



**Marvin E. Pratt**  
Acting Mayor, City of Milwaukee

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March 31, 2004

Governor Jim Doyle  
Office of the Governor  
115 East State Capitol  
Madison, WI 53702

Dear Governor Doyle:

The 2003-04 legislative session has been particularly challenging and you are to be commended for addressing a record budget shortfall inherited from the previous administration. Throughout that process, the City of Milwaukee appreciates your recognition of the important partnership between state and local governments and the need to preserve Wisconsin's progressive tradition. You demonstrated your commitment to these ideals by vetoing misguided legislative proposals to devastate the shared revenue program, place arbitrary limitations on local budgets, disenfranchise voters, and increase the presence of lethal weapons in public places.

With several bills awaiting your review, you are again in a position to prevent harmful legislation. The City of Milwaukee has serious concerns with the following bills and **urges you to veto them.**

1. **Senate Bill 512.** The City of Milwaukee strongly agrees that there is a need to address the impact of the Columbus Park decision on the ability of non-profits to continue to provide affordable rental units to our low-income residents. The City also feels strongly that our low-income homeowners should no longer continue to provide a \$7.5 million subsidy to facilities that serve high-income residents. The Columbus decision reversed this long-standing abuse of the tax exemption tool. Narrowing the scope of the tax exemption would address the negative impact on low-income renters, while preserving a long-sought benefit for poor homeowners. Unfortunately, the version of SB512 before you is simply a permanent reversal of the entire decision. We urge you to veto this hastily crafted bill and instead work with the legislature toward a solution that protects affordable housing options for **all** of our residents.
2. **Assembly Bill 791.** This bill allows private companies to access the limited funding available to the State's public ports. Through the Harbor Assistance Program, the State has invested in its public ports, facilitating the shipping of goods to domestic and international

markets. Diverting funds away from public docks toward private docks threatens to undermine safety, access, and competitiveness of our State's critical ports.

3. **Assembly Bill 210.** This bill would require Milwaukee to issue temporary liquor licenses to any operator that holds a valid license from another municipality, even if that municipality has fewer restrictions on granting such licenses. This adds an additional burden on our law enforcement efforts and ignores the fact that the concerns regarding operator licenses vary among municipalities. The Milwaukee Police Department maintains strict requirements on the issuance and enforcement of liquor licenses. It would not be in the City's best interest to change its license process or lower its standards on license matters.
4. **Senate Bill 272.** This bill places additional and unnecessary barriers on municipal initiatives to ensure citizens affordable, universal access to advanced telecommunications capabilities. Robust, competitive broadband service is an essential tool to revitalize state and local economies. This bill will hinder development of expanded services at lower rates for citizens and places local economic development efforts at risk.
5. **Assembly Bill 169.** This bill mandates libraries to breach adolescents' confidentiality by requiring the release of information on library usage by any patron under age 17. The Wisconsin Library Association and DPI recommended amending the bill to apply only to those under 15, to address concerns such as fines accumulated by younger patrons, without undermining the privacy of adolescents. Unfortunately, this change was not made and the bill before you raises more concerns than it addresses.

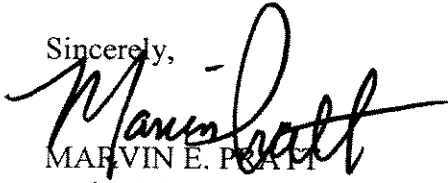
Fortunately, there are also bills before you of considerable merit and the City of Milwaukee **encourages you to sign** the following bills into law:

1. **Assembly Bill 419. This is a high priority bill for Milwaukee.** It enables municipalities to utilize WISDOT's existing vehicle registration hold program to collect outstanding towing and storage costs they are owed. In Milwaukee, over 30,000 vehicles are brought into our tow lot annually, and 19,000 are never claimed. This bill will give us a tool to address the growing problem of abandoned automobiles on city streets and provide a mechanism for capturing delinquent fees. The bill, along with Assembly Bill 467, also results in a net gain in revenues for the DOT. Signing this bill is a win-win for municipalities and the State.
2. **Assembly Bill 206.** This bill expands the scope of a current law prohibition against prisoners throwing bodily substances at others to also make it a felony for anyone to expel bodily substances at any public safety officer with the intent of inflicting harm. The City of Milwaukee, the Milwaukee Police Department, and Milwaukee Fire Department all strongly concur with the intent of this legislation and encourage your support.

3. **Assembly Bill 273.** Current law provides for municipal court to hear cases of defendants charged with operating while intoxicated (OWI), but if the same defendant refused to submit to an intoxication test, the refusal hearing must be heard in circuit court. It is not practical for two different courts to handle cases arising from the same incident. By allowing refusal cases to stay with the underlying OWI case regardless of where it initiated, AB273 would save time and money for the court system, defendants, attorneys, and police, while preserving the rights of defendants.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

  
MARVIN E. PRATT  
Acting Mayor

  
ALDERMAN MICHAEL D'AMATO  
Chair, Judiciary and Legislation Committee

cc: DOA Secretary Marc Marotta  
Tim Casper, Policy Advisor to Gov. Doyle