

To: Mayor Paul Soglin and Members of the Madison Common Council
From: The Dane County Commission on Sensitive Crimes
Re: Support for Madison Municipal Employees Paid Family and Medical Leave Policy
Date: May 15, 2018

The Dane County Commission on Sensitive Crimes (COSC) is a public commission created under Dane County Ordinance. The Ordinance charges the COSC with serving as a forum to discuss and coordinate county stakeholders' responses to sensitive crimes, assisting policymakers in Dane County with developing policies relating to the County's approach to sensitive crimes, and providing analysis of public policies regarding sensitive crimes. The COSC currently focuses on five areas of sensitive crimes: domestic violence, sexual violence, child abuse and neglect, elder abuse, and crimes against individuals with intellectual disabilities.

COSC membership was excited to learn that the City of Madison is currently considering a change in employment policy that would provide Madison municipal employees with access to paid family and medical leave. Consistent with the COSC's charge to make recommendations regarding public policies that will affect victims of sensitive crimes in our communities, the Commission strongly recommends that the City of Madison implement a comprehensive and robust paid family and medical leave policy for municipal employees. Inclusive paid leave policies help provide victims of sensitive crimes with crucial support and job stability that they need in order to achieve economic stability, safety, and healing. Paid leave policies are also important for employees who need to take time off of work in order to support children or other family members who are recovering from or experiencing abuse.

Like other unexpected life events, such as a serious illness, victims are not in the position to "schedule" their trauma. Guaranteeing paid leave for municipal employees will allow such employees who are victims of sensitive crimes (or to support family members who are victims) the freedom to seek medical attention, obtain mental health services, access services from local victim service providers, or relocate to achieve safety. Should the City of Madison choose to adopt a comprehensive paid leave policy for municipal employees, it will serve as an important example for other local governments and private sector employers about what proactive, concrete steps policymakers and businesses can take to empower and protect victims of sensitive crimes.

The COSC approved these recommendations by a vote of x-x at its May 15, 2018 meeting. As chair of the COSC, I would be happy to further discuss these recommendations should you have any comments, questions, or concerns.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mike Murray
Chair, Dane County Commission on Sensitive Crimes