



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 8952 • MADISON, WI 53708

October 30, 2012

Chief of Police Steven C. Rinzel
Village of Brown Deer Police Department
4800 West Green Brook Drive
Brown Deer, WI 53223

Dear Chief Rinzel:

As members of the Wisconsin State Legislature, the body that created Wisconsin's domestic abuse mandatory arrest law in 1988, we are deeply concerned about the apparent failure of your department to uphold that law. The Brown Deer Police allowed Radcliffe Haughton, the killer in the recent Brookfield shooting, to escape accountability on at least two occasions when he seemingly should have been arrested pursuant to the mandatory arrest law. We believe the least you can do as the leader of the Brown Deer Police Department is to agree to an open, independent, and completely transparent investigation of all the department's interactions with Haughton, as well as the department's policies and practices related to domestic violence.

The *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* reported that your department had twenty contacts with Haughton since 2001. We know from our work on the issue of domestic violence that early intervention and clear and consistent accountability measures for perpetrators are key to preventing terrifying and tragic incidents like the one that took place at the Azana Salon. Two of the reported contacts with Haughton are especially noteworthy because they appear to have clearly warranted an arrest under the mandatory arrest law. In 2011, your department was involved in a standoff with Haughton. During that episode, Haughton pointed what was believed to be a gun at his wife. Police never took him into custody for his brazen threats, and this killer's sense of entitlement over his family was reinforced. In a more recent situation, officers failed to arrest Haughton for a beating that left severe bruising on his wife's face.

Your explanation of the department's handling of these situations has also been very troubling. The public statements about these incidents have misrepresented the meaning and letter of the mandatory arrest law. In addition, you have repeatedly stated that an arrest would have been made had the victim provided different information or been more cooperative. Domestic violence victims face countless and unimaginable pressures. Your department's duty to uphold the law should not, and does not, hinge on the actions of the victim. You must stop implying that the victim was to blame for the failure of your department to make an arrest, and for the sake of other victims in Brown

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Deer and throughout Wisconsin you must correct your inaccurate and damaging statements.

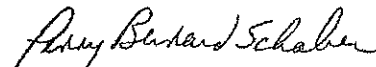
Given both the flagrant nature of the errors and your department's inaccurate and counterproductive public response, we believe you must open the department's actions, policies, and practices to a thorough and independent evaluation. This is especially important since the Brown Deer Police Commission apparently exercises very little oversight of the Police Department, is not taking a pro-active role in this matter, and has not conducted its own investigation of the 2011 standoff. The president of the Commission actually said publicly that his plan was to "...sit and watch things play out".

We believe advocates for victims of domestic violence and experts on the appropriate response of law enforcement to situations involving domestic violence should be involved in selecting an outside investigator. As an officer, you know victim confidence in law enforcement response is crucial to identifying and addressing violence and abuse in our communities. This confidence cannot be restored until you allow a transparent external review. We look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



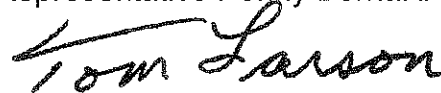
Representative Terese Berceau



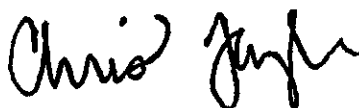
Representative Penny Bernard Schaber



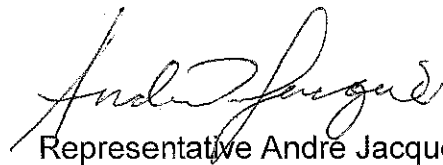
Senator Spencer Coggs



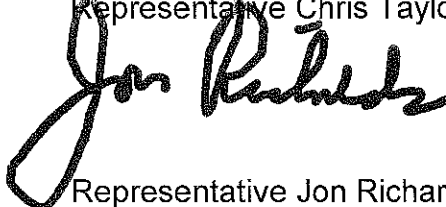
Representative Tom Larson



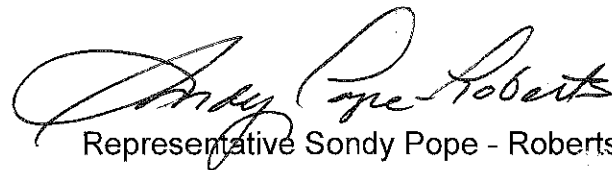
Representative Chris Taylor



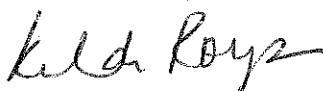
Representative André Jacque



Representative Jon Richards

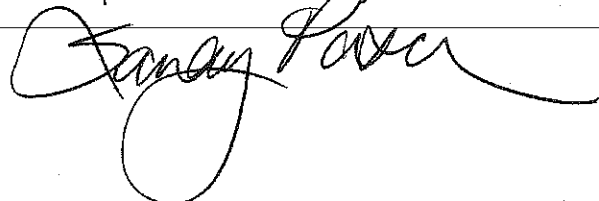


Representative Sondy Pope - Roberts

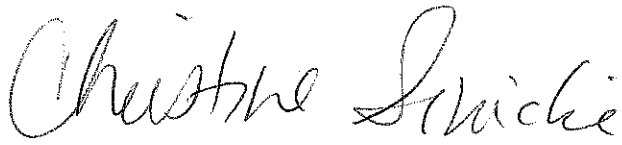


Representative Kelda Roys

Representative Sandy Pasch



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A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christine Sinicki". The letters are fluid and connected, with a prominent loop at the end of the last name.

Representative Christine Sinicki

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tamara Grigsby". The signature is written in a similar fluid style to the one on the left, with a large initial 'T' and a long, sweeping underline.

Representative Tamara Grigsby