



Alderman Ben MacShane

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Early last week, multiple women shared with me directly about experiences in which they had been made to feel harassed, coerced, and fearful of retaliation by Alderman Roger Wilson. I also spoke with community leaders who had been trusted by other women with similar stories. When I brought these reports to the city's legal department, I was incredulous to discover the broad extent to which there is no city oversight of elected officials' conduct. I learned that elected officials are not subject to the HR department policies or accountability processes that apply to regular "employees" of the city government. The city code's section on ethics outlines the process to file a complaint if an elected official violates provisions narrowly specified in the code (e.g., conflicts of interest, financial disclosures), but it does not include provisions related to sexual harassment or misconduct. There is no aspect of the city code that refers explicitly to sexual harassment by an elected official, or that provides for the investigation or removal of an elected official who engages in sexual misconduct in our community. With no official process available for these women, I agreed to bring this into the light.

We all deserve to live in a community where we can rely on effective systems of accountability to ensure safety and justice for our citizens. The women who have shared their stories about Alderman Wilson's behavior deserve to have an official process ready to appropriately receive their complaints. The absence of accountability processes for elected officials' misconduct is a long-overlooked structural failure that I'm working to repair. Since last week, the process is underway on the legislation necessary to put new accountability processes in place. I believe that shedding light on these kinds of flaws in our government—and working to address them—is an important part of my role as Alderman. Sometimes, bringing wrongs into the

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