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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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FOR INFORMATION CALL

November 19, 2013

Ald. Terry Witkowski  
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## Ordinance to improve taxicab service in Milwaukee passes

An ordinance meant to improve taxicab service and increase the availability of cabs throughout Milwaukee was recommended for approval Tuesday on a 5-0 vote before the Common Council's **Public Safety Committee**. The measure is sponsored by **Council Members Terry L. Witkowski and Robert J. Bauman**.

The ordinance would establish a system of affiliation that all (permittee) taxicabs in the city would be required to belong to. It would also require taxicab fleet affiliations to receive, maintain and report dispatch information, and assure that affiliated permittees and vehicle drivers comply with requirements that include driver training, driver appearance standards, vehicle inspection standards and written plans to assure passenger and driver security.

"Having more licensed cabs on the streets of Milwaukee will improve the livability of the city and reduce reliance on privately-owned automobiles," Alderman Bauman said. "Every great city has a robust taxi fleet to augment modes of transit that includes buses, streetcars, commuter rail, bicycles and privately-owned cars."

The ordinance authorizes the addition of 100 new taxicab vehicle permits and provides for an annual review of the need for additional permits. The ordinance would also require fleet affiliations to provide citywide service on a 24-hour basis. The current limitation on issuing new permits has been challenged in court.

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## **Taxicab ordinance/ADD ONE**

Other elements of the ordinance include annual taxi inspections twice per year instead of once per year. There are also several new vehicle requirements that would be put in place, including a minimum leg room increase for passengers to at least 32 inches and a requirement for backseat credit/debit card swipe devices to ensure privacy. Taxicabs seeking annual license renewal would have to meet these requirements.

**Alderman Witkowski**, chair of the Public Safety Committee, expressed satisfaction with today’s 5-0 vote at committee. “I am very pleased that after months of public hearings—including ones held by the Common Council-authorized Study Subcommittee of the Public Transportation Review Board (chaired by **Alderman Bauman**)—we have taken steps to improve taxicab service in the City of Milwaukee,” he said.

The Office of the City Clerk will begin taking applicants for the additional licenses this February. Each applicant can only receive two new licenses per year.