

Rebecca Cooke worked with a dark money Washington DC group to financially back Mandela Barnes's campaign for United States Senate. Mandela ran on a radical crime agenda, supporting defunding the police and eliminating cash bail.

According To Her Personal Financial Disclosures, Cooke Previously Served As A Steering Committee Member For Opportunity Wisconsin. (Rebecca Cooke, 2022 Candidate Financial Disclosure Report, [Clerk Of The House Of Representatives](#), Filed 5/12/22; Rebecca Cooke, 2021 Candidate Financial Disclosure Report, [Clerk Of The House Of Representatives](#), Filed 2/10/22)

Filing Year	Position	Name Of Organization
2022	Steering Committee Member	Opportunity Wisconsin
2021	Steering Committee Member	Opportunity Wisconsin

(Rebecca Cooke, 2022 Candidate Financial Disclosure Report, [Clerk Of The House Of Representatives](#), Filed 5/12/22; Rebecca Cooke, 2021 Candidate Financial Disclosure Report, [Clerk Of The House Of Representatives](#), Filed 2/10/22)

NOTE: *Cooke does not list this position as a paid position on her personal financial disclosure.*

While Opportunity Wisconsin Touts Itself As A “Coalition Of Residents,” The Group Is Actually “A Front For A Massive Dark Money Group Based In Washington, DC ...”

According To Their Website, Opportunity Wisconsin Is A Coalition Of Residents “Fighting For An Economy That Works For Working People.” “Opportunity Wisconsin is a coalition of Wisconsin residents fighting for an economy that works for working people. Through our stories, we’re elevating the real consequences of the destructive economic policies that put the wealthy few first and leave the rest of us behind. Join us in demanding our elected officials focus more on growing the economy for middle-class folks and expanding opportunity for all Wisconsinites.” (About Us, [Opportunity Wisconsin](#), Accessed 9/11/23)

According To Their Facebook, Opportunity Wisconsin Is A Nonprofit. (Opportunity Wisconsin, [Facebook](#), Accessed 9/11/23)



(Opportunity Wisconsin, [Facebook](#), Accessed 9/11/23)

NOTE: *Searches within the Internal Revenue Service, a Federal Election Commission, and Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions yielded no results.*

According To The Washington Free Beacon, Opportunity Wisconsin Is “A Front For A Massive Dark Money Group Based In Washington, D.C., According To Corporate Registration Records. “A ‘coalition of Wisconsin residents’ that has been running TV attack ads against Sen. Ron Johnson (R.) is a front for a massive dark money group based in Washington, D.C., according to corporate registration records. Opportunity Wisconsin said it has pumped at least \$4 million into negative Johnson ads—including one on Friday blasting him for benefiting from a tax cut he helped pass—making it the most prevalent anti-Johnson group on the state’s airwaves. On its website, Opportunity Wisconsin bills itself as a ‘coalition of Wisconsin residents fighting for an economy that works for all Wisconsinites, not just the wealthy few’ and touts a steering committee composed of state-level progressive activists.” (Alana Goodman, “Wisconsin Dems Rely On Front Group To Attack Republican Incumbent While Decrying Dark Money,” [The Washington Free Beacon](#), 4/25/22)

Opportunity Wisconsin Is A Business Alias For The North Fund, Which Is Not Required To Disclose Its Donors And Is Managed By Progressive, For-Profit Consulting Firm Arabella Advisors

“Opportunity Wisconsin Doesn’t Actually Exist On Paper. The Name Is A Business Alias For The North Fund ...” Based In Washington DC. “But Opportunity Wisconsin doesn’t actually exist on paper. The name is a business alias for the North Fund, which is more than 600 miles away in Washington, D.C. The North Fund filed to conduct business under the name ‘Opportunity Wisconsin’ in January 2020, according to D.C. corporate records. Opportunity Wisconsin did not respond to a request for comment.” (Alana Goodman, “Wisconsin Dems Rely On Front Group To Attack Republican Incumbent While Decrying Dark Money,” [The Washington Free Beacon](#), 4/25/22)

