



Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

Lee Holloway

Chairman of the Board

July 11, 2007

For Immediate Release

Contact: Harold Mester, Public Information Manager

414/278-4051 or harold.mester@milwenty.com

ASSEMBLY BUDGET DISASTROUS FOR MILWAUKEE COUNTY TAXPAYERS

Budget ignores recommendations of Task Force on Milwaukee County Finances

Milwaukee, WI – Milwaukee County Board Chairman Lee Holloway released the following statement in response to the State Assembly budget proposal:

“I believe the 2007-09 State Budget proposed by Assembly Republicans is disastrous for Milwaukee County taxpayers. The attempt to remove all new spending from the State Budget would come at the expense of Milwaukee County’s services. Their proposal eliminates support for crucial services the County provides to constituents. This would be a disservice to the residents of Milwaukee County.”

Specifically, Assembly Republicans deleted the County Aid Fund, reducing aid statewide by more than \$60 million. By removing increased funding for Milwaukee County Circuit Courts and Youth Aids, while further reducing Shared Revenue payments to Counties and certain Municipalities, taxpayers in Milwaukee County could be put in an extremely difficult situation. As the State Budget heads towards Conference Committee, I encourage all legislators who represent Milwaukee County to consider the impact of deleting funds that support core County services.”

“The Assembly Republican Caucus is ignoring the work of Governor Jim Doyle’s Task Force on Milwaukee County Finances, which included business leaders such as Tim Sheehy, President of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce, and Julia Taylor, President of the Greater Milwaukee Committee, as well as my representative on the Task Force, Attorney Jeremy Levinson.”

(more)

The Budget approved by Assembly Republicans would totally dismantle the following Recommendations of the Task Force Co-Chairs, Secretary Michael Morgan and Mr. Sheldon Lubar:

- Enhancing State Support for Circuit Courts, a key budget priority for the Wisconsin Judiciary. Governor Doyle proposed a \$19 million biennial increase.
- Increasing County and Municipal Aid by \$15 million. Instead, Assembly Republicans are proposing *cutting* each County's Shared Revenue payment by 5%, which would result in a revenue decrease of more than \$2.8 million for Milwaukee County. Moreover, the Assembly Republicans would also slash the Shared Revenue allocation to the City of Milwaukee by 12.5% (a reduction of \$28,732,100). These moves would have spillover effects for us, as Milwaukee is our largest municipality, and the only first-class city in the State of Wisconsin.
- Providing greater support for Juvenile Corrections. Governor Doyle's Budget provides an increase of approximately \$27 million over the biennium.
 - The fiscal effect of the daily rate increases for juvenile correctional care is alarming. In a June 5, 2007, Legislative Fiscal Bureau memo to Representative Pedro Colon, the non-partisan agency estimated the biennial increased costs to Counties for juvenile correctional facility care at approximately \$18 million. By the end of the biennium, it will cost Counties \$97,820 to send one juvenile to a State secured institution for just one year. That's more than the annual cost of sending two children to Harvard!
 - But the Assembly removed these offsetting Youth Aids revenues, while leaving the dramatic increases in the daily rates charged to Counties intact. According to the County's Department of Health and Human Services, Milwaukee County costs would rise by about \$5 million in 2007 and by \$8 million in 2008. Without additional Youth Aids, this would be a direct hit to County property taxpayers.
- Unlike the Senate Democrats, Assembly Republicans failed to provide funds for Mass Transit above the 2% increase recommended by Governor Doyle. Chairman Holloway has sent letters in support of transit funding to key members of the Senate and Assembly representing Milwaukee County, including Senator Lena Taylor and a joint letter with County Executive Scott Walker to Representative Jeff Stone. While the Governor's budget did provide a 2% increase for Mass Transit, these revenues will not be sufficient to avoid future route cuts and fare increases.

###