

The Broderick Report

By Supervisor Gerry Broderick

For Residents of Milwaukee County's 3rd District

Fall 2007

Corporate Taxation Needs Reform

It's time to set the record straight on tax collections in Wisconsin. Many people claim that our state is overtaxed. Most of the time, those individuals are referring to property taxes. Granted, property and personal income taxes in Wisconsin appear to be above average. But, the rest of the story is seldom told. While many of us deal with higher property taxes, large corporations that do business in Wisconsin are getting away with obscene tax exemptions that are unavailable to the average household.

In fact, a full two-thirds of Wisconsin corporate income tax filers pay NO income tax. These include major employers in Milwaukee County. How do they do it? They fly under the radar. They use tax law loopholes to drastically lower their tax burden without breaking any laws. As a result, Wisconsin ranks 38th in corporate tax collections.

When corporations use loopholes to legally avoid paying their fair share of taxes, the burden is shifted to individual property tax payers. That is just plain wrong. Our hard-working residents should not be subsidizing corporations that skirt the law.

As your Milwaukee County Supervisor, part of my job is to demand that the State funds the services that counties are mandated to perform. Wisconsin corporate tax collections only account for about 6% of the state's General Purpose Revenue (GPR). As a result, legislators in Madison have had difficulty in fully funding these mandated services, causing Milwaukee County taxpayers to pick up the slack.

loop·hole (lūp'hōl')

n.

A way of escaping a difficulty, especially an omission or ambiguity in the wording of a contract or law that provides a means of evading compliance. **Coca-Cola, Exxon-Mobil, Home Depot, Kraft Foods, Kimberly Clark, McDonald's, Merck, Microsoft, Manpower, Kohl's, PepsiCo, Johnson Controls, etc.**

Wisconsin's business community has constantly reduced its level of public investments, so our residents increasingly pay more for schools, public safety, roads, quality-of-life programs, the U-W System, public transportation and many other services that we have come to expect.

So, who ends up paying for those services in our state and county? Lower income married homeowners end up with the highest burden of state and local taxes. And that's what fuels the desire to call Wisconsin a "tax hell." But we can change that. By fairly taxing corporations doing business in Wisconsin we can make the entire system more equitable for taxpayers here in Milwaukee County.

For more information on the study compiled by the Institute for Wisconsin's Future, visit www.wisconsinsfuture.org.

A recent study by Dr. Jack Norman from the Institute for Wisconsin's Future makes this case clearly. His study found Wisconsin's tax base has shifted over the years:

- While individual property tax payers provided 36% of state and local tax revenue in Wisconsin in 2004, corporate income taxes accounted for only 3% of the total.
- In 1970, manufacturing accounted for 18% of the property tax burden. It shifted drastically to 3.6% in 2005, according to the Legislative Fiscal Bureau.
- Residential property owners now provide 70% of state revenue, up from 50% thirty years ago.
- If Wisconsin businesses paid the same amount of state and local taxes as the national average, Wisconsin would see an additional \$1.3 billion in revenue each year, enough to fund fire protection for every community in Wisconsin!

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MILWAUKEE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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Sales Tax Referendum Fails



As many of you know, preserving and protecting our Milwaukee County Parks System is my top priority in serving on the Board of Supervisors. This past year, we had an opportunity to consider an advisory referendum that would provide property tax relief, along with additional funding for parks, transit and public safety, through a one percent sales tax increase. The County Board passed the referendum on a 10-6 vote. However, County Executive Scott Walker vetoed that measure, denying voters the opportunity to have a say.

Plain and simple, the voters should have been heard. Whether you are for or against raising the sales tax, you should have had a chance to weigh in on the issue. While the County Executive has expressed his opposition to raising the sales tax, he has offered no sound reasons for opposing the advisory referendum. In addition, the County

Executive has displayed his lack of leadership by offering no alternatives after his veto.

When the issue came up for an override vote at the County Board, the vote was 10-9, falling three votes shy of the two-thirds needed to override. According to a recent independent poll, nearly 60 percent of Milwaukee County voters favored having a voice in this debate. But, the County Executive and nine County Board members, faced with re-election this spring, were afraid the public would confuse support for the referendum with support for a tax increase.

The east side of the Milwaukee County Courthouse (facing MacArthur Square) features the following phrase, etched in stone on the frieze across the top of the building: "Vox populi vox dei." Translated in English, it reminds us that, in a democracy, "The voice of the people is the voice of god." It's disappointing that the County Executive did not stop for a moment to consider those words, written on the very building housing his office.