- **“The North Fund Filed To Conduct Business Under The Name ‘Opportunity Wisconsin’ In January 2020, According To D.C. Corporate Records.”** “The North Fund filed to conduct business under the name ‘Opportunity Wisconsin’ in January 2020, according to D.C. corporate records. Opportunity Wisconsin did not respond to a request for comment.” (Alana Goodman, “Wisconsin Dems Rely On Front Group To Attack Republican Incumbent While Decrying Dark Money,” [The Washington Free Beacon](#), 4/25/22)
- **The North Fund Is Not Required To Disclose Its Donors And Is Managed By Arabella Advisors, A Progressive, For-Profit Consulting Firm That Has “Funneled Hundreds Of Millions Of Dollars Through A Daisy Chain Of Groups Supporting Democrats And Progressive Causes ...”** “Unlike super PACs and other campaign committees, the North Fund isn’t required to disclose its donors. The North Fund is managed by Arabella Advisors, a progressive, for-profit consulting firm that has ‘funneled hundreds of millions of dollars through a daisy chain of groups supporting Democrats and progressive causes,’ the New York Times reported last year.” (Alana Goodman, “Wisconsin Dems Rely On Front Group To Attack Republican Incumbent While Decrying Dark Money,” [The Washington Free Beacon](#), 4/25/22)

On January 10, 2020, Opportunity Wisconsin Was Registered With The Washington, DC Department Of Corporations. ([Washington, DC Department Of Corporations](#), Accessed 9/12/23)

Find Your Organization

opportunity wisconsin [Search] [Search Options]

Search Results

Organization Name	File Number	Registration Date	Organization Status	Organization Type	Jurisdiction
Opportunity Wisconsin	TR0006470881	1/10/2020	Active	Trade Name	

([Washington, DC Department Of Corporations](#), Accessed 9/12/23)

Opportunity Wisconsin’s Search Result Redirects To The North Fund’s Filing. Under Trade Names, Opportunity Wisconsin Is Listed. ([Washington, DC Department Of Corporations](#), Accessed 9/12/23)

Home North Fund - Initial File Number: N00006138995 Edit Account Sign Out

Trade Name Listing	Registration Date	Trade Name Status	Trade Name Expiration Date
31161111	1/10/2020	Active	8/1/2026
Opportunity Wisconsin	1/10/2020	Active	8/1/2026
Advocacy Team	8/1/2020	Active	8/1/2026
Voting Rights Lead Action	8/1/2020	Cancelled	8/1/2020
Just Democracy	8/1/2020	Cancelled	8/1/2020
Guard Every Vote Project	8/1/2020	Cancelled	8/1/2020
Just Democracy	8/1/2020	Active	8/1/2026
One Wisconsin Ahead Fund	8/1/2020	Active	8/1/2026
Free and Fair Elections USA	8/1/2020	Cancelled	8/1/2020
Log On Wisconsin	1/10/2020	Active	8/1/2026
Change & Grow	8/1/2020	Active	8/1/2026
Free & Just	8/1/2020	Active	8/1/2026

([Washington, DC Department Of Corporations](#), Accessed 9/12/23)

According To The North Fund’s Form 990s, The Group’s Books And Records Are Held With Arabella Advisors, The “Mothership” That Connects Many Groups That Funnel Hundreds Of Millions From Anonymous Donors Into Campaigns Around The Country

The North Fund Is Managed By Arabella Advisors. “Unlike super PACs and other campaign committees, the North Fund isn’t required to disclose its donors. The North Fund is managed by Arabella Advisors, a progressive, for-profit consulting firm that has ‘funneled hundreds of millions of

dollars through a daisy chain of groups supporting Democrats and progressive causes,' the New York Times reported last year." (Alana Goodman, "Wisconsin Dems Rely On Front Group To Attack Republican Incumbent While Decrying Dark Money," [The Washington Free Beacon](#), 4/25/22)

- **“Over The Past Half Decade, Democrats Have Quietly Pulled Ahead Of Republicans In So-Called Dark-Money Spending, Funneling Hundreds Of Millions From Anonymous Donors Into Campaigns Around The Country.”** “In a trendy co-working space in Washington, D.C.’s Dupont Circle—where people wear Chucks and fuss about fancy coffee—lies the progressive movement’s empire of political cash. Over the past half decade, Democrats have quietly pulled ahead of Republicans in so-called dark-money spending, funneling hundreds of millions from anonymous donors into campaigns around the country. The groups that spend money this way tend to have innocuous-sounding names and promiscuously spawn mini-organizations that take up particular state and local causes. The North Fund, for example, spent nearly \$5 million trying to legalize marijuana in Montana last year. The Sixteen Thirty Fund—the indisputable heavyweight of Democratic dark money—was the second-largest super-PAC donor in 2020, according to the investigative organization OpenSecrets, giving roughly \$61 million of effectively untraceable money to progressive causes. The organization that connects many of these groups—what a critic might call the mothership—is called Arabella Advisors.” (Emma Green, “The Massive Progressive Dark-Money Group You’ve Never Heard Of,” [The Atlantic](#), 11/2/21)
- **“The Organization That Connects Many Of These Groups—What A Critic Might Call The Mothership—Is Called Arabella Advisors.”** (Emma Green, “The Massive Progressive Dark-Money Group You’ve Never Heard Of,” [The Atlantic](#), 11/2/21)

