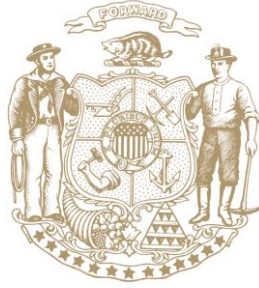

State of Wisconsin

Governor Tony Evers

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VIA ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

June 19, 2020

Representative LaKeshia Myers
Chair, Wisconsin Legislative Black Caucus
Room 304 West
State Capitol

Dear Representative Myers:

Thank you for your June 9, 2020 letter calling for action as it relates to addressing misconduct by law enforcement officers, reforming our justice system, and attacking the public health crisis of racism in our state.

We appreciated the conversations we have had with the Black Caucus over the past few weeks and your feedback and guidance. After our conversations with caucus members, community leaders, and those on the ground across the state, one thing is crystal clear: calling another special session where legislative leaders come in and gavel in and gavel out risks us losing this incredible moment in history where we can and should be able to work together to get something accomplished.

We should not need a special session when people across our state are demanding we take action. We are committed to working with Republican leadership, committee chairs, and other members of the Legislature to find common ground on these issues, and we know you are, too.

This is the moment for action. Today we are announcing our support for a package of legislation that invests in community programs providing violence interruption, addresses the issue of use of force by law enforcement, prohibits dangerous police practices, builds on the work of the Law Enforcement Standards Board, and strengthens accountability measures. These are commonsense policies that should transcend political debate, and many of them have been embraced by community, state, and federal leaders on both sides of the aisle.

This package of legislation is an important first step, but we know the solution to racism and the racial disparities Wisconsin faces cannot be solved in one fell swoop. This can only be the beginning. As you know, Wisconsin is consistently ranked one of the worst states in the nation for racial disparities, from health outcomes to incarceration rates, the wage gap to education inequity. We have significant work to do.

As we move forward, if there is an unwillingness to do this important work, conversations with legislative leaders break down, or there are talks of delays until the next legislative session, as governor, I am ready and willing to use my power to call on the Legislature into special session to act. We must do better. We must continue to do the hard and uncomfortable work of dismantling the institutional oppression that exists in our state and our country. We must be willing to listen, and we must be willing to do the work.

Thank you again for your letter. There is a lot of work that lies ahead of us, but we know it is achievable and we look forward to working with you in this fight to make Wisconsin a more just and equitable state.

Sincerely,



Tony Evers
Governor



Mandela Barnes
Lieutenant Governor

cc: Wisconsin Legislative Black Caucus
Members of the Wisconsin State Legislature