



MARK POCAN

WISCONSIN STATE REPRESENTATIVE

March 3, 2011

An Open Letter to Whoever is Calling the Shots on the Lockdown at the State Capitol:

I write to whoever is making the calls to lock down the State Capitol. I don't know to whom to address this letter because I cannot get a clear answer on the chain of command. This week we have been told those in charge include A) The State Capitol Police B) The Assembly Sergeant's Office C) The State Patrol D) The Chief of Staff for the Governor and E) A consortium of people are making the daily call on the building. This lack of a chain of command with someone being responsible and approachable has made this situation an utter mess.

On Monday, when the lockdown of the most public building in my Assembly district began, law enforcement changed the rules for constituent access to the Capitol 4 times in a little over an hour. We first were told by the State Capitol Police we could bring them in the Martin Luther King Blvd entrance. Then we were told that wasn't allowed per the Assembly Sergeant's Office. We were then told we could bring in eight people at a time. After lengthy conversations with UW Police Chief Sue Riesling in which she stated 8 people would be allowed inside the building per legislative office via the MLK entrance, the rules changed again to just one at a time and now through the King Street entrance. After letting 3 people in, we were again told the rules had changed and no others were allowed in.

During this time I watched Justice Annette Ziegler bring in four students with her without any of the required passes allegedly required. I also witnessed a GOP Representative escort someone into the building during the time I was not allowed to. Furthermore, last night over one hundred people were allowed in through the MLK entrance for the 100th Anniversary party for the Joint Finance Committee merely by checking their name off a list with no ID's shown at all.

The policy is inconsistent at best.

Further, I believe we are in contempt of court for not following the spirit of the injunction that was granted in Dane County Court. During my experiences the other day there were multiple periods of time where NOBODY was allowed into the Capitol.

Perhaps most importantly, this is just wrong. Whoever is making this decision to block public access to the building should be reprimanded. This is not what open government is about. We cannot violate our most basic fundamental rights over political posturing. I truly feel some one the far-right believe the end goal is to have something "happen" to justify a further crackdown. If that "something" results in physical harm to citizens or law enforcement, I

would hope criminal charges would be brought against those who have made the decision to limit public access to this building.

I am very disheartened that state government has sunk so low. From the rule violations and shutting down of the process that transpired during a simple Assembly vote to the lockdown at the Capitol, we are operating more like a third world junta than the government once led by "Fighting" Bob La Follette.

Please for the sake of the clean government reputation of Wisconsin, value the public more than politics. Open the building again.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Pocan', written in a cursive style.

Rep. Mark Pocan
78th Assembly district

Wisconsin State Constitution, Article I, Section 4: "The right of the people peacefully to assemble, to consult for the common good, and to petition the government, or any department thereof, shall never be abridged."

Wisconsin State Constitution, Article I, Section 4 Annotated: "The legislature cannot prohibit an individual from entering the Capitol or its grounds." 59 Atty. Gen. 8.