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FOR INFORMATION CALL

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Ald. Robert Bauman
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Lease Arrangement for Intermodal Facility Leaves Local Taxes Unpaid

Alderman Bauman says Lease Holder Owes Nearly \$330,000

The troubled holder of the primary lease from the State of Wisconsin for the downtown Milwaukee Intermodal Station (MIS) owes more than \$328,000 in unpaid local property taxes, said Alderman Robert J. Bauman, whose 4th Aldermanic District includes the land and building where the facility is located.

Intermodal Partners, LLC, which is principally controlled by Wilton Partners of Los Angeles, and linked to disgraced former Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich and indicted Chicago businessman Tony Rezko, has not paid its property tax bills for 2008 or 2009 for the station located at 433 W. St. Paul Ave., Alderman Bauman said.

Alderman Bauman, a longtime critic of the lease arrangement the state has with Intermodal Partners and Wilton Partners, believes strongly that the station should be publicly operated and is urging the City Attorney to commence foreclosure proceedings against Intermodal Partners/Wilton Partners.

“If we’re successful (in a foreclosure action), Milwaukee will either get paid or become the operator of the Intermodal facility,” he said.

Alderman Bauman said Wilton Partners in turn leases the station to end users Greyhound and Amtrak. The busy MIS serves bus riders traveling to Chicago, Madison, Minneapolis and Green Bay, while most Amtrak passengers are coming from or heading to either Chicago or Minneapolis.

Chicago news media reports indicate Wilton Partners was involved in a secret “pay-to-play” deal with former Governor Rod Blagojevich that would have forgiven millions in back rent and other payments the developer was supposed to make for redeveloping Illinois tollway oases.

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Intermodal Facility Taxes Not Paid/ADD ONE

According to those news reports, in a single 24-hour period one month after Blagojevich announced the launch of the Wilton tollway oases project, the former governor's campaign fund received donations of \$50,000 from Wilton Partners managing partner Jay Wilton and his wife, \$25,000 from the firm hired as general contractor for the project, and \$25,000 from the project's architectural firm.

Rezko was reportedly the former governor's confidant in making the deal – and other such alleged “pay-to-play” deals – come to fruition.

According to Alderman Bauman, under Wisconsin law certain types of leasehold interests are subject to local property taxes (and other tax actions). He said the city has assessed Wilton Partners for the MIS lease and submitted property tax bills – but Wilton Partners has simply ignored those bills.