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JAMES A. BOHL, JR.

Alderman, 5th District

Joe Dudzik was a blue-collar leader, a quintessential Milwaukeean

Statement of Alderman Jim Bohl May 22, 2015

If Alderman Joe Dudzik was still with us today, he would have a good laugh at my expense. He would point out that this is the first time in a long time that I have been at a loss for words. His laughter and his stories would be a great comfort on a day when we sorely need it.

I was incredibly saddened to learn of Joe's passing, and I offer my deepest condolences to his wife, Lynn, and their sons. I hope the community will rally around his family in the days and weeks ahead and show them the love, the dedication and the support that they will be lacking in Joe's absence. Joe's proudest achievement was his family, and he loved them very much.

Since he joined the Common Council in 2002, Joe has represented his South Side district with great strength of convictions, always doing what he believed was best for his district and Milwaukee. The son of a Milwaukee Police officer, Joe was a longtime Department of Public Works employee before joining the Common Council. For him, public service wasn't just a career—it was a way of life. He was a great neighbor who would lend you the shirt off his back, or as was the case with his constituents, might drive up with his pickup truck to assist with a front yard clean-up.

Joe was a quintessential son of Milwaukee, and he made his district proud. He approached his job with a blue-collar sensibility, humility, a great sense of humor and an unrivaled work ethic. He always did his homework, threw himself into his job and never sought recognition for his good deeds.

It's not often that you see a politician eschew the spotlight, but for Joe, doing right was more important than getting the credit. He didn't believe in speaking on issues when it wasn't necessary and didn't lightly offer an opinion; but when he did speak, it was always from the position of a well-thought-out conviction. He was never shy about sharing those convictions, but he was always respectful and didn't take disagreements personally. He and I found time to chat every day at work, and I'm glad for it.

Joe believed that what's best for the city was more important than his image. And now, that image is what we have to remember him by—a down-to-earth, hard-working son of Milwaukee who lived life to its fullest and strived to do what was best for his family and his hometown. He will be sorely missed as a valued colleague. More importantly, he will be missed as a good friend.

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