



Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Supervisor Khalif Rainey, District 2
Supervisor Martin Weddle, District 5

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**SUPERVISORS RAINEY AND WEDDLE OUTRAGED BY COUNTY EXECUTIVE'S
COMMENTS AT BUDGET ADDRESS**

They Say Chris Abele Lacks Sensitivity on Issues Affecting African Americans

Milwaukee County Supervisors Khalif Rainey and Martin Weddle said today that they were outraged by County Executive Chris Abele's insensitivity toward the African American community during a question and answer session with Supervisors at his budget address to the County Board on Thursday.

"The County Executive all but said he was doing nothing for the African American community in Milwaukee County when he addressed the Board," Rainey said. "I asked him for specifics, and he came back and said he was increasing funding for social services and the House of Correction, among other things. Is that what he thinks of the African American community? That they need more social services and better accommodations at the House of Correction?"

"Chris Abele has no plan for dealing with the crisis in the African American community, and his comments not only reflect a lack of sensitivity, they reflect complete ignorance as to what is happening in Milwaukee County."

Milwaukee County's African American community is the largest in the state, Rainey said, and he added that he was "outraged and deeply discouraged" by Abele's comments.

"The keys are jobs, equal opportunities and economic development, not social services," Rainey said. "Does he think social services and the House of Correction only serve African Americans? How can we make progress in this community when leaders such as the County Executive show such ignorance and disrespect to the real needs of African Americans and other minorities?"

Rainey said he was especially angered by Abele's comments about adding funding for the House of Correction.

"Does he think only African Americans are housed there?" Rainey said. "What he said today reflected a prejudice that cannot be tolerated in the leadership of Milwaukee County. Chris Abele should apologize to all Milwaukee County African Americans for his comments, and he should ask himself what he really thinks about an important part of Milwaukee County. He apparently considers the African American community a drain on Milwaukee County. How dare he?"

Supervisor Martin Weddle said: "It's plain as day to see that not enough is being done to help the African American community get jobs, not just now, but for as long as I can remember," Weddle said. "As our funding for African American cultural institutions and services continues to decrease, and as job growth in the community continues to lag, we will continue to experience severe difficulties. Chris Abele clearly does not recognize the needs of a community in crisis."

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