



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P. O. Box 7882 Madison, WI 53707-7882

November 21, 2008

Denise Revels Robinson, Director
Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare
1555 North RiverCenter Dr., Ste 200
Milwaukee, WI 53212

Dear Denise:

We are writing to express our profound frustration with the quality of case management services and the level of supervision Christopher Thomas and his sister received while in the care of the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare. We recognize the work you do is difficult and the fragile families you work with are extremely troubled. However, circumstances have risen to the point where we need to ask some hard questions.

Christopher's death and the severe abuse suffered by his sister are just the latest in what has become an incomprehensible string of tragedies to befall the most vulnerable children in our community. After each of these tragedies the Bureau has vowed to investigate the incident and take appropriate action. What exactly is the Bureau doing with the information it has gathered from these tragedies? What changes are being made within the Bureau to mitigate future tragedies? Why does the system continue to fail so miserably? What exactly do you hope to learn from the review of this case that you have not already learned from the several reviews that have been conducted over the last 18 months? When will the families in our community who are impacted by your Bureau be able to feel confident that their children are in a better and safer situation than the one from which they were taken?

The Department of Children and Families, and more specifically, the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare must do a better job of protecting the children placed in your care. As elected officials who represent this community, we expect better. Our grieving community demands better. And our children deserve better.

We anxiously await your response. Our children can not continue to fall victim to a system that refuses to recognize its own failings.

Sincerely,

Rep. Tamara Grigsby
18th Assembly District

Sen. Spencer Coggs
6th Senate District

Rep. Polly Williams
10th Assembly District

Rep. Jason Fields
11th Assembly District

Rep. Barbara Toles
17th Assembly District

Senator Lena Taylor
4th Senate District