The Boston Tea Party actually started due to a reduction in taxes for British companies (but not colonial businesses) on imported tea, which hurt American colonists. Due to their frustration in not being able to voice their opinion, they revolted during the Boston Tea Party. This was a classic example of ignoring the voice of the people.

Now, 234 years later, the voice of the public has again been muted. Civics 101 teaches us the most effective public servants are those that listen to the public's wishes. It's disappointing the County Executive and nine of my colleagues chose not to hear the voice of the voters.

County Board Approves Chairman's Appointees To Parks Advisory Commission



In an effort to provide policy and funding guidance to the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors on preserving the natural beauty of the Milwaukee County Parks System, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors approved a resolution in April to create a seven member Parks Advisory Commission.

In July, the County Board then approved the seven commission members appointed by County Board Chairman Lee Holloway. The panel will provide input to County Supervisors, but final decision-making and taxing authority still rests with the County Board and County Executive.

Louis G. Fortis, Publisher and Editor-in-Chief of the Shepherd Express weekly newspaper will chair the Commission.

Other members of the panel include **Daniel J. Steininger**, President of Steininger & Associates; **Rafael Acavedo**, Executive Director of Public Allies Milwaukee; Historian **John Gurda**; U.S. Administrative Judge **Henry Hamilton III**; Attorney **F. William Haberman**; and Community Outreach Manager **Penelope Stewart** and Alternate Commissioner **Nancy Davlantes**.

The Milwaukee County Parks System was formed in 1907 and encompasses over 15,000 acres of parks and parkways. The system has long been renowned for its unspoiled beauty and as a source of recreational enjoyment for citizens and visitors alike. Every effort must be made to ensure the Milwaukee County Parks remain one of America's finest system.



Sarah Dean honored as Milwaukee County Senior Statesman

The Ninth Annual Milwaukee County Senior Statesman program was held July 25-27, 2007. This event is an exclusive opportunity for 25 Milwaukee County Seniors to meet with Milwaukee County Board officials, experience a County Board meeting and learn first hand the legislative process in County government.

Sarah Dean (pictured with 3rd District Supervisor Gerry Broderick) was honored as a member of the 2007 Class of Senior Statesman. She was recognized for her numerous contributions to the community and saluted for her advocacy on behalf of the senior citizens of Milwaukee County.

The East Bank Trail

The Milwaukee River corridor between the site of the former North Avenue Dam and Providence Street is located in one of the most densely populated regions of the state. Maintained in a relatively natural condition it supports a remarkable diversity of aquatic and terrestrial plant and animal populations. Although there are several County park sites in the subject area including Caesar Park, Riverside Park and the Cambridge Woods natural area, there was no formal pedestrian access along the east bank of the river.

The Milwaukee County Parks Department, the City of Milwaukee, the River Revitalization Foundation, the Urban Ecology Center and many residents have long envisioned soft trails along both sides of the river in this area, connecting the river valley to the various parklands to the north. These entities also collaborated with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program, concerned citizens, and adjacent property owners to make this vision a reality. The first segment of these



envisioned trails is now a reality and a model for future trail segments.

Creating a trail along the river that is universally accessible (compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act) was one of the major goals of this project of Director Sue Black and Trails Coordinator Guy Smith. This trail allows access for people of all ages to enjoy the Milwaukee River. We will also be providing improvements to the existing pedestrian trails and constructing a handicap accessible pier and accessible canoe launch at the river.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Americorps NCCC group of 9 for their assistance in the construction of the trail, as well as the many citizens and friends groups for their input and continued management of invasive plants as well as plant natives and newly planted vegetation.

Come hike the trail this fall and enjoy the great colors! As winter approaches, skiing and snowshoeing are in the forecast. Keep your eyes open to next spring and summer as the trail expands towards Locust Street.

Happy Trails!



Thanks to the Milwaukee County-funded Youth Sports Authority, many young swimmers from Milwaukee and Shorewood will enjoy some new equipment to increase their swimming success and enjoyment.

The Shorewood Swim Club has received two Sports Authority grants, approved by the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors: one in 2006 for \$2,500 toward a starting and timing system for swim competition, and the second in 2007 for \$1,039.96 for new lane lines for the pool.

The Shorewood Swim Club has 202 swim members from Milwaukee, Shorewood and other communities. Children and youth age 6 to 18 are encouraged to swim, regardless of ability or physical limitation. The Club makes a special effort to recruit and integrate children who struggle with English as a second language or with special needs ranging from autism to attention deficit hyperactivity disorder to physical disabilities. The Club also reaches out to

lower-income children by offering reduced fees. Recently, Club swimmers volunteered at the swimming events for the National Veterans Wheelchair Games held in Milwaukee.

