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FOR INFORMATION CALL

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Ald. Joe Davis, Sr.
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State Assembly Committee Will Take Up "Watered Down" Version Of Rep. Toles' Bill Tuesday; Fired Officers Will Continue To Be Paid While Legislature Mulls Issue

Ald. Davis Urges Lawmakers to Support Strong, Original Version of Bill

Milwaukee Ald. Joe Davis, Sr. today urged members of the Assembly's Committee on Corrections and Courts to reject a "watered down" version of Rep. Barbara Toles' bill that would change the state law that currently allows fired Milwaukee police officers to receive full pay and benefits until their appeals are exhausted with the Fire and Police Commission.

During a hearing at 10 a.m. tomorrow (Tuesday, December 4, 2007) at the State Capitol, the Committee on Corrections and Courts is expected to vote on a substitute version of Rep. Toles' bill – one that would actually worsen the situation for Milwaukee taxpayers when it comes to paying fired officers, the alderman said.

"It is time for our state legislators to do the right thing and remove this benefit that is found literally nowhere else in the nation, and that means approving the bill offered by Milwaukee Representative Barbara Toles," said Ald. Davis.

"In the world that most workers live in, employees who have serious violations of workplace rules such as falsifying reports or lying to supervisors can expect to be terminated, and their pay goes away," he said. "It's time for state legislators to take the burden of paying fired officers off the backs of the taxpayers of the City of Milwaukee."

-More-

Fired Officers' Pay/ADD ONE

The original version of Rep. Toles' bill would end pay for fired officers at termination. However, the Assembly version allows officers fighting termination to defend themselves in a hearing before the Fire and Police Commission before losing their pay. At such a hearing, the chief of police would be required to present a case against an officer to the commission, which would then make the decision about termination.

The state Senate's version of the Toles bill is strong and is acceptable to city leaders, Ald. Davis said. A crowded Senate hearing last week on that version of the bill attracted dozens of speakers, including Mayor Tom Barrett.

Since 1990 Milwaukee taxpayers have paid over \$4 million to police officers fired for just cause.