Council approves legislation to increase time for paying parking citations

The Common Council today approved an ordinance that will increase the time for paying parking citations without a penalty.

Sponsored by Alderman Cavalier Johnson, Common Council File #181630 is legislation that extends the grace period for paying a parking citation from the current 10 days to 14 days. Extending the grace period is not expected to have a material effect on parking citation collections, and may actually reduce the number of unpaid citations submitted to a collection agency for non-payment. Co-sponsored by Alderwoman Milele A. Coggs, Alderwoman Nikiya Dodd, Alderman José G. Pérez, Alderwoman Chantia Lewis, Alderman Khalif J. Rainey, Ashanti Hamilton, Alderman Russell W. Stamper, II, and Alderman Robert J. Bauman, the ordinance was approved unanimously by the full Council.

“My goal in sponsoring this legislation is economic justice,” said Ald. Johnson. “Before this ordinance change, failure to pay a parking citation within 10 days meant a late-payment penalty was assessed to the original ticket. Residents living paycheck to paycheck now have a longer grace period to pay a citation in full, thus breaking a cycle of missed payment deadlines and ever-increasing late-payment penalties. Such penalties can push the cost of the citation beyond a person’s ability to pay.”

Research requested by Ald. Johnson indicates that several U.S. cities have greater grace periods than Milwaukee’s previous 10 days including Cincinnati (14 days), Cleveland (15 days), Minneapolis/St. Paul (21 days), Chicago (21 days), and St. Louis (30 days).

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