According To The North Fund’s Form 990 For The 2020 And 2021 Tax Years, Arabella Advisors Keeps The Organization’s Books And Records. (2020 Tax Year, [North Fund Form 990](#), Filed 11/30/21; 2021 Tax Year, [North Fund Form 990](#), Filed 11/6/22)

The North Fund’s Form 990 For The 2021 Tax Year Can Be Found On ProPublica. (2021 Tax Year, [North Fund Form 990](#), Filed 11/6/22)

The North Fund’s Form 990 For The 2020 Tax Year Can Be Found On ProPublica. (2020 Tax Year, [North Fund Form 990](#), Filed 11/30/21)

During The 2018 Tax Period, The North Fund Filed A Form 990-N (E-Postcard) Because They Received Less Than \$50,000 In Gross Receipts. (Tax Exempt Organization Search, [Internal Revenue Service](#), Accessed 9/12/23)

George Soros’ Open Society Policy Center Has Funneled Hundreds Of Thousands To The North Fund

George Soros Finances A Nonprofit, The Open Society Policy Center, Which Falls Under The Soros-Funded Open Society Foundations Network. “A nonprofit financed by billionaire George Soros quietly donated \$140 million to advocacy organizations and ballot initiatives in 2021, plus another \$60 million to like-minded charities. Soros, who personally donated \$170 million during the 2022 midterms to Democratic candidates and campaigns on top of that, spread the additional largess through the Open Society Policy Center — a 501(c)(4) nonprofit that falls under the Soros-funded Open Society Foundations network, according to a copy of its 2021 tax filing, which was obtained by CNBC and is the most recent data available. The Open Society Policy Center also doled out \$138 million to advocacy groups and causes in 2020. Two of Soros’ children sit on its board, the tax filings and its website show.” (Brian Schwartz, “Nonprofit Financed By Billionaire George Soros Quietly Donated \$140 Million To Political Causes In 2021,” [CNBC](#), 1/4/23)

According To Its 2022 Tax Year Form 990, The Open Society Policy Center Funneled \$250,000 To The North Fund For “Support Policy Advocacy.” (2022 Tax Year, [Open Society Policy Center Form 990](#), Filed 11/15/23)

According To Its 2021 Tax Year Form 990, The Open Society Policy Center Funneled \$732,000 To The North Fund For “Support Policy Advocacy.” (2021 Tax Year, [Open Society Policy Center Form 990](#), Filed 11/15/22)

The North Fund Has Received Millions In Grants From The Sixteen Thirty Fund, An “Indisputable Heavyweight Of Democratic Dark Money” Whose Donors Include Nonprofits Linked To Swiss Billionaire Hansjörg Wyss

In The 2020 Cycle, The North Fund Received More Than \$20 Million In Grants From Sixteen Thirty Fund And Its Sister Organization New Venture Fund. “The first year Trump was in office was the first year Sixteen Thirty Fund’s payments to Arabella reached seven figures with \$2 million in payments for the year. The following year, Arabella’s annual management fees climbed to more than \$3.4 million before jumping to \$9 million in 2020. That’s up from less than \$240,000 in 2015. Arabella Advisors also received large payments from other groups the firm helps manage. The North Fund — which received more than \$20 million in grants from Sixteen Thirty Fund and New Venture Fund in 2020 — paid more than \$941,000 to Arabella Advisors in 2020 after reporting no more than \$100,000 in payments to any contractor in 2018 or 2019.” (Anna Massoglia, “Liberal ‘Dark Money’ Groups’ Revenue Soared Ahead Of 2020 Elections,” [Open Secrets](#), 12/23/21)\

