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**ROBERT G. DONOVAN**

Alderman, 8th District

# **Mayor looking to shut down public vote on downtown streetcar**

**Statement from Alderman Bob Donovan  
December 8, 2014**

I've learned that the mayor is making a desperate attempt to thwart a referendum on the streetcar project by having the Redevelopment Authority issue bonds to pay for the construction costs. The move is meant to sneak around the state statute provision that allows for a referendum on the borrowing for the project.

I say shame, shame, shame on you mayor!

This desperate attempt to deny the people of Milwaukee the opportunity to have their voices heard on the streetcar shows just how out of touch and scared the mayor has become on this issue. I would ask him what he's so afraid of – but now I'm starting to wonder if he's losing the few marbles I thought he still had left!

I am now exploring possible legal options to stop this Hail Mary end-around, and keep in mind that using general obligation bonds is the usual way to pay for large public works projects. Also, having the Redevelopment Authority issue bonds for the streetcar project is not only wrong, it could end up being more expensive for the taxpayers of Milwaukee in the long run.

But the mayor doesn't care.

But there are many, many others who do care – including state legislators. In fact, I am hearing more and more from state leaders that the mayor's double down and continued hard push on the downtown streetcar is getting to the point of jeopardizing state help for a new arena. This sneaky borrowing move will likely not help matters, Mr. Mayor.

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Legislators out-state are asking why the mayor is pushing full-throttle on this boondoggle trolley. Specifically, they are wary of helping the city with the arena project because they are taken aback by the mayor's desperation, and his insistence on pushing ahead on a project that is wasteful and makes no sense.

They are wondering aloud whether the mayor has misplaced priorities, and quite frankly, I wholeheartedly agree!

The mayor's continued abandonment of common sense could, in the long run, hurt Milwaukee. Perhaps even worse, his self-induced, all-in coupling to the streetcar project could already be spoiling opportunities for partnerships that could help move our city forward.

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