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ALDERMAN, 7TH DISTRICT

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New system for contracting police services will benefit business, public safety

Statement of Alderman Willie C. Wade November 26, 2013

It will be much easier for businesses to contract with the Milwaukee Police Department for additional security, under an ordinance amendment passed today by the Milwaukee Common Council. The changes empower MPD to negotiate contracts with private business entities, and those contracts needn't be tied up waiting for approval from the Common Council unless they exceed \$50,000 a year.

It goes without saying that this measure will make the city a safer place for residents by helping allocate a police presence where it's needed most. But I believe it will also create economic benefits that have not yet been fully recognized.

In the months leading up to today's vote, I've heard from many businesses in my district—not just bars and taverns, but grocery stores, shops and music venues as well—that are interested in contracting with the Milwaukee Police Department for security. In the case of stores and shops, they believe that an increased police presence will result in more business from customers who will feel safer visiting their businesses. And for many establishments that are on the bubble to get their licenses renewed, contracting with Milwaukee Police for added security provides a much-needed alternative to closing their doors for good, which costs the city jobs and economic vitality.

I'm very grateful to the co-sponsors who helped me pass this important legislation—particularly Alderman Jim Bohl and Alderman Willie L Hines, Jr.—as well as the vast majority of council members who supported it today. This is something that I have been pursuing since 2006, and it's gratifying to have finally found a solution that addresses everyone's concerns. Our action provides residents and business leaders with the services they have asked for in order to make our city a safer and more economically vibrant place to live.

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