

## **Statement by David Wolfe Bender given to The B Square on June 1, 2022**

Today, I officially withdrew from the Bloomington City Council race.

I imagine the Monroe County Democratic Party will have the opportunity to name a new candidate sometime this summer. I want to make this explicitly clear: it is my fervent hope that the precinct chairs slate in a young, future-focused candidate who will work on behalf of all Bloomingtonians.

I never intended for any of the issues raised by the Election Board to distract from the election. I still believe my team's interpretation of the law is correct. I got into this race because I wanted to voice my vision for the city's future. I never did anything to try and violate any election statute. I am confident that anyone who reviews the legal merits of this case in the future will come to that conclusion.

Still, withdrawing is what is right for the residents of the Sixth District. Allowing a new candidate to run in the general election will ensure our election in November is about nothing but the issues facing the Sixth District.

As the new council begins in January, I hope the new members will consider the very serious challenges faced by the Sixth District. I'm increasingly concerned about the lack of reasonable dialogue between our city and county governments; I fear fighting and factioning within the Democratic Party on our council. I also hope the council members will keep the needs of students in mind when they make their decisions, for our city is one where students and non students should be able to come together to solve problems.

I also hope this single incident does not undermine the chances of a student — in the future — winning an election in this city. If Bloomington is to claim to be the equitable city we all want it to be, it is prudent to put a priority on student engagement.

There are a few people and groups I want to thank.

I want to express my appreciation to the Election Board for its commitment and dedication to our community. I deeply appreciate the respect they showed during the May 18 proceeding.

Also, I must offer thanks to every person who helped make this campaign possible. There are too many to name, but to every donor, supporter, voter, and volunteer, I want to say thank you.

All of that is to say: I'll enjoy my promotion from City Council candidate back to engaged citizen.