
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



FOR INFORMATION CALL

October 15, 2007

Ald. Michael J. Murphy
Ald. Jim Bohl
(414) 286-2221

Joint News Conference To Include Mayor & Council Members

Urgency of Budget & Shared Revenue Impact At Heart Of Message For 6:15 p.m. News Event

Members of the Common Council will join Mayor Tom Barrett in a unified call urging all Milwaukee legislators to pass a state budget that provides critical funding for vital city services.

The 6:15 p.m. news conference today will be held in the first floor rotunda at City Hall, 200 E. Wells St.

Governor Jim Doyle's revised state spending plan includes zero new aid to local governments, effectively blasting a \$3.6 million hole in the City of Milwaukee's 2008 budget and sending a swift kick to city property taxpayers.

"We've taken a \$73.2 million hit on shared revenue since 1996 and we've simply reached a breaking point," said Ald. Michael J. Murphy, chair of the Common Council's Finance and Personnel Committee. "With all of our critical public safety, infrastructure and general services needs, we need our state legislators to do everything in their power to pass a state budget that addresses the very real needs of their constituents and offers genuine tax relief."

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Joint News Conference/ADD ONE

Ald. Jim Bohl said news reports of the governor's efforts to offer compromise budget "sweeteners" to lure over certain Republican state legislators are "disheartening" in light of a shared revenue increase being cut out of the new budget equation. "I understand the governor's desire to craft a budget that will ultimately attract the GOP votes he needs for passage, but we need our Milwaukee legislators to push Milwaukee priorities first," he said.

"It doesn't make sense for Milwaukee legislators to give their OK to these pork barrel pet projects which benefit a small number of people in rural areas while leaving their own constituents out in the cold," he said.

City Comptroller W. Martin "Wally" Morics said the state, which prohibits local governments from developing other revenue streams through various non-property taxes, is supposed to help Milwaukee and other, similar Wisconsin communities facing dire infrastructure needs. "The shared revenue hit comes at a time when the cost of maintaining our infrastructure is going up," Morics said, noting that the city has forged an excellent track record of having low operating costs compared to other cities and of controlling spending.

"Unless we get the funding from the state we rely on and are entitled to, severe service cuts are our only option," Morics said.

Ald. Murphy has said that for 2007 state shared revenue directed to Milwaukee is \$10 million less than the 2003 level, and that since 1996 – in inflation-adjusted terms – state shared revenue to the city has declined \$73.2 million or 23%.

Common Council President Willie L. Hines, Jr. is attending a funeral and will not be able to attend the news conference.