

www.ProfBillLynn.com  
Committee to Re-elect Bill Lynn  
1935 Walling Court  
Davenport, IA 52803

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# Crime



Reducing crime  
Is a priority

**YES! I want to help keep Prof Bill Lynn on the city council.**

Please accept my gift of:

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I want to help out as a volunteer. I will:

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I'm proud to publicly endorse Bill for re-election.

“

\_\_\_\_\_ I support Bill Lynn for re-election in the Fifth Ward.”

(If you wish, add your own reasons in the space provided or just leave the statement as is.)

These endorsements may be used by Bill in printed campaign material, or websites, or simply verbally.)

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**Re-Elect  
Professor  
Bill  
5th Ward  
Good  
Government  
for Change**

### **Thank You!**

First, I want to extend a thank you to those who supported me and voted to put me on the November ballot. And thank you to everyone who voted in the primary election. I still believe **the more the public knows and the more the public participates, the better the outcome.**

### **Hi, I'm your alderman.**

In the past two elections, I worked to knock on the door of every voter in the ward. Unfortunately I have not been able to do that this time because I am under doctor's care for pneumonia and he is forbidding me to do any walking to do door knocking until I get this under control. Hopefully I will be able to be out walking the neighborhoods soon, as I really do enjoy doing just that. And just because I'm your alderman, I don't assume that everyone knows who I am. I'm Kyle's dad and Arletta's husband. We've lived on Walling Court for almost 20 years in a modest home. I'm now "60 something." I'm an associate professor of economics at St. Ambrose. I run a couple small businesses and I've helped people successfully start a bunch of their own. I understand business plans and projections. **I know what's business reality and what's development hype.**

## **The Crime Issue**

I feel there are three major issues facing the City of Davenport. They are crime, jobs and growth, and the need to improve city services. In this letter I would like to discuss crime.

I believe that crime is a major issue in Davenport and based on surveys it appears to be of concern all over the city—not just the Fifth Ward. Since my first term I have felt that it was a major issue and I have lead the council to develop programs like community-based policing (**NETS**) and the volunteer police program (**VIPS**). Last year I invited the **Guardian Angels** to Davenport to create a chapter here and we created the first chapter in Iowa. The Angels have been successful, but much more needs to be done to address crime.

### **Crime Rate and Its Impact**

Based on federal crime data, this is a serious problem in Davenport. Federal crime data indicates our crime rate is 60% above the national average. Since Iowa was well below the national average this meant we had one of the highest crime rates in Iowa. (For comparison to other cities, go to [www.areaconnect.com/crime/compare.htm](http://www.areaconnect.com/crime/compare.htm).)

This high crime rate has a highly negative impact on our city even in areas that do not have significant problems. It discourages people from buying homes in Davenport and thus lowers property values. While we are spending more on law enforcement, we are seeing our revenues decline due to low property values. People do not want to live in neighborhoods where they don't feel safe. That is only the beginning. It discourages people from maintaining property since they don't see any return for doing it. Their property values don't rise and too often when they do make improvements those improvements may be vandalized. Also it is more difficult to borrow money to make improvements since property values are not rising.

Crime also discourages companies from locating in our central city. This means further loss of jobs and income and further declines in property values. I was told by a very reputable source that a company was interested in the old Sears building downtown. They would have created 500 jobs, but they decided not to buy the building because of the high crime in the area.

### **Assumed Solution—More Police/More Money**

The normal response is that we need more police and we need to spend more money. The problem with this answer is that it is a **long-term plan** and we **need immediate help**. It costs us somewhere between \$80,000 and \$100,000 per year to put a police officer on the street. We simply do not have the money to hire 30 or 40 new police officers unless we increase taxes and fees significantly or cut other city services.

## Alderman Bill Lynn, Page 2

While I agree we need to put more police on the street, I must ask why other cities can keep crime rates down better than us. We have **164 sworn officers** but only **62 officers are on the street**. I did a study comparing the police departments of other cities in Iowa and Illinois to Davenport. (That short study is available on my website, if you want more detail.) I found that we had exactly the average number of police per capita of other cities, and the number of civilian employees in the police department was about two times higher. That raises a question as to why other cities must be able to do more with the same or less. I don't make any value judgments, I simply raise the question. I believe it is a question that must be answered. If there is something wrong with the structure of the department, we need to know this and the first thing we need to do is restructure the department. That is a low cost change that might have big returns, but it will require a major commitment on the part of the city council.

I have often pointed out that the service a police department provides is a feeling of security or low crime rates. That is what we need to strive for. If spending more money won't do this, then it will be wasted.

### **Zero Tolerance**

Other cities have been able to turn their crime problems around. The most notable is New York City in the 1980's. It was around this time that the Guardian Angels started. It was probably one of the most crime ridden cities in the U.S. People were in great fear of their lives. Today New York is one of the safest cities in the U.S. The approach they took was actually very simple—it was called **zero tolerance**. Prior to this, petty crimes were ignored. It was not important enough. Under zero tolerance, if you committed a crime you were arrested. What happened was amazing—the overall crime rate dropped. (Today they have a lower crime rate than Davenport in six of the seven categories.) They found that people who committed petty crimes often had committed several other crimes and they often had many warrants outstanding. By arresting them, they solved several crimes at one time and prevented many more. In essence they decided **they would no longer tolerate bad behavior, because the more they tolerated the more they got**.

### **One Simple Approach**

In one of my newsletters I outlined a simple approach—that is to check license plate numbers against car descriptions. Switching plates is illegal but common among drug dealers and other people dealing in criminal activity. If we ticket and tow the vehicle and check for warrants when the owner comes to claim the car, I believe we will create a zero-tolerance atmosphere and many people who exhibit bad behavior will leave. This is only one idea and I am sure you have many more.

### **Increase Respect for the Law**

One thing we do not want to do is simply pass more laws we won't enforce. I often get questions about passing ordinances that make certain behaviors illegal. When I check I often find that there is already an ordinance, but we simply are not enforcing it. When you pass laws but don't enforce them, people lose respect for the law. We want to increase citizen respect for the law.

### **Jail Space—No Excuse**

One argument I hear is that if we arrest all of these people we don't have space in our jail for them. I know our jail is bursting at the seams and we are building a new jail, but we can't use lack of jail space as an excuse. I suggest we have several empty buildings in Davenport that could be used. It might increase our cost for awhile; but once people realize we won't tolerate bad behavior, I believe they will leave. I have been very open in stating that we do not need citizens that exhibit criminal behavior. I don't imagine that the criminals in New York City became model citizens. I believe they left and found other cities that would tolerate their behavior.

**For the Good of the City**

We need to improve the crime problem in Davenport, so the other measures we are taking will not be just band-aid approaches. Putting more money into the central city is a waste, if we don't take care of the bigger problem. If people feel safe, they will buy houses in the central city and improve the neighborhoods. Other cities have seen this happen and Davenport can too. We need a **short-term and long-term plan**, as I have outlined in this letter.

**Coming Attraction**

In the next letter I will discuss the issue of improving city services.

**Please Help**

Thank you to those who have contributed to my campaign. Unfortunately, campaigns don't just happen. If I'm to help our ward and our city for the next two years I need your help now. Please take a look at the volunteer form on the outside of this mailing, consider what you're able and willing to do to help, and please get back to me (call: 320-3675; e-mail: [Bill@ProfBillLynn.com](mailto:Bill@ProfBillLynn.com); address: 1935 Walling Ct., zip 52803). THANK YOU!



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