- **The Sixteen Thirty Fund Has Been Described As The “Indisputable Heavyweight Of Democratic Dark Money ...”** “The groups that spend money this way tend to have innocuous-sounding names and promiscuously spawn mini-organizations that take up particular state and local causes. The North Fund, for example, spent nearly \$5 million trying to legalize marijuana in Montana last year. The Sixteen Thirty Fund—the indisputable heavyweight of Democratic dark money—was the second-largest super-PAC donor in 2020, according to the investigative organization OpenSecrets, giving roughly \$61 million of effectively untraceable money to progressive causes. The organization that connects many of these groups—what a critic might call the mothership—is called Arabella Advisors.” (Emma Green, “The Massive Progressive Dark-Money Group You’ve Never Heard Of,” [The Atlantic](#), 11/2/21)
- **Sixteen Thirty Fund Has Been Described As Arabella Advisors’ “Primary Political Arm ...”** “Arabella Advisors’ primary political arm, the Sixteen Thirty Fund, spent over \$66 million supporting liberal politicians and ballot initiatives in 2022. The fund spent \$20 million on efforts to strengthen abortion rights and make ballot drop boxes a permanent feature of state elections, both of which succeeded. The Sixteen Thirty Fund also contributed over \$20 million to America Votes, a group that bills itself as the ‘coordination hub of the progressive community’ and works to advance left-wing policies in swing states including Georgia, Pennsylvania, Nevada, Wisconsin, and North Carolina.” (Andrew Kerr, “Under Ethics Scrutiny, Liberal Dark Money Behemoth Arabella Advisors Discloses \$1.3 Billion Fundraising Haul,” [The Washington Free Beacon](#), 11/16/23)

According To Its 2022 Tax Year Form 990, The Sixteen Thirty Fund Funneled \$5,020,600 To The North Fund For “Capacity Building.” (2022 Tax Year, [Sixteen Thirty Fund Form 990](#), Filed 11/7/23)

According To Its 2021 Tax Year Form 990, The Sixteen Thirty Fund Funneled \$1,136,250 To The North Fund For “Civil Rights, Social Action, Advocacy.” (2021 Tax Year, [Sixteen Thirty Fund Form 990](#), Filed 11/6/22)

Donors To The Sixteen Thirty Fund Have Included Nonprofits Linked To Swiss Billionaire Hansjörg Wyss And Liberal Mega-Donor George Soros. “While Sixteen Thirty Fund and New Venture Fund do not voluntarily disclose donors, some funders have been made public by foundations and other groups giving grants to them. Donors have included nonprofits linked to Swiss billionaire Hansjörg Wyss, Ebay founder Pierre Omidyar and liberal mega-donor George Soros. As the network’s revenue continued to balloon in 2020, so did payments from the network to Arabella Advisors, which runs the groups’ administration and management.” (Anna Massoglia, “Liberal ‘Dark Money’ Groups’ Revenue Soared Ahead Of 2020 Elections,” [Open Secrets](#), 12/23/21)

- **In FY 2022, Berger Action Fund, A Nonprofit Affiliated With Wyss, Doled Out \$35 Million In Grants To The Sixteen Thirty Fund.** “The nonprofit affiliated with billionaire megadonor Hansjörg Wyss doled out more than \$63 million in grants to left-leaning groups in fiscal 2022 — including \$35 million to one of the top dark money spending vehicles on the left —

even as it reported a loss in revenues. Berger Action Fund's eight-figure contribution to the Sixteen Thirty Fund was by far its largest between April 2022 and March 2023, according to tax returns covering that period shared first with PI. But while the donation likely would still place the nonprofit among Sixteen Thirty Fund's top funders, it reflects a broader decrease in spending by Berger Action Fund in fiscal 2022. Berger Action Fund donated \$42.5 million to Sixteen Thirty Fund in fiscal 2021." (Caitlin Oprysko, "Wyss' Nonprofit Showered Liberal Groups With More Than \$63M," [Politico](#), 2/16/24)

"Berger Action Fund Donated \$42.5 Million To Sixteen Thirty Fund In Fiscal 2021."

