



Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Supervisor Steve F. Taylor, District 9
Second Vice Chairman

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Supervisor Taylor Congratulates Speaker Ryan for his Leadership
Shares Ryan's Concerns about Divisions Wrought by Identity Politics

MILWAUKEE – County Supervisor Steve F. Taylor thanked Speaker Paul Ryan for his service and warned against the damaging effects of identity politics waged by political actors in Milwaukee County in a statement released today.

"I want to thank Speaker Paul Ryan for his service to the residents of the 1st Congressional District and for his leadership on behalf of the American people. I respect his decision to retire after his term ends in January of 2019 and the reasons for it.

"I have known Paul since he first ran for Congress in 1998 when I met him at the GOP State Convention. Back then he was 28 and I was 22. Paul never forgot where he came from and he never let the job get to his head, no matter how far he travelled up the political ranks. He has set an example for how to conduct oneself as an elected official, and it's an approach I've tried to emulate as a Milwaukee County Supervisor.

"In response to questions about his announcement, Speaker Ryan revealed that a major concern of his regarding the nature of politics these days was "identity politics" and the problem of "21st century technology accelerating it and putting gas on the fire." He defined "identity politics" as "playing on people's divisions and exploiting people's frustrations and divisions with other people – dividing people for political gain, not good, to get a coalition that's 50 plus 1."

"As I prepare to leave the office of Milwaukee County Supervisor and reflect on the changes I have seen during my six-year tenure, I'm struck by how Speaker Ryan's assessment of identity politics and the danger it poses to democracy rings true in Milwaukee County.

"In my time here, I have seen Milwaukee County politics become more partisan and more divisive, as a result of the identity politics that some engage in. We just had an election season where County Executive Chris Abele used nearly \$1 million of his vast personal wealth to defeat those who are critical of him in a manner that turned once civil local elections into gutter politics.

"Instead of promoting a positive vision, my constituents and many others across the county were bombarded with negative rhetoric that played upon people's divisions. I only hope that the residents of Milwaukee County consider this the next time Chris Abele is on the ballot."

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