



207 East Buffalo Street, Suite 325
Milwaukee, WI 53202-5774

www.aclu-wi.org

MEDIA RELEASE

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Contact: Chris Ahmuty, 414.272.4032 ext. 13

ACLU of Wisconsin calls for public investigation of police confrontation at UW-Milwaukee

Milwaukee – Today, Christopher Ahmuty, Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin issued the following statement regarding an incident at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee (UWM).

“We are expressing dismay at a confrontation between demonstrators and University and Milwaukee police officers at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee. It is unclear at this time whether or not the demonstrators or the police violated the law. It is clear that a confrontation following an unsuccessful attempt by some demonstrators to forcibly enter the Chancellor’s office included the police using pepper spray, apparently confiscating cell phones with cameras, and detaining and arresting demonstrators who may have been simply exercising their right to free speech and freedom of assembly. The apparent decision of the police to treat the demonstration as an unlawful assembly or disorderly conduct needs review.”

“Demonstrators who were arrested and may have been ticketed deserve a fair review of their cases, so that any who were within their rights are not forced to go to court. The ACLU of Wisconsin will consider assisting ticketed demonstrators with meritorious defenses.”

“In addition, the ACLU of Wisconsin calls upon Chancellor Santiago to conduct a review of the incident to assess how well the University’s policies and procedures protect First Amendment rights as well as campus safety. Such a review must be independent from the University Police and must be transparent. The results must be made public.”

The ACLU of Wisconsin and the University administration undoubtedly agree on the special importance that free speech has on a public university campus. It is unfortunate that this demonstration led to a confrontation.

The ACLU of Wisconsin has approximately 9,000 members who support its efforts to defend the civil liberties and civil rights of all Wisconsin residents. For more on the work of the ACLU of Wisconsin, visit our [webpage](#). You can also get news and opinion on civil liberties in Wisconsin on our [Cap City Liberty blog](#). Find us on [Facebook and Twitter at ACLUMadison and ACLUofWisconsin](#).