(Caitlin Oprysko, "Wyss' Nonprofit Showered Liberal Groups With More Than \$63M," [Politico](#), 2/16/24)

In The 2022 Election Cycle, Opportunity Wisconsin Spent Millions Of Dollars Against Sen. Ron Johnson In His Race Against Democratic Candidate Mandela Barnes

In April 2022, *The Washington Free Beacon* Reported That Opportunity Wisconsin Had "Pumped At Least \$4 Million Into Negative [Ron] Johnson Ads ..." "A 'coalition of Wisconsin residents' that has been running TV attack ads against Sen. Ron Johnson (R.) is a front for a massive dark money group based in Washington, D.C., according to corporate registration records. Opportunity Wisconsin said it has pumped at least \$4 million into negative Johnson ads—including one on Friday blasting him for benefiting from a tax cut he helped pass—making it the most prevalent anti-Johnson group on the state's airwaves. On its website, Opportunity Wisconsin bills itself as a 'coalition of Wisconsin residents fighting for an economy that works for all Wisconsinites, not just the wealthy few' and touts a steering committee composed of state-level progressive activists." (Alana Goodman, "Wisconsin Dems Rely On Front Group To Attack Republican Incumbent While Decrying Dark Money," [The Washington Free Beacon](#), 4/25/22)

In The 2022 Cycle, Johnson Ran Against Mandela Barnes, Who Previously Advocated To Cutting The Prison Population In Half And Called Reducing Prison Populations "Sexy. It's Now A Thing That Leading Candidates Are Talking About"

In November 2022, Sen. Ron Johnson Won Re-Election To A Third Term, Defeating Democrat Mandela Barnes. "GOP Sen. Ron Johnson has won re-election to a third term in Wisconsin, NBC News projects, narrowly defeating Democrat Mandela Barnes. 'The votes are in,' Johnson said in an email statement that was released before NBC News and other news outlets made the call. 'There is no path mathematically for Lt. Gov. Barnes to overcome his 27,374 vote deficit. This race is over.'" (Adam Edelman, "Ron Johnson Defeats Mandela Barnes In Wisconsin Senate Race, NBC News Projects," [NBC News](#), 11/9/22)

VIDEO: On January 17, 2018 At The Wisdom And EXPO Forum On Revocations, Mandela Barnes Expressed His Happiness To Be Able To Talk About Criminal Justice Reform, Because Reducing Prison Populations "Is Now Sexy. It's Now A Thing That Leading Candidates Are Talking About." BARNES: "So, I'm happy that we're all here, I'm happy that we're all talking about it. Now that criminal justice reform, reducing prison populations, is now sexy. It's now a thing that leading candidates are talking about. Because 10 years ago, people would have ran away from this issue. People would not have shown up to a forum like this, because they would have been scared, they would have looked like they were soft on crime." (Mandela Barnes, [Remarks At The Wisdom And EXPO Forum On Revocations, Madison, WI](#), 1/17/18) Minute 2:16 – 2:37

- **Fox News Headline: "Wisconsin Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes, Senate Candidate, Supported Cutting Prison Population In Half"** (Jessica Chasmar, "Wisconsin Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes, Senate Candidate, Supported Cutting Prison Population In Half," [Fox News](#), 9/8/22)
- **Washington Examiner Headline: "Senate Candidate Mandela Barnes Once Supported Cutting Prison Population In Half"** (Asher Notheis, "Senate Candidate Mandela Barnes Once Supported Cutting Prison Population In Half," [Washington Examiner](#), 9/8/22)

Before Entering Public Office, Barnes Was An Organizer For The Milwaukee Inner City Congregations Allied For Hope (MICA), Which Teamed Up With Another Group To Launch A 2012 Initiative Aimed At Cutting The State's Prison Population In Half. "Wisconsin Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes, a Democrat running against incumbent Republican Sen. Ron

Johnson, has repeatedly advocated for cutting the state's prison population in half, eliminating cash bail and other progressive criminal justice reforms. Before entering public office, Barnes previously worked as an organizer for Milwaukee Inner City Congregations Allied for Hope, a Milwaukee-based social justice group, when he teamed up with another organization, Wisdom, to launch a 2012 initiative aimed at cutting Wisconsin's prison population in half." (Jessica Chasmar, "Wisconsin Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes, Senate Candidate, Supported Cutting Prison Population In Half," [Fox News](#), 9/8/22)

