



Henry Davis, Jr.
2nd District Council Member

FROM: COUNCILMEMBER HENRY DAVIS, JR.
SUBJECT: STATEMENT FROM COUNCILMEMBER DAVIS JR.
DATE: AUGUST 27, 2020
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In Kenosha they say Jacob Blake. In Louisville they say Breonna Taylor. In Chicago they say Laquan McDonald. In Indianapolis they say Sean Reed. In South Bend we say Michael Anderson and Eric Logan.

I am sickened that we continue to have to say the names of Black people in this country that have been maimed or murdered because of state sanctioned violence. I am tired.

Our lives matter even when it isn't about the spectacle of the videos that document our murder. It matters as Covid ravages the Black community. A pandemic that's disproportionately killing Black people more than any other racial group in America. Further, Indiana has one of the largest disparities between Black and white people when it comes to hospitalizations as a result of Covid.

Throughout the current 2020 campaign season we have been witnesses to the remixing of our story in South Bend. We have been told about a resurgent South Bend while also trying to reconcile a 40% increase in violent crime.

How do we we reconcile the national image of a resurgent South Bend when the Martin Luther King and Charles Black Centers fight for an equitable portion of city dollars at the same time multi-million dollar investments are made in a ice skating rink, it's field house, and colorful lighting on the East Race? These centers—located in communities west of the river—are threatened with cuts so severe that they will not be able to offer the most basic level of service to Black communities.

Elected representatives do not have the right to be outraged by the negative impacts of the decisions that we have created. We find ourselves in this moment because of votes and decisions that have been made by our mayors and city councils. Now we must take responsibility, admit those failings, and create and pass equitable and just policies.

If we believe that Black lives matter, we will pass legislation creating the first ever Citizens Review Board in South Bend. If we believe Black lives matter, we will appropriate funding to expand services at the Martin Luther King and Charles Black Centers.

We have the power to cast votes to move policies that prioritize Black lives. We have an opportunity. For the first time in our city's history, two Black women lead our council. At time a when Black people need resources and protection, we have four Black common council members. We have the voice and votes to prioritize Black lives. We are entering budget season. If our city is committed to ensuring equity and justice, our budget will reflect it because our elected leaders will have voted to make Black lives matter.

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