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City of Milwaukee to Defend State Constitution

Joint statement of Mayor Tom Barrett, Common Council President
Willie L. Hines, Jr. and Alderman Michael J. Murphy

Today the Milwaukee Common Council adopted a resolution to defend the Wisconsin State Constitution. It was immediately signed by Mayor Tom Barrett.

This resolution directs all city officials to continue enforcement of the City Charter as it relates to our residency requirement. This action represents our commitment to upholding the Wisconsin State Constitution, even when faced with contradictions in the state statutes.

It is our belief that the Wisconsin State Constitution supersedes the language prohibiting residency requirements that was enacted in 2013 Wisconsin Act 20. The constitutional "Home Rule" provision was adopted by referendum of the people of this state in 1924, and Milwaukee's charter ordinance governing residency was adopted in 1938. After 75 years of being determined by the local elected officials that govern individual municipalities, residency policy cannot have suddenly become an issue of statewide concern.

We feel we must do everything we can to protect residency, as well as the best interests of the city. Our actions today reflect that we are willing to do whatever is necessary to ensure Milwaukee's well-being.