County Board colleagues Toni Clark and Peggy West serve on the Sports Authority Board along with five community members. The Board's recommendations for grant funding are forwarded to the County Board of Supervisors for final approval. I'm pleased to support this partnership with a community-based organization in my District that fosters lifetime physical, emotional and intellectual skills in an environment of teamwork, sportsmanship and excellence.



Supervisor Broderick was honored and delighted to present the Milwaukee County Department on Aging "Senior Citizen Hall of Fame" Award to a well deserving constituent, for the second consecutive year. On May 27, 2007 Ms. Jayne Pelton received this prestigious award honoring older adults in Milwaukee County who have made significant contributions to the community. Else Ankel was a 2006 recipient.

We note with great sadness the recent passing of Jayne's husband, Glenn Pelton, whose active participation in East Side community organizations will be sorely missed. (Pictured left to right: County Executive Scott Walker, Ms. Jayne Pelton and County Supervisor Gerry Broderick)



Members of the Milwaukee County State Legislative Delegation were invited to the Milwaukee County Courthouse on January 26, 2007 and January 29, 2007, for two public meetings. This visit provided a venue for Supervisors to communicate Milwaukee County's top fiscal and legislative priorities for the 2007-09 state budget to their State Representatives and State Senators. (Pictured left to right: Supervisor Joseph Rice, Supervisor Mark Borkowski and Supervisor Gerry Broderick)

Neighborhood Associations and Parks Groups

- A** Brady Street Association
1510 N. Marshall St., Milwaukee 53202
Donnie Menefee, President (414) 651-9454
- B** Cambridge Woods Neighborhood Association
3038 N. Bartlett Ave., Milwaukee 53211
Peter McMullen, President (414) 962-6834
- C** East Village Association
3314 N. Hackett Ave., Milwaukee 53202
Mike Bondar, President (414) 276-8130
- D** Mariners' Neighborhood Association
3312 N. Cramer Ave., Milwaukee 53211
David Conway, (interim President) (414) 962-9436
- E** Murray Hill Neighborhood Association
2954 N. Frederick Ave., Milwaukee 53211
Gerard Capell, President (414) 962-4638
- F** Watertower Landmark Trust
P.O. Box 668, Milwaukee 53201
Jeff Grzeca, President (414) 964-0196
- G** Riverside Park Neighborhood Association
2494 N. Bartlett Ave., Milwaukee 53211
Terri Kinis, President (414) 964-7669

Lake Park Friends
P.O. Box 71197, Milwaukee 53211
David O'Brien, President (414) 964-0550

East Town Business Association
770 North Jefferson St., Milwaukee 53202
Kate Borders, Executive Director (414) 271-1416

North Point Lighthouse Friends
P.O. Box 930, Milwaukee 53201
Jeryllyn Bar, Executive Director (414) 332-6754

Come Home Riverside Foundation
1615 E. Locust St., Milwaukee 53211
Jan Gibson, President (414) 291-9076

Shorewood Senior Resource Center
2010 E. Shorewood Boulevard Shorewood 53211
Elizabeth Price, Program Director (414) 847-2727

River Revitalization Foundation
1845 N. Farwell, Suite 100, Milwaukee 53202
Kimberly Gleffe, Executive Director (414) 271-8000

Friends of Bradford Beach
11647 N. Austin Ave. Mequon, WI 53092
Deborah Lukovich, Chair (414) 803-3229

East Side Condominium Association (ESCOA)
Bob Wurtz, President robsu@sbcglobal.net

The Park People
1845 N. Farwell Ave., Milwaukee 53202
Deb Lukovich, President (414) 273-7275

East Side Business Improvement District
Oakland Avenue Business Improvement District
2122 N. Prospect Ave., Milwaukee 53202
Jim Plaisted, Executive Director (414) 272-5823

University Square Business Improvement District
Clark Kaufmann, Clark Graphics
Kaufmann.c@sbcglobal.net

East Side Business Improvement District
Peg Silvestrini, Beans and Barley
peg@beansandbarley.com

