

LRB – RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS SECTION

JUDICIARY & LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

ITEM 5, FILE 051299

JANUARY 30, 2006

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File #051299 is a resolution directing the Election Commission to provide, on the spring general election ballot, April 4, 2006, an advisory referendum seeking approval to seek introduction and passage of state legislation enabling cities of the first class to enact forms of alternative funding for the purpose of financing public safety services and essential infrastructure projects.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

1. This resolution directs the Election Commission of the City of Milwaukee to place an advisory referendum on the spring general election ballot of April 4, 2006. The advisory referendum seeks approval for the introduction and passage of state legislation permitting cities of the first class to enact different forms of alternative funding to finance public safety services and necessary infrastructure projects.
2. The referendum asks voters if the city should pursue “alternative funding streams” to pay for public safety services and infrastructure projects. Public safety services include the Milwaukee Police Department and Milwaukee Fire Department and infrastructure projects include road paving, traffic signals and signs, bridges, street and alley lights provided by the Department of Public Works – Infrastructure Services Division. The primary funding sources for these services and other city services is through the city’s property tax and the state shared revenue.
3. The referendum question states:

“Do you agree that the City of Milwaukee cannot allow any further reduction in basic city services such as police and fire protection, and street paving and maintenance, and that the city leadership should find new ways to pay for these to offset property taxes?”
4. The cost for placing the referendum notice in the Milwaukee Journal/Sentinel, Community Journal, Milwaukee Times, Spanish Journal and Milwaukee Courier is \$10,000. The ads will appear twice, one month before the election and the day before the election.

FISCAL IMPACT

1. The cost for placing a noticing referendum in 5 daily and weekly newspapers notifying citizens of an advisory referendum on the spring general election ballot, April 4, 2006, is \$10,000. The funding is from the department’s budget. The department does not anticipate any additional costs.

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LRB – Research and Analysis Section
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