



Milwaukee County

County Executive Scott Walker

County Board Chairman Lee Holloway

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WALKER, HOLLOWAY REITERATE OPPOSITION TO CHANGE IN JUVENILE OFFENDER LAW

MILWAUKEE – County Executive Scott Walker and County Board Chairman Lee Holloway are reiterating their opposition to a bill proposed in the State Legislature to return 17 year-old offenders to the jurisdiction of juvenile court. If enacted, this change could cost Milwaukee County at least \$24 million.

"Counties cannot afford any more unfunded mandates from the state," said Walker. "This mandate could cost local taxpayers more than \$24 million each year. The new revenue streams they propose will not cover the cost, and our 2010 Milwaukee County budget does not have a provision to handle the additional costs associated with this legislation."

"It's time for the state to get serious about juvenile justice and fund any reforms to our current system. The State of Wisconsin should be financially responsible for any changes to current correctional policy, because our property tax payers already bear too much of a burden for under-funded state mandates. They simply can't afford a \$24-30 million increase in costs," Chairman Holloway said. "The State Legislature should consider passing the Joint Legislative Council Proposal (Senate Bill 151) that would provide funding to counties to cover any increase in juvenile correction costs."

This comes on the heels of an estimate by the non-partisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau that the State faces a more than \$200 million shortfall and a report by the Public Policy Forum highlighting Milwaukee County's fiscal challenges.

"While there is agreement that meeting the unique needs of 17 year-old offenders and preventing recidivism of this group must be addressed, an alternative to the juvenile system must be considered if the State does not fully and immediately fund all associated costs to the county," Walker added. "There is a real risk that the current services will be compromised, eroding the juvenile justice system programs' ability to rehabilitate these youth. Without the necessary funding, the system these offenders are returned to will not be able to provide the expected services."

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