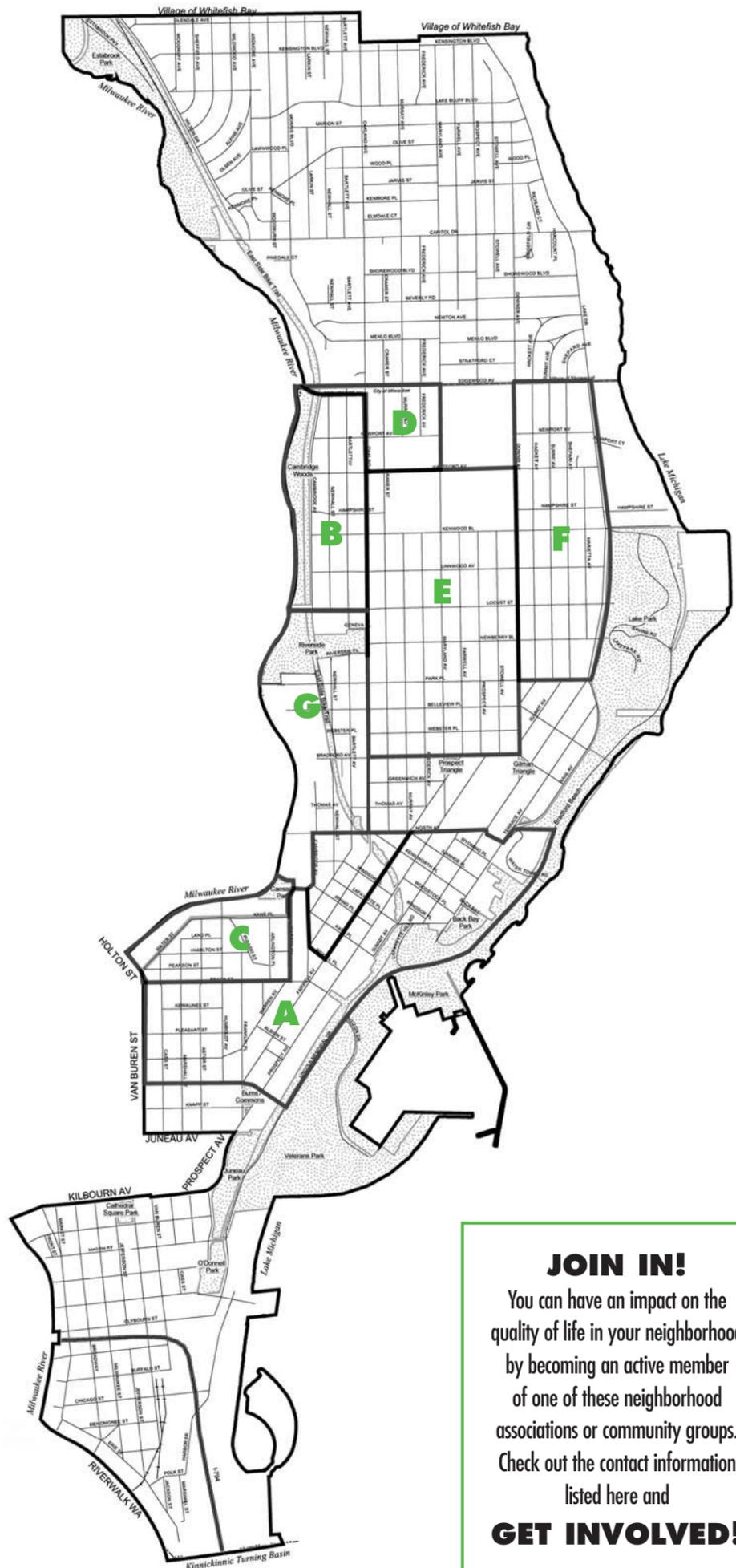
MPD District #5
Community Liaison Officer
Officer Ray Robakowski (414) 935-7258
rrobak@milwaukee.gov

Shorewood Business Improvement District
Tim Ryan, Harley's: A Store For Men
tryan@harleys4men.com

Preserve Our Parks
5690 N. Dexter Ave. Glendale 53209
John Lutz, President (414) 702-7288

Urban Ecology Center
1500 E. Park Place, Milwaukee 53211
Ken Leinbach, Director (414) 964-8505

University Neighborhood Association
Oscar O. Perez, Neighborhood
and Local Govt. Relations Liaison
UW-Milwaukee, University
Relations and Communications
Chapman Hall, Room 180B
PO box 413, Milwaukee 53201
Office: 414-229-6261
oop@uwm.edu



JOIN IN!
You can have an impact on the quality of life in your neighborhood by becoming an active member of one of these neighborhood associations or community groups. Check out the contact information listed here and **GET INVOLVED!**