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FOR INFORMATION CALL

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Ald. Jim Bohl
(414) 286-3870

Summer On The Brink

Ald. Jim Bohl Stands With Colleague In Favoring Strong, Immediate Steps To Prevent Violence From Boiling Over

Although he doesn't entirely echo Ald. Bob Donovan's call for as many as 75 National Guard military policemen to help police keep the peace on city streets this summer, Ald. Jim Bohl said the idea shouldn't be entirely dismissed.

"When your police resources are strained to the hilt and your ranks of available officers are thinning because of retirements, you are left with very few options," said Ald. Bohl, who represents the 5th Aldermanic District on the city's northwest side.

"We have neighborhoods where shootings and violence are common practice and this occurrence seems to be spreading. So in the face of this kind of powder keg we must do whatever it takes to protect the safety and wellbeing of our citizens and our neighborhoods, and for that I'm unwilling to leave any option on the shelf," Ald. Bohl said.

The senseless shooting deaths of Scott Huggins (last week, at a gas station at Sherman and Capitol) and of a young pregnant woman at 19th and National have been just the most recent in a long line of fatal Milwaukee shootings during the past few years that have "literally carved out pieces of Milwaukee's soul," Ald. Bohl said.

"I'm not sure how much more tragedy we can take, and that's why I'm speaking out again now, with summer fast approaching," he said.

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Summer On The Brink/ADD ONE

Until more comprehensive societal, neighborhood- and family-level changes are effected to seriously quell the violence in Milwaukee, there will be limited options for elected officials to pursue, said Ald. Bohl, who joined Ald. Donovan publicly last year in calling for a comprehensive crime reduction plan to stem the tide of violence. He said public disorder and violence have worsened, and the situation has reached “crisis status.”

“I believe we need to take a stand and push comprehensive public safety planning to the forefront where it belongs,” he said.

Ald. Donovan’s call for National Guard MPs – believed to be the first time since the riots of 1967 that a Milwaukee elected public official has asked for National Guard troops to be deployed to help police – was but one of eight separate recommendations included in a letter issued to the mayor. Ald. Bohl said the city is not in a position to outright dismiss any potential crime-fighting tool, including the use of Guard troops. He also reiterated his support for the bulk of the recommendations offered by Ald. Donovan, the chair of the Common Council’s Public Safety Committee.

“We must put additional police officers on the street as soon as possible, a position I’ve consistently held. However, I’d prefer not to hire additional PSSIs (public service specialist investigators) to get that done until we’ve exhausted the possibility of using current duty disability officers to help speed up the background (investigation) work on new officer candidates,” he said. Ald. Bohl points out that funding advanced by the Council last July created a number of PSSI positions.

Ald. Bohl said he also strongly supports efforts to seek and secure additional state and federal funding to help the city hire more police officers.

“We’re kidding ourselves if we deny our current circumstances,” he said. “The state of crime and violence in our city is at a point where more leaders need to stand up and say ‘Enough is Enough.’”

“I’m saying Enough is Enough!”