- **“The 11x15 Campaign Sought To Reduce The State’s Prison Population To 11,000 Inmates By 2015, Barnes Told Local Media At The Time.”** (Jessica Chasmar, "Wisconsin Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes, Senate Candidate, Supported Cutting Prison Population In Half," [Fox News](#), 9/8/22)
- **The 11x15 Campaign Sought \$75 Million A Year For Programs That Stressed Drug, Alcohol, And Mental Health Treatment Over Incarceration.** “A proposal aimed at cutting the state’s prison population in half is emerging as a top priority for many faith leaders and religious lobbyists as the 2013-'14 legislative session heats up in Madison. The 11-by-15 campaign, which seeks \$75 million a year for programs that stress drug, alcohol and mental health treatment over incarceration, enjoys strong support across religious traditions and denominational lines. It dominated the agenda when hundreds of religious leaders and activists gathered in Madison this month for their annual advocacy day at the Capitol.” (Annysa Johnson, "Cutting Prison Population In Half Is A Top Priority For Wisconsin Religious Lobbyists," [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#), 3/25/13)
- **VIDEO: On August 9, 2018 At An Our Wisconsin Revolution Event, Barnes Declared That If Wisconsin Were To “Cut Our Prison Population In Half,” It Would “Make Our Communities Safer ...”** BARNES: “I am Mandela Barnes, I'm running for Lieutenant Governor. As she just stated, I am a former state representative, I served two terms in the Assembly. And prior to that I was an organizer for a group called MICA, which is Milwaukee Inner-City Congregations Allied For Hope. A group of interfaith social justice organizations. The work that they do is jobs and economic development, education, immigration reform, and treatment instead of prisons. Which has been in the news a lot lately because we spend a billion and a half dollars each year to keep people in prisons in Wisconsin, which is very unfortunate. Because we can cut our population in half, we can make our communities safer, and we can save money in the process.” (Mandela Barnes, [Remarks At An Our Wisconsin Revolution – La Crosse Chapter Event](#), La Crosse, WI, 8/9/18) Minute 1:03 - 1:40

Barnes Did Not Believe Defunding The Police To Be A Radical Idea And Has Criticized Police Budgets, Arguing That Funding Should Be Re-Allocated

VIDEO: On June 10, 2020, Lieutenant Governor Barnes Said, “The Minute You Talk About Reducing A Police Department’s Budget, It’s Like All Hell Breaks Loose And Everybody Acts Like You Are Signaling Armageddon. But That’s Not The Case.”

BARNES: “Every other budget that gets cut it seems like oh, well, you know, we just had to cut this budget. We had to do what we had to do. We had to tighten up our purse strings. We had to tighten up our belt. But the minute you talk about reducing a police department’s budget, it’s like all hell breaks loose and everybody acts like you are signaling Armageddon. But that’s not the case. It’s about reallocating funds in a way that actually promotes safety and I don’t think that when virtually every department and every level of government sees these sweeping cuts that all of a sudden police officers are being attacked because they are being asked to do the same thing as everybody else in government.” (Marisa Wojcik, "Taking A Hard Look At What Is Being Funded At What Level," [PBS Wisconsin](#), 6/12/20) Minute 0:12 – 0:59

In July 2020, Barnes Tweeted, “Defunding The Police Only Dreams Of Being As Radical As A Donald Trump Pardon.” “Defunding the police only dreams of being as radical as a Donald Trump pardon.” (Mandela Barnes, [Twitter](#), 7/10/20)



Mandela Barnes
@TheOtherMandela

Defunding the police only dreams of being as radical as a Donald Trump pardon.

10:10 PM · Jul 10, 2020

(Mandela Barnes, [Twitter](#), 7/10/20)

VIDEO: In A June 2020 Interview With PBS Wisconsin, Barnes Said “Defunding Isn’t Necessarily As Aggressive As A Lot Of Folks Paint It. You Know, School Budgets Get Cut Almost Every Year.” REPORTER: “Liberal leaders such as Madison Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway are being heavily criticized for claiming to be on the side of the protestors who want to abolish police departments or defund them, but then also coming out in support of police departments and we literally see them clashing at protests on the streets. Perhaps not so much these last few weeks, but it is still happening. Do you see these two things as you have to take one side or the other as they are playing out at these protests?” BARNES: “I don’t think it is about taking sides. I think it is about doing the right thing. That’s the important part, right? And, you know, defunding isn’t necessarily as aggressive as a lot of folks paint it. You know, school budgets get cut almost every year.” (Marisa Wojcik, “Noon Wednesday: Communities Chart Court To Address Racism,” [PBS Wisconsin](#), 6/10/20) Minute 13:02 – 13:53

