hardworking taxpayers, then it should reconsider employing a community ambassador who argues police should not enforce certain laws.

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