



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

We, the undersigned organizations and community activists, are calling for a full, thorough, complete, and transparent investigation into the treatment of Diamond Wade while in custody at the Racine County Jail. We, the undersigned, condemn the harassment and bullying of Ms. Wade by inmates within the Racine County Jail and a lack of action by the Racine County Sheriff’s Office to rectify the mistreatment and misgendering of Ms. Wade.

Ms. Wade was arrested and taken to the Racine County Jail about 2 months ago. Ms. Wade, a black transgender woman, was placed in a male pod/dorm despite identifying as a woman. Per reports, Ms. Wade has been subjected to sexual harassment by other inmates within the Racine County Jail, including her bunk mate. Ms. Wade has attempted to file complaints but has had a difficult time doing so.

Ms. Wade should be afforded an opportunity to shower in a place that is private and be housed in a setting consistent with her gender identity. Based on information obtained, Ms. Wade has not been able to shower in an area outside of the male showers, female officers have “not been available” to escort her to a private shower, and Ms. Wade has had to shower overnight in order to be afforded privacy.

According to information received, Ms. Wade has attempted to file complaints, including a Prison Rape Elimination Act complaint (PREA). Due to “technical issues” the PREA complaint was not able to be finished. The Racine County Sheriff’s Department acknowledges a complaint is under investigation; however, the treatment of Ms. Wade BY the Racine County Sheriff’s Department should be investigated by an outside, independent entity.

As such, we, the undersigned, hereby call on Racine County Sheriff Christopher Schmalung to work with community partners to review and update Racine County Jail policies to ensure equal and equitable treatment of all inmates in the care of the Racine County Sheriff’s Department.

Additionally we, the undersigned, hereby call on the Wisconsin Department of Justice, along with the United States Department of Justice to open a civil rights investigation into the harassment and mistreatment of Ms. Diamond Wade.

Signed by:

Dan Seaver President Kenosha Pride, Inc.	Barbara Farrer Executive Director LGBT Center of SE WI	Tanya McLean Executive Director Leaders of Kenosha	Gerald Coons, PhD. President / CEO Diverse & Resilient	Nikki Michele Executive Director LGBTQ Center of Lake Co
Megin McDonell Executive Director Fair Wisconsin	Pennie Meyers Executive Director WCASA	Dr. Melinda Brennan Executive Director ACLU-WI	Angela Lang Executive Director BLOC	Brian Juchems Co-Executive Director GSAFE
Rabbi Bonnie Margulis Executive Director WI Faith Voices for Justice	Wendy Strout WI State Director Human Rights Campaign	Michael Munson Executive Director FORGE	Heidi Duss President OPEN	Steve Starkey Executive Director OutReach LGBTQ Center

SHEBA (Sisters Helping Each other Battle Adversity); Kenosha Racial and Social Justice Activists;