

MEDIA STATEMENT



For Immediate Release

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Coalition to March on the RNC Condemns Judge's Decision to Reject Our Argument

Milwaukee, WI – The Coalition to March on the RNC is gathered here today to condemn the court's decision to reject our claim that the city is infringing on our First Amendment rights. What we have seen happen in Milwaukee is unfortunately what often happens when the RNC comes to town. Mayors and local police departments from host cities will work with the Secret Service and the RNC to suppress communities' free speech. We firmly believe that the City of Milwaukee delayed the release of their designated route so we would not have much time in court to litigate for our First Amendment rights. We deserved a route we had adequate time to organize around and litigate.

While the courts have decided, exactly a week out, that the City is not infringing on our First Amendment rights, we are firm in our demand to march within sight and sound of the front doors of the Fiserv Forum. While the City at this point may not have a legal obligation to give us the route we are asking for, they do have a moral obligation to give us the route we are asking for. The City has opened doors and rolled out red carpet for the Republicans and has left their residents in the dark. There is no legitimate reason to criminalize our protest, on a route we have marched before without incident. While the City says that they cannot grant us our route due to "safety concerns," they are actually increasing the likelihood of police coming into contact with protests by not granting us a permit for our route. Historically, police intervention has always been the start of a protest going south.

It is important to be clear that as organizers we were never going to let this decision decide if we march or not. We are going to march on the streets that we have a right to march on, the same way we always have here in Milwaukee. This court decision is about how the City will react to our family friendly protest. Historically, the Milwaukee Police Department has been relatively hands off in response to our protests. Leading organizers have held successful marches of similar size and larger without a permit. The overwhelming majority of our protests proceed as planned without arrests, and we expect the same to happen while the RNC is in town. We are preparing for the worst, but expecting the best. Our best will be a family friendly protest where we can project our agenda to the extent that it will overshadow the hateful, reactionary and racist Republican agenda.

Join us on July 15th, at Red Arrow Park, starting at 10am to march on the RNC.

