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ROBERT G. DONOVAN
Alderman, 8th District

State legislation will effectively kill the downtown streetcar project

Statement of Alderman Bob Donovan
March 27, 2013

Not 20 minutes prior to my news conference at City Hall today (with City of Milwaukee Youth Council member **Vincent Synowicz**, in reference to his unanimously-approved legislation calling for a referendum on the downtown streetcar project), I received a call from state **Rep. Dale Kooyenga**, who represents a district that includes Brookfield, Wauwatosa, and Milwaukee.

Rep. Kooyenga, a member of the legislature's Joint Finance Committee, told me he is introducing legislation that seeks to bar utility companies from passing along costs to rate payers that are associated with moving utility lines related to a streetcar project.

If approved, this means city taxpayers and certain downtown businesses alone would shoulder the burden of these as yet unknown costs, which are believed to be approximately \$70 million. I simply cannot fathom members of the Common Council allowing the project to move forward under that cost scenario, so Rep. Kooyenga's legislation would effectively be the final stake in the heart of the streetcar project.

I want to publicly thank Rep. Kooyenga for his legislation. Not only is he giving me an early birthday present, but he's also exercising the common sense that I wish more of our local public officials would tap into more often.

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