



Lutheran Office for Public Policy in Wisconsin
4001 Mandrake Road
Madison, WI 53704

608-940-1808
www.loppw.org

January 23, 2026

To Elected Officials Entrusted with Public Leadership in Wisconsin:

We write to you as Wisconsinites who care deeply about the well-being of our communities, and as Lutherans committed to the biblical call to love our neighbor, uphold human dignity, and seek peace in public life. As the Lutheran Office for Public Policy in Wisconsin and the members of our Policy Council, we speak from decades of experience serving congregations, listening to communities, and working alongside public leaders in our shared civic life.

In recent weeks, we have watched with grief and alarm as violence and fear have escalated in Minnesota. Communities across the river from us are experiencing trauma, instability, and profound uncertainty. Here in Wisconsin, the ripple effects of that fear are real. Families are afraid to send their children to school, go to work, seek medical care, or move about in public spaces. People feel unsafe in their own neighborhoods. The anxiety is not limited to any one group; many immigrants are especially vulnerable, but people of all backgrounds are feeling the strain.

This moment calls for clarity, courage, and moral leadership.

We are deeply concerned about the normalization of violence — whether carried out by individuals, groups, or government agents — and about the dehumanizing rhetoric that too often fuels it. When language strips people of their dignity or portrays entire communities as threats, it erodes public trust and lowers the moral boundaries that keep all of us safe. We urge you to reject such language whenever it appears, and to model the restraint, care, and respect that our public life desperately needs.

Our Lutheran tradition teaches that every person is created in the image of God and is worthy of protection, compassion, and justice. Scripture reminds us: "... *you shall love the alien [foreigner living among you] as yourself*" (Leviticus 19:33–34). We affirm the inherent worth of immigrants and the dignity of all people who call this region home — regardless of race, citizenship status, or political identity.

We are not writing to offer a partisan critique or to prescribe specific legislative solutions. Instead, we appeal to the responsibility entrusted to all public officials: to safeguard human life, to oppose violence in every form, and to help restore a public discourse grounded in civility, honesty, and compassion.

We ask you to use the moral authority of your office to:

- Speak clearly against violence.
- Reject rhetoric that dehumanizes or endangers whole communities.
- Promote transparency, accountability, and restraint in the actions of any agency or individual entrusted with public authority.
- Work with leaders across political lines to build trust and ensure the safety of all who live here.

We offer our prayers for you as you carry the responsibilities of public service during this difficult time, and we offer our commitment to work alongside you to build communities where every person can live without fear, move without threat, and flourish in dignity.

In Christ's peace,

The Lutheran Office for Public Policy in Wisconsin and the LOPPW Policy Council