

City of Milwaukee Legislative Agenda
State of Wisconsin's 2013-14 Legislative Session

“Reinvest in Milwaukee”

Milwaukee is the heart of Wisconsin's economy. It is a premiere center of advanced manufacturing, fresh water research and development, green technology, health care, biomedical technology and financial services. Milwaukee's dynamic and accessible markets attract tourism, business and investment in large and increasing numbers. Our transportation system is the backbone for statewide tourism, conventions, and commerce and is the gateway to the state's economy.

Our diverse and resilient community both supports and challenges state policy makers. Since fiscal, economic and community ties between the city and state run strong in both directions, we have identified a multitude of opportunities to invest and reinvest in Milwaukee that will reap dividends for the rest of the state. This legislative package provides numerous ways for the state to build on our interdependence and improve Milwaukee's future ability to thrive.

Key Legislative Priorities

Stabilize the City's Fiscal Capacity

- Maintain or increase all sources of intergovernmental revenue, especially shared revenue.
- Protect the city's property tax base and ensure uniform assessment practices.
- Provide more local revenue options to reduce the reliance on the property tax.
- Treat all municipal employees equitably with regard to pension and healthcare contributions.
- Ensure we receive timely and reliable financial information from the state.

Maintain Local Control and Flexibility

- Strengthen the ability of local leaders to make decisions that affect their constituents and improve local fiscal health.
- Retain local authority over conditions of employment - such as residency requirements.
- Remove legal impediments to efficiencies that are locally identified and supported.
- Ensure fair city representation on regional boards and commissions, like SEWRPC, MATC and MMSD.
- Incentivize efforts to achieve municipal service consolidations.
- Repeal or adequately fund state mandates on local governments.

Enhance our Economic Well Being

- Support job creation and training programs and economic development incentives.
- Fund local educational institutions in a manner that is conscious of educational quality and fair to our taxpayers.
- Expand the presence of state agencies and universities in the city.
- Invest in the 30th Street Industrial Corridor and other catalytic economic development opportunities.
- Improve transitions into the workplace for the recently unemployed or incarcerated.

Strengthen our Mobility and Infrastructure

- Seek additional funding to support local road and sewer improvements, with an emphasis on “fixing it first”.
- Restore or improve funding for alternative forms of mobility such as rail, transit, bicycles, and pedestrian access.
- Ensure residents have a comprehensive and safe transportation system that provides convenient and affordable access to jobs.
- Invest in the Port of Milwaukee, the Aerotropolis, and other multi-modal initiatives.

Promote Racial, Social and Economic Equity for City Residents

- Fight for living wage job opportunities for city residents, like the Milwaukee Promise.
- Reduce disparities that create obstacles to fighting poverty, such as the racial disparity in infant mortality rates.
- Remove barriers to employment and voting and prevent discrimination.
- Support programs that improve family support structures, like the Fatherhood Initiative.
- Enhance access to health insurance and programs that will improve community health.

Invest in our Neighborhoods, Public Safety and Quality of Life

- Invest in programs that support foreclosure prevention, intervention, and neighborhood stabilization.
- Support water, park and lakeshore health and overall sustainability of our environment and natural resources.
- Promote and leverage our natural assets for tourism and economic growth.
- Remove barriers to crime reduction, especially policies that encourage the proliferation of illegal guns.
- Fund and support domestic and sexual assault service programs and policies.