

REVDIGITAL STUDIOS

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September 7, 2022

Mr. David O. Brown
Chicago Police Superintendent
3510 S. Michigan Avenue, 5th Floor
Chicago, IL 60653

Dear Superintendent Brown,

I received a letter from you, dated August 8, 2022, revoking the media credentials issued to me by the City of Chicago, which I have had for more than a decade. You did this without affording me any due process, which is an egregious violation of the Constitution of the United States and the State of Illinois.

Nelson Mandela once said, "A critical, independent and investigative press is the lifeblood of any democracy." And what you and Mayor Lightfoot have done by revoking my media credentials is a threat to Chicago's democracy - the people's democracy. This is more than a case of a wrongfully revoked media credential. This is about a too-powerful mayor who is enraged that any reporter would dare try to hold her accountable for Chicago's rapid decline into crime and chaos.

I'm not really surprised that you revoked my media credentials, disregarding any pretense of due process and in direct violation of the First Amendment. After all, you were appointed by Mayor Lightfoot and serve at her pleasure. It is no secret that your boss, Mayor Lightfoot, despises me because I have put her and her Administration under a national microscope with stories that have received millions of views. Now that she is running for re-election, Mayor Lightfoot cannot afford to have me reminding people about how great Chicago used to be, how many black children have been shot and killed during her tenure, how many unsolved murders and record carjackings there have been, or the deterioration of our city's retail districts.

It is also no secret that your boss, Mayor Lightfoot, has targeted and discriminated against me due to my affiliations with conservative-leaning news outlets. In the past year, she's bragged that she's investigated me, screamed at me, stating that I'm "full of crap," blamed me and other "right-wing media" for Chicago's reputation as a crime-ridden "no go zone", and attacked me for appearing on Tucker Carlson Tonight on FOX News.

Another great man, Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter." Chicago's decline from a world-class city into a city of fear matters to me and it matters to the people of Chicago.

It is not your job, or the job of Mayor Lightfoot's ninety-person security force to protect her from having to answer questions about the things that matter to Chicago's residents. It is also not your job to help Mayor Lightfoot get re-elected by trying to control the media or harass reporters trying to do their jobs. The allegations made against me in your letter of August 8, 2022, were debunked by the video footage that shows me being physically harassed by one of Lightfoot's security officers when I was at least 30 feet away from the mayor and on a public sidewalk.

It is a crime that Mayor Lightfoot has a security force bigger than any politician except the President of the United States when there are not enough police to protect the people of Chicago. As Chicago Police Superintendent, it is your primary duty to keep Chicagoans safe. So why, at a time when CPD is short 1500 officers, have you assigned ninety officers to her personal security detail when you should assign most of them to protect the people of Chicago?

These are important questions that I, as a veteran journalist, have the right to ask you and Mayor Lightfoot.

My attorneys and I are proceeding in our court action to get my illegally and unconstitutionally revoked press credentials reinstated. However, this should not be necessary. When you were named police superintendent, you took an oath to defend the Constitution and accepted the duty of protecting the people of Chicago.

Will you finally be true to your oath and reinstate my media credentials immediately, or will you continue to serve the political goals of Mayor Lightfoot and her re-election campaign in violation of the Constitution, your oath, and your duty?

Please let me know.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William J. Kelly". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

William J. Kelly