

**MICHAEL S. D'AMATO**  
ALDERMAN, 3RD DISTRICT

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
January 17, 2001

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Ald. D'Amato  
286-2221

## **City Should Get Out of Charter School Business, Alderman Says**

### ***Alderman Michael S. D'Amato Proposes Measure To Drop City As Chartering Agency***

The City of Milwaukee should stick to what it does best – providing valuable municipal services to its residents – and should leave the charter school business to educational institutions and agencies, according to Ald. Michael S. D'Amato.

Alderman D'Amato, who represents the city's 3<sup>rd</sup> Aldermanic District, said he is proposing legislation that would end the city's three-year role as a chartering agency for Milwaukee charter schools. He said decisions regarding the education of Milwaukee's children should be left to the city's educational institutions, in particular the city's other three chartering agencies: the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee Public Schools and Milwaukee Area Technical College.

"It is not the primary purpose of the City of Milwaukee to run an educational institution," said Alderman D'Amato. "It is our primary responsibility to deliver the best possible municipal services at the lowest possible cost and to maximize the potential of our two primary assets – our land and our people. Let the educators educate."

**-More-**



## **Charter Schools/ADD ONE**

Ald. Thomas G. Nardelli, one of the measure's co-sponsors, said precious city resources should not be spent on educational matters already being handled by capable educational institutions in the city. "At a time when people are demanding smaller government and the elimination of duplicative levels of bureaucracy, the chartering of schools is simply not something that should be done by the City of Milwaukee," Alderman Nardelli said

A report issued last month by the Public Policy Forum stated that for the 2000-2001 school year, no charter school applications were made to the City of Milwaukee, while MPS received 13 applications and UW-Milwaukee received one. For the 1999-2000 school year, MPS received three applications, the city received 10 and UW-Milwaukee received four.

According to the Public Policy Forum, the Milwaukee Public School district is the only location in the country to have three different chartering agencies outside of the public school system (city, UW-Milwaukee and MATC). All three have nearly identical application procedures and requirements.

From 1993 to 1997, only MPS could grant charters and only one charter school existed in Milwaukee. In 1997, the state legislature authorized additional charter agencies in Milwaukee, and the result has been a dramatic increase in the number of students enrolled in charter schools. For example, in 1998 fewer than 200 students were enrolled in charter schools in Milwaukee. By the 2000-2001 school year, 5,048 students were enrolled in 11 charter schools.

Additional co-sponsors of the legislation include Alderwomen Annette E. Scherbert and Suzanne M. Breier and Aldermen Jim Bohl and Alderman Don Richards.

Alderman D'Amato said he will present the proposal for consideration before the Common Council's Steering & Rules Committee. If taken up and approved at committee, the measure will then go to the full council for adoption.