

Joint Statement from Elected Officials and Community Leaders in Dane County:

No one should ever experience violence. We stand in solidarity with survivors of intimate partner violence. Three survivors have made public allegations of abusive behavior at the hands of City of Madison Alder Iorfa Charles Myadze.

There is also court documentation of physical violence and abuse by Alder Myadze of his former spouse, including a 4-year restraining order and a guilty plea for a deferred prosecution plan which requires an admission of guilt by Alder Myadze. We must believe these women are victims of abuse and are survivors of Alder Myadze. We have two statements, a first hand witness account, and a guilty plea all pointing towards domestic violence perpetrated by Alder Myadze.

Additional survivors have also privately disclosed to friends, family, organizations, and even to some of us, new stories of abuse but are afraid to publicly disclose because of fear, shame, disbelief, and continued threats from Alder Myadze.

We call on Alder Myadze to resign, publicly apologize to his victims and the community, and fully cooperate with any investigations.

We believe all survivors. We want our community to stand with us to believe them too. Let us show support to survivors of intimate partner violence in our community by: listening to these victims without judgment, letting them know you believe them, support their decisions, and connect with them to ask what else you can do. In addition to these, circulating and signing this statement of support for these survivors and requesting that Alder Myadze give a formal apology to his victims and step down from his role as Alder. Our community trust in our elected officials is a hallmark of functional governing. Having ethical people in spaces of power that directly impact survivors and our community is who we are as citizens of Dane County and Madison.

It is our duty as elected officials and community leaders to stand with victims and survivors of abuse, to hold the standard of integrity and excellence from our fellow elected officials, to call out problematic behavior and demand accountability when an elected official has caused harm. Alder Myadze's victims deserve our trust and support.

Their voices in this will not be silenced. We as leaders in our community stand with them.

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. A tenet of this month is the supposition that we come from a place of belief when a victim tells their story. The statistics bear out that 92-98% of all sexual assault and domestic violence allegations are founded and have enough evidence to reach the legal levels of prosecution. So when we say "Believe Survivors" this is a sentiment that is borne out of the reality that the vast majority of these allegations are credible and people do not tend to falsely accuse due to many things including societal pressure and lack of belief in general.

According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence:

Domestic violence: On average, nearly 20 people per minute are physically abused by an intimate partner in the United States. During one year, this equates to more than 10 million women and men. 1 in 4 women and 1 in 9 men experience severe intimate partner physical violence, intimate partner contact sexual violence, and/or intimate partner stalking with impacts such as injury, fearfulness, post-traumatic stress disorder, use of victim services, contraction of sexually transmitted diseases, etc. 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men have experienced some form of physical violence by an intimate partner. This includes a range of behaviors (e.g. slapping, shoving, pushing) and in some cases might not be considered "domestic violence."

Sexual assault: 1 in 5 women and 1 in 40 men in the United States are victims of rape or attempted rape during their lifetime. Nearly 1 in 5 women and 1 in 12 men have experienced contact sexual violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime.

Stalking: Stalking victimization involves a pattern of harassing or threatening tactics used by a perpetrator that causes the victim to fear for their safety or the safety of others. 19.1 million women and 6.4 million men in the United States have been stalked. 66.2% of female stalking victims reported stalking by a current or former intimate partner. 1 in 10 women and 1 in 50 men have experienced stalking by an intimate partner during their lifetime.

Homicide: 1 in 2 female murder victims and 1 in 13 male murder victims are killed by intimate partners. A study of intimate partner homicides found 20% of victims were family members or friends of the abused partner, neighbors, persons who intervened, law enforcement responders, or bystanders. 65% of all murder-suicides are perpetrated

by intimate partners. 96% of murder-suicide victims are female. While the overall rate of intimate partner violence has decreased, intimate partner femicide has increased in recent years, driven by an increase in intimate partner femicide committed with a firearm.

Physical & mental effects: Victims of intimate partner violence are at increased risk of contracting HIV or other STI's due to forced intercourse and/or prolonged exposure to stress. Intimate partner victimization is correlated with a higher rate of depression and suicidal behavior. Only 34% of people who are injured by intimate partners receive medical care for their injuries.

Economic effects: Victims of intimate partner violence lose a total of 8,000,000 days of paid work each year, the equivalent of 32,000 full-time jobs. Intimate partner violence is estimated to cost the US economy between \$5.8 billion and \$12.6 billion annually, up to 0.125% of the national gross domestic product. Between 21-60% of victims of intimate partner violence lose their jobs due to reasons stemming from the abuse. Between 2003 and 2008, 142 women were murdered in their workplace by former or current intimate partners. This amounts to 22% of workplace homicides among women."

(<https://ncadv.org/statistics>)

Here is a list of resources for victims and survivors. If you or someone you know is going through this, please seek help:

National Domestic Hotline: Text HOME to 741741 to reach a trained Crisis Counselor through Crisis Text Line, a global not-for-profit organization. Free, 24/7, confidential.

<https://www.thehotline.org/>

Get Help-End Domestic Abuse WI: <https://www.endabusewi.org/get-help/>

Share Well: <https://sharewellnow.com/>

Free Domestic Legal Aid:

<https://en.lawinfopedia.com/pro-bono/wi/ctg-Free-Domestic-Violence-Legal-Aid>

DAIS (Domestic Abuse Intervention Services): <https://abuseintervention.org/>

Sincerely,

Brenda Yang–Dane County Board Supervisor

Dana Pellebon - Former Dane County Board Supervisor

Kierstin Huelsemann - Dane County Board Supervisor

Joe Maldonado - Alder, City of Fitchburg

Lorrie Hurckes - Independent Contractor, Business Owner
April Kigeya - Dane County Board Supervisor
Aaron Collins - Dane County Supervisor, District 10
Gloria Reyes - Dane County Human Services Co-Deputy Director
Patrick Miles - Dane County Board Supervisor
Linda Ketcham - Executive Director Just Dane
Shannon Barry - Executive Director of DAIS
Helyn Luisi-Mills - Medical Programs Director of Madison Street Medicine
Yogesh Chawla - Dane County Board Supervisor
Heidi Wegleitner - Dane County Board Supervisor
Mike Bare - WI State Representative
Francesca Hong - WI State Representative
Elizabeth Doyle - Dane County Board Supervisor
Matt Veldran - Dane County Supervisor, District 4
Alex Joers - WI State Representative
Michael Engelberger - Dane County Board Supervisor District 35
Anthony J. Gray - Dane County Supervisor District - 14
Jeffrey Kroning - Dane County Board Supervisor
Chad Kemp - Dane County Supervisor
Tommy Rylander - Dane County Board Supervisor
Steven Peters - Dane County Board Supervisor