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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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FOR INFORMATION CALL

January 5, 2015

**Ald. Bob Donovan**  
(414) 708-9417  
**Ald. Joe Davis, Sr.**  
(414) 708-1747

## **Aldermen join forces to launch streetcar referendum petition drive**

*News conference set for 1 p.m. TODAY at City Hall*

**Alderman Bob Donovan** and **Alderman Joe Davis, Sr.** today will announce a citywide petition drive to force a binding referendum on funding for the proposed downtown streetcar project. Alderman Donovan and Alderman Davis will be joined by supporters in launching the UNITED *for* Milwaukee effort during a **news conference at 1 p.m. TODAY in the third floor Council Chamber anteroom** at City Hall, 200 E. Wells St.

The aldermen have formed UNITED *for* Milwaukee, a committee seeking to pass a local ordinance requiring all rail transit spending over \$20 million be approved by referendum. To enact the ordinance, the committee will utilize Wisconsin's direct legislation statute allowing citizens to circulate petitions requiring the common council to pass the proposed ordinance or bring the request before city voters this April.

State law requires the committee collect signatures equal to 15% of the number of city voters in the last gubernatorial election, or roughly 31,000 signatures. The committee has 60 days to gather the signatures. The full Common Council, however, is scheduled to take up Mayor Barrett's \$123 million streetcar proposal on January 21, so the committee is planning to collect and deliver the required signatures before that date.

**-More-**

## **UNITED *for* Milwaukee/ADD ONE**

Regarding the effort, Alderman Donovan and Alderman Davis issued this joint statement: “The streetcar proposal will have significant short and long-term implications on the city’s finances. Using Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) districts to pay for the project redirects precious tax dollars away from other entities including business growth which will support job initiatives to help relieve Milwaukee’s national embarrassment of having the highest poverty and unemployment rates for African-American men in the U.S., fire and police agencies, public schools, public works projects, and the opportunity for tax relief for the city’s already overburdened taxpayers. This \$123 million plan has been described as the first of several phases of the project. There are, however, no funding sources identified for these extraordinary future capital expenses and no plans to even cover the operating expenses of the first phase after three years. Before we create an unbearable mortgage for generations of city taxpayers, we believe it is critical to let the people decide if this is the right direction for Milwaukee.”

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