



CITY OF MILWAUKEE

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# **Joint statement from Alderman Robert J. Bauman and Alderman Russell W. Stamper, II**

**July 1, 2015**

The work stoppage by the Milwaukee County Transit System bus drivers may be just another news story for many across Milwaukee and the metro area, but for tens of thousands of City of Milwaukee residents it is a major, life-altering hardship.

Yes, tens of thousands of city residents rely daily on the bus to get to work and to shop, and to do everything else they need to do in the course of their day. To have the bus system shut down is not serving the public interest, and the work stoppage simply must not continue.

Bus drivers are essential public servants, and the bus system is a public service funded by taxpayers. There is no wealthy owner or group of investors involved here – it is truly the public that is feeling the pain and bearing the brunt of this calculated work stoppage.

There are some who are making the work stoppage all about Summerfest and the upcoming 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend. But we know it is really about the negative impact on residents, and on families.

We know firsthand how badly our residents are being affected by the work stoppage because in many households (especially in the central city), not having bus transportation means not being able to get to work, it means not being able to get a child to school or child care, and not being able to get to a hospital or medical clinic for key medications and/or treatment. The stoppage is especially damaging to our economy, as our workers are struggling to get to their workplaces, and shoppers are having a hard time making it to the stores and restaurants they would normally patronize.

We understand that there are economic and compensation issues that are in play (as part of the dispute), and we are not taking sides here. But we believe the work dispute of the drivers should never have come to this point, and it is time for the stoppage to end so that a large portion of Milwaukee residents can resume their normal daily routines.