



# *Milwaukee County*

## Board of Supervisors

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For Immediate Release

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### **CHAIRMAN LEE HOLLOWAY DEVELOPS NEW MODEL TO CONTROL SPIRALING HEALTH CARE COSTS**

*Finance and Audit Committee unanimously approves new division, cost savings*

*Milwaukee, WI* – Milwaukee County Board Chairman Lee Holloway says it's time to transform the way the County manages its nearly \$200 million in fringe benefits. He's proposing a new model to help the county grapple with rising health care costs.

Holloway's proposed amendment to the County Executive's 2007 budget would create a Division of Employee Benefits in the Department of Administrative Services to oversee the County's fringe benefits program, while saving the County more than \$200,000.

"Employee health care is the largest growing segment of the County budget," Holloway said. "It needs its own singular focus to bring health costs down and improve the County's financial picture."

The amendment creates a Director of Employee Benefits, who would report to the Director of Administrative Services and a newly created Health Benefits Advisory Committee. The committee's goal is to help develop health plans, review industry trends, and serve as a County liaison to the greater community in addressing rising regional health costs.

The cost of these changes would be offset by a decrease in Medicare Part B premiums, resulting in a tax levy reduction of \$217,000.

The Finance and Audit Committee has approved the budget amendment by a vote of 7-0. The full County Board will consider the amendment as part of the total 2007 County Budget on November 6<sup>th</sup>.

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