



Tony Evers

Office of the Governor | State of Wisconsin

VIA ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

August 30, 2020

Dear President Trump:

I understand yesterday you indicated you would be visiting Kenosha, and according to pool reports last night, that you intend to visit Kenosha this Tuesday. I write today to respectfully ask you to reconsider.

These past few months, from managing a pandemic to facing entrenched racial disparities and inequities, our state—like so many others—has faced unimaginable challenges. But this past week has been particularly difficult. Kenosha and communities across Wisconsin are enduring extraordinary grief, grappling with a Black man being shot seven times and the loss of two additional lives on Tuesday night at the hands of an out-of-state armed militant.

When I visited Kenosha last week, what I saw was a community working to deal with the trauma and pain of these events and extreme loss. They are exhausted and heartbroken with the division that has ripped apart their community, but they are also already working to rebuild, together, and support each other in the face of adversity.

I, along with other community leaders who have reached out, are concerned about what your presence will mean for Kenosha and our state. I am concerned your presence will only hinder our healing. I am concerned your presence will only delay our work to overcome division and move forward together.

It is our job as elected officials to lead by example and to be a calming presence for the people we know are hurting, mourning, and trying to cope with trauma. Now is not the time for divisiveness. Now is not the time for elected officials to ignore armed militants and out-of-state instigators who want to contribute to our anguish.

Moreover, as the Kenosha community continues their recovery efforts, I am likewise concerned that an in-person visit from you will require a massive re-direction of these resources to support your visit at a time when it is critical that we continue to remain focused on keeping the people of Kenosha safe and supporting the community's response.

Our first responders have been working around the clock since Sunday evening. To date, and contrary to yours and others' misinformation, I have continued to stress that protests need to be peaceful and that we must come together to address the significant challenges that we face, and the State of Wisconsin has fulfilled every request for support we have received from the City of Kenosha and Kenosha County leaders. Early Monday morning, Kenosha County requested National Guard assistance and 125 Wisconsin National Guard men and women were on the ground by Monday evening, 250 members on Tuesday evening, 500 members on Wednesday evening, and we have continued to increase their presence with additional National Guard support from Arizona, Michigan, and Alabama. Likewise, Wisconsin Emergency Management has been working with local law enforcement non-stop and beginning Sunday night through the last week, we have had hundreds of police officers from across the region and from across the state in Kenosha to assist the Kenosha Police Department and the Kenosha County Sheriff's Department.

As governor, I will continue to support the Kenosha community as well as the people across our state who are demanding police accountability and transparency reform. This work cannot wait, which is why I have called the Wisconsin legislature to come to work on Monday and take up a policing accountability and transparency reform package. I would welcome your support of these initiatives.

For the reasons above, I urge you to revisit your decision to visit Kenosha on Tuesday. Thank you for your time and your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tony Evers".

Tony Evers
Governor