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CAVALIER JOHNSON
ALDERMAN, 2ND DISTRICT

Regional transit approach needed to help workers keep jobs, fill abundant vacancies

Statement of Alderman Cavalier Johnson October 19, 2018

At the end of 2018 funding that resulted from a \$11.5 million lawsuit initiated by Milwaukee Inner City Congregations Allied for Hope (MICAH) and the Black Health Coalition of Wisconsin will come to end. Unless another funding source is identified, the end of 2018 could also mark the end of the Milwaukee County Transit System's JobLines bus service.

JobLines has served as a crucial step forward toward better regional transit collaboration in the metropolitan Milwaukee area. The existence of JobLines has meant that people who live in city of Milwaukee neighborhoods where there is joblessness have access to literally thousands of jobs in suburban Milwaukee county as well as Waukesha and Washington counties. If JobLines are no longer funded, nearly 700 employers with the capacity to employ nearly 15,000 people will be out of reach for people who need jobs the most. The nearly one thousand people who use JobLines to get to work each day will find themselves without the transportation to get there.

According to the study, of those respondents questioned, 73.5% did not possess a valid driver's license and 83.1% did not have access to a car. According to those respondents, 66.6% make at least \$10 and some more than \$20 per hour and according to respondents, 42.3% would quit if JobLines were canceled while 29.5% were uncertain. Funding these vital services is important and the State should be a partner in the effort to uplift hard hit neighborhoods and the beating heart of the state economy here in the Milwaukee area. Fair shared revenue to local governments would help to accomplish that.

Too many of Milwaukee's neighborhoods face serious challenges as it relates to poverty and unemployment. With record low unemployment in the Wisconsin as a whole, employers are in a constant scramble to find employees. It only makes sense that State government would move aside and allow for regional transit in southeastern Wisconsin. Doing so would benefit those looking for work and those looking for workers alike.

To learn more about the Milwaukee County Transit System's JobLines Route 6 and 61 program, read the UW-Milwaukee's Center for Economic Development's report here:
http://www4.uwm.edu/ced/publications/joblines_10-10-18.pdf

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