VIDEO: On October 18, 2020, Lieutenant Governor Barnes Said During A Discussion With The First Unitarian Society Of Milwaukee, “It Pains Me To Look At City Budgets ... And The Larger Chunk That Goes To Policing.” BARNES: “That just shows that systemic reforms are the bare minimum that we need right now, and what we need more than anything is resources to our communities. And it pains me to look at city budgets and see the allocations to city services, whether it's libraries, neighborhood services, and youth programs, and the larger chunk that goes to policing. And, you know, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to understand that if we were to resource communities properly, efficiently, and effectively there will be much less of a need for policing in communities.” (Mandela Barnes, [Discussion With The First Unitarian Society Of Milwaukee](#), 10/18/20) Minute 18:40 – 19:19

- **VIDEO: Barnes: “If We Were To Resource Communities Properly, Efficiently, And Effectively There Will Be Much Less Of A Need For Policing In Communities.”** “And, you know, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to understand that if we were to resource communities properly, efficiently, and effectively there will be much less of a need for policing in communities.” (Mandela Barnes, [Discussion With The First Unitarian Society Of Milwaukee](#), 10/18/20)
- **VIDEO: Barnes Discussed Officers Policing Cities They Did Not Live In, Saying, “You Don't Look At People Much Differently When You Are An Outsider, Coming In As An Occupying Force, And That's Exactly What's Happening.”** BARNES: “One of the most disturbing, too, is how many officers don't live in the city. I think it's egregious that people police a community and they don't even have to live under the same laws of that community. Law enforcement should not be hierarchical. If you think you're too good or too cool to live in the same city that you police, you probably shouldn't be in policing. Because you don't look at people much differently when they're not your neighbors. You don't look at people much differently when you are an outsider, coming in as an occupying force, and that's exactly what's happening.” (Mandela Barnes, [Discussion With The First Unitarian Society Of Milwaukee](#), 10/18/20) Minute 19:39 – 20:15
- **VIDEO: Barnes Said One Of The Pillars Of His Lieutenant Governor Campaign Was “Reducing Our State Spending On Corrections,” And Said, “I Am Constantly Pushing On The Reduction Of Spending On Corrections.”** QUESTION: “With the upcoming budget, it seems to me that some low-hanging fruit for reducing costs would be the Department of Corrections. What will it take to reduce the size of that monstrous budget? It's the second highest cost item on our budget. It's been there it's been that way for a long time. What will it take to move that off the list?” BARNES: “That is a good question and obviously that was one of the pillars of my campaign, is reducing our state spending on corrections. And I wish it was a light switch, we're talking about 20 years of escalating costs, and so, it would be it would be very tough to just slash

that in half right away, but we are making strides. Like there are fewer people who are behind bars right now than before now. It's not the chunk that I wish it could be. But the Governor has got the pardons board active and parole as well, and we hadn't had that for eight years. So, this is a step-by-step process man, like I wish we can accelerate this as much, if not more than you [know], but that is that is an area that we are pushing. I am constantly pushing on the reduction of spending on corrections.” (Mandela Barnes, [Discussion With The First Unitarian Society Of Milwaukee](#), 10/18/20) Minute 27:47 – 29:21

VIDEO: On June 10, 2020, Barnes Called For Funding “Neighborhood Services And Programming” By Taking Money From “Over Bloated Budgets In Police Departments ...” WOJCIK: “So, but do you agree that police budgets should be maybe completely done away with, or defunded?” BARNES: “Not completely done away with. We need to invest more in neighborhood services and programming for our residents, for our communities on the front end. Where will that money come from? Well, it can come from over bloated budgets in police departments, you know?” (Mandela Barnes, [Interview With PBS Wisconsin](#), 6/10/20) Minute 2:05 – 2:28

In 2016, Mandela Barnes Sponsored Legislation To Eliminate Cash Bail And Bar Courts From Using The Severity Of The Crime To Argue Against Release

