



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: August 31, 2020
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“INVEST IN US” PROTEST AND PRESS CONFERENCE

Press Conference Information:

Time: 10:30 AM CST
Location: Wisconsin Capitol Steps (STATE ST)

Monday, August 31st, community leaders, organizers, and Black Caucus members of the Wisconsin State will come together for a press conference to speak out about the urgency and importance of passing legislation to address police violence and uplift community solutions to end gun violence.

Confirmed Participants: Brandi Grayson, Representative David Bowen, Representative Shelia Stubbs, Reggie Moore, Tatiana Washington

Protest Information:

Time: 6:00 PM CST
Location: Wisconsin Capitol Steps

CONTEXT FOR WISCONSIN SPECIAL SESSION

In the wake of #BlackLivesMatterMovement, the shooting of Jacob Blake, the murder of George Floyd, Anisa Scott, and the murder of Kenosha protestors, Wisconsin community leaders have created demands for the government to reduce police funding and invest in public health, violence prevention, and intervention strategies to make Black communities safer and healthier.

These demands ranged in amounts, but local and national advocates agree that significant investments need to be made in Black communities most impacted by gun violence vs increasing policing which Madison local elected officials are pushing for.

Increasing police presence in communities surviving poverty has shown to increase violence vs decreasing community violence, specifically, gun violence.

Evidence-based violence prevention models are clear; when a city and/or a state invests in building the people by providing resources and supports, violence drops substantially.

Despite the evidence, and despite the increasing destruction of Black communities by the hands of police and others perpetrating violence and surviving poverty, state officials continue to fail to take action.

As a result of the shooting of Jacob Blake that left him paralyzed from the waist down, Governor Evers has now requested a special session on policing to occur on Monday, August 31st to consider a package of policy changes that include multiple reform actions, but more importantly, funding a \$1 million grant to invest in gun violence intervention programs.

The request made by the Governor is a small step and a necessary one.

For the first time in a long time, Black community leaders across WI are in agreement---including grassroots organizations, activists, advocates, State elected officials, and community-based programs-- who have banded together to demand, both in-person and digitally, that Wisconsin leaders take this special session seriously, make a larger investment in our communities (\$25 million to start), and implement a comprehensive community safety approach that includes efforts to prevent all forms of violence against marginalized communities, access to trauma services, and housing security.

WHAT we're anticipating is that the special session will be whitewashed by conservatives who are more concerned with performative politics than Black Lives.

We're expecting Republicans will gavel in and gavel out as they did in 11//2019 when Governor Evers requested a special session on gun violence.

<https://www.channel3000.com/republicans-gavel-in-gavel-out-during-special-sessions-held-at-capitol/>

In preparation, we're ASKING ALL BLACK PEOPLE, ALLIES FOR BLACK LIVES, ALL CO-CONSPIRATORS for Black Lives, clergymen and women for Black Lives, ALL Asians for Black Lives, ALL doctors, teachers, lawyers, and city workers for Black Lives, ALL essential workers for Black lives----- --TO show up and SHOW OUT tomorrow in full force. BOTH AT the 10:30 am press conference and ESPECIALLY AT the 6:00 pm protest to demand Republicans and Democrats, alike, invest in Black Communities, Black families, and Black Children.

We demand that they invest in organizations that are on the ground doing the work. Organizations that have the social capital and community trust to develop and implement violent prevention programming and coordinate services required to provide holistic supports for Black communities.

We demand that state policymakers take the special session scheduled for tomorrow seriously, that they commit funding to invest in community-based violence prevention solutions, and to adopt a comprehensive way forward to protect marginalized communities.

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