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FOR INFORMATION CALL

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Ald. Mike McGee, Jr.
286-2994/708-2247

Police Chief Urged To Share Asset Forfeiture Proceeds For Gun Buy-Back, Other Crime-Fighting Programs

*Ald. Mike McGee, Jr. Says Assets Seized in Police Cases Come From the Community
and Should Be Used In Combating Crime & Violence There*

Some Milwaukee residents might be shocked to learn that revenue generated from assets seized in police operations is used almost exclusively to pay for things like the canine unit, cellular phones and the department's mounted horse patrols.

That fact bothers Ald. Mike McGee, Jr., who thinks Police Chief Nannette Hegerty should be sharing asset forfeiture revenue so that some of the money can be used to help pay for additional gun buy-back programs, more "Slow Down" stop speeding signs, as well as a police substation at the new Granville Station (former site of Northridge Mall). Late last week, Ald. McGee was joined by Pastor Mose Fuller of St. Timothy's Church and Ald. Robert W. Puente during a meeting with Chief Hegerty and those very suggestions were made to her, Ald. McGee said.

But, Ald. McGee said Chief Hegerty – who has said she doesn't think gun buy-back programs work (although she gladly used the guns taken off the streets by Ald. McGee's buy-back efforts last year to beef up her departmental total for guns seized last year) – wouldn't budge from her plans to utilize the asset forfeiture revenue for certain MPD uses. "The chief was adamant about utilizing \$10,000 for the Canine Unit, \$53,000 for cellular phones, \$105,000 for mounted horse patrols, and more for computer upgrades," said Ald. McGee.

-More-

Asset Forfeiture Changes Needed/ADD ONE

“It is my opinion that the department should be willing to have two-way dialogue with respect to asset forfeiture, because those very resources are extracted out of the community,” said Ald. McGee, who is a member of the Common Council’s Public Safety Committee. “The Common Council may not directly decide how the (forfeiture) funds are prioritized, but it should be able to negotiate in good faith with the Chief if we authorize expenditures of asset forfeitures. With the rampant crime that is overtaking the community, we need every resource available to help combat violence.”

The Public Safety Committee will take up the MPD’s asset forfeitures expenditures at its meeting on Thursday, January 26, 2006, at 9 a.m. in room 301-B at City Hall, 200 E. Wells St.

Ald. McGee said he will continue a push to find ways to channel asset forfeiture revenue back into crime and violence reduction initiatives in neighborhoods. “If the whole community was informed about the scope and magnitude of which the Milwaukee Police Department literally ‘lives’ off its misery, people would be outraged,” he said. “I believe it’s truly absurd for the department to hoard resources that could be used for alternative interventions by the community to combat crime and deadly violence.”