

Stavn, Stephanie

From: Bill Anderson <wicheesemaker@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 12, 2021 5:29 PM
To: Stavn, Stephanie
Cc: Krause, Dorothy
Subject: Res. 303

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Hello, as a Dane County resident living in District 27, I am writing to register my opposition to Resolution 303, which from my understanding is Item C-3 on tonight's committee meeting agenda. Though I am unsure if she is on the committee, I am also including my supervisor in this message. If you could, please also share it with other members of the committee

I am strongly in favor of taking immediate and bold measures to curtail Dane County's atrocious racial disparities in incarceration. However, I do not believe that symbolic gestures like this will do anything to actually change this situation. A non-binding resolution asking the Sheriff to reduce the number of beds in the new jail is nothing less than an abdication of your duties and powers as elected public officials to provide civilian oversight of our law enforcement agencies.

I have very little reason to believe that Sheriff Mahoney is acting in good faith on any of the discussions around policing and the new jail, given that racial disparities in policing, prosecution, and incarceration have only grown worse under his nearly-15 year tenure. There is no indication that he actually intends to change any of this.

I also stand firmly against any construction of a new jail. The vast sums of money being allocated for this project would be far more effective if they were invested in mental health facilities, social services, and poverty alleviation measures.

Dane County, despite its "liberal" or "progressive" reputation, remains embarrassingly backwards on all of these questions, with Madison being among the worst cities in the US to be black. It is absolutely unacceptable that the County Board believes this token resolution is a substitute for concrete action towards ending the proposed jail construction project. We need to be taking bold action towards phasing out the very paradigm of incarceration itself. But in the process, engaging in meaningless virtue signaling like this does nothing but perpetuate the problem.

Please live up to your duty as elected public officials, and replace this resolution with a more concrete and binding proposal that will actually hold the Sheriff accountable for his atrociously racist record.

Thank you,

Bill Anderson
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