In March 2016, Barnes Sponsored Assembly Bill 981 To Eliminate The Practice Of Monetary Bail. “The Democratic frontrunner in Wisconsin's Senate race sponsored a bill that would have ended cash bail and barred courts from using the severity of a defendant's crimes to argue against their release. As a state legislator in 2016, Mandela Barnes introduced legislation to eliminate ‘monetary bail as a condition of release for a defendant charged with’ a crime. Instead of setting bail, Wisconsin courts would be ‘required to release a defendant before trial’ unless they found ‘by clear and convincing evidence’ that the defendant would ‘cause serious bodily harm to a member of the community’ if released. Under the bill, however, courts could not ‘use the nature, number, and gravity’ of the crimes in question as the sole reason to keep someone behind bars, severely limiting prosecutors’ ability to argue that the defendant would be a risk to the community.” (Collin Anderson, “Wisconsin Dem Frontrunner Sponsored Bill To Eliminate Cash Bail,” [The Washington Free Beacon](#), 12/6/21)

- **The Bill Would Have Eliminated Monetary Bail As A Condition Of Release For Defendants.** “This bill eliminates monetary bail as a condition of release for a defendant charged with, or convicted of, a crime.” ([AB981](#), Failed 4/13/16)
- **The Bill Would Have Required Courts To Release A Defendant Before Trial Unless It Found A “Substantial Risk” The Defendant Would Not Appear For Trial Or Would Cause Serious Bodily Harm If They Were Released.** “Under the bill, a court is required to release a defendant before trial unless it finds, by clear and convincing evidence, that there is a substantial risk that the defendant will not appear for trial or will cause serious bodily harm to a member of the community or intimidate a witness if he or she is released.” ([AB981](#), Failed 4/13/16)
- **The Bill Would Have Prohibited Courts From Using The “Nature, Number, And Gravity Of The Offenses” As The Sole Reason For Refusing Release.** “Under the bill, the court may not use the nature, number, and gravity of the offenses as the sole sufficient reason for refusing to release the defendant.” ([AB981](#), Failed 4/13/16)
- **The Bill Also Would Have Eliminated Using Monetary Bail To Compensate Victims Of Crimes.** “The bill also eliminates the practice of imposing a monetary bail on a witness to ensure the witness's appearance at trial, eliminates the use of monetary bail to compensate victims of crimes, and eliminates the use of monetary bail as a means of securing a person's appearance in a civil forfeiture action.” ([AB981](#), Failed 4/13/16)
- **The Bill Would Have Allowed The Courts To Set Nonmonetary Conditions Of Release.** “The bill allows the court to set nonmonetary conditions of release for defendants and

for persons convicted of a crime but not sentenced or ordered to release upon or pending appeal.”
([AB981](#), Failed 4/13/16)

- **Under Barnes’ Bill, If Defendants Facing Felony Charges Violated The Terms Of Their Release Before Trial, They Would Be Hit With A Misdemeanor If They Did Not Commit A New Crime While On The Lam. The Penalty Now Would Be An Additional Felony Charge.** “But that's not all. The Milwaukee Democrat also pushed a bill in 2016 that would have lowered the penalty for bail-jumping in certain instances. Under Barnes' plan, if defendants facing felony charges violated the terms of their release before trial, they would be hit with a misdemeanor if they did not commit a new crime while on the lam. The penalty now would be an additional felony charge.” (Daniel Bice, “Bice: U.S. Senate Candidate Mandela Barnes Favors Eliminating Cash Bail Nationally, Aide Says,” [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#), 2/21/22)

In April 2016, The Bill Failed To Pass The Assembly. ([AB981](#), Failed 4/13/16)

“When The *Journal Sentinel’s* Dan Bice Asked Barnes’ Senate Campaign Whether Barnes Still Stands By A 2016 Bill He Authored That Would Eliminate Cash Bail In Wisconsin, Barnes Spokeswoman Maddy McDaniel Said Absolutely.” “Barnes, like most Democrats, understands that he can’t get elected if the public learns what he really believes, so he just lies about it. This has been a tried-and-true election-year strategy for decades, but it seems one of his staffers didn’t get the memo. When the *Journal Sentinel’s* Dan Bice asked Barnes’ Senate campaign whether Barnes still stands by a 2016 bill he authored that would eliminate cash bail in Wisconsin, Barnes spokeswoman Maddy McDaniel said absolutely. Not only that, she gushed, he supports ending cash bail nationally. ‘The lieutenant governor believes we should decide who is imprisoned before their trial begins based on how much of a risk they pose to the community, not on how much money they have,’ she said.” (Dan O’Donnell, “Lt. Gov. Barnes’ Bail Blunder,” [MacIver Institute](#), 2/23/22)