

City of Milwaukee Legislative Agenda

State of Wisconsin's

2015-16 Legislative Session

Creating Sustainable Prosperity for Milwaukee

Milwaukee is the heart of Wisconsin's economy. It is a premiere center of advanced manufacturing, fresh water research and development, green technology, health care, biomedical technology and financial services. Milwaukee's dynamic and accessible markets attract tourism, business and investment in large and increasing numbers. Our transportation system is the backbone for statewide tourism, conventions, and commerce and is the gateway to the state's economy.

Our diverse and resilient community both supports and challenges state policy makers. Since fiscal, economic and community ties between the city and state run strong in both directions, we have identified a multitude of opportunities to invest and reinvest in Milwaukee that will reap dividends for the rest of the state. This legislative package provides numerous ways for the state to build on our interdependence and improve Milwaukee's future ability to thrive. It also focuses on policies that will enhance self-sustaining prosperity.

Key Legislative Priorities

Stabilize the City's Fiscal Capacity and Enhance Operational Efficiency

1. Maintain or increase all sources of intergovernmental revenue, especially shared revenue.
2. Protect and expand the city's property tax base and ensure uniform assessment practices.
3. Provide more local revenue options to reduce the reliance on the property tax.
4. Treat all municipal employees equitably with regard to pension and healthcare contributions.
5. Ensure that the city receives timely and reliable financial information from the state.
6. Protect matters of interest for city government and residents in utility rate cases.

Enhance our Neighborhoods and Economic Well Being

1. Support job creation and training programs.
2. Increase the number and type of economic development incentives, especially those supporting catalytic economic development projects and the manufacturing industry.
3. Fund local educational institutions in a manner that is conscious of educational quality and fair to our taxpayers.
4. Expand the presence of state agencies and state universities in the city.
5. Secure state support for valuable cultural, sports and entertainment institutions.
6. Invest in programs that support foreclosure prevention, intervention and neighborhood stabilization.

Promote Racial, Social and Economic Equity for City Residents

1. Fight for a fair and equitable voting process that provides the ease and freedom to vote for all Milwaukee residents.
2. Promote employability and fair compensation for our residents by funding sector-based apprenticeships, youth employment programs and supporting a higher minimum wage.
3. Reduce barriers to employment through means such as better access to driver education and reducing the lasting impact of non-violent felony convictions.
4. Support programs that improve family support structures like the Fatherhood Initiative, the Black Male Achievement Council, and My Brother's Keeper.
5. Improve transitions into the workplace for the recently unemployed or incarcerated.

Invest in and Support Public Safety and Public Health

1. Remove barriers to crime reduction by enacting policies that discourage the proliferation of illegal guns and that strengthen mental health support systems.
2. Support evidence-based policies that protect our children, including lead remediation programs and expansion of mental health services to early development and school-age youth.
3. Fund and support injury prevention, domestic violence prevention, human trafficking, and sexual assault prevention and treatment programming.

Strengthen our Environment, our Mobility and our Infrastructure

1. Seek additional funding to support local road and sewer improvements, with an emphasis on "fixing it first".
2. Support alternative forms of mobility such as rail, transit, bicycles and pedestrian access.
3. Ensure residents have a comprehensive and safe transportation system that provides convenient and affordable access to jobs.
4. Invest in freight, rail, air and waterways, especially in the Port of Milwaukee, the Aerotropolis, the 30th St. Industrial Corridor and other multi-modal initiatives.
5. Support water, park and lakeshore health and overall sustainability of our environment and natural resources.

Maintain Local Control and Flexibility

1. Strengthen the ability of local leaders to make decisions that affect their constituents.
2. Repeal or adequately fund state mandates on local governments.
3. Maintain city control over the disposition of real estate assets.
4. Ensure fair city representation on state and regional boards and commissions like SEWRPC, MATC, 911 advisory boards, and MMSD.
5. Improve our ability to use tax incremental, business improvement and neighborhood improvement districts and other tools which enhance local fiscal health.