

Sept. 4th, 2015

Dear Mayor Barrett and City of Milwaukee Common Council:

Government tax money should not be used for a new Bucks arena for all of the following reasons:

1. Higher priorities exist in Milwaukee County, the City of Milwaukee and the State of Wisconsin such as helping with the homeless, poor, unemployed, children in low-income families, disabled, safe parks, clean water, education, next generation job technology, etc. How will our consciences and history speak about what we do with government tax dollars?
2. An arena does not make a city, county or a state great. What kind of city, county and state would you like to live in and lead? One that gives free money to a privately owned sports franchise team for a new arena? Or, one that treats residents well and has no blighted communities?
3. The last new arena did not help the downtown Milwaukee neighborhood to spur large downtown neighbor redevelopment. If you don't know, take a drive around the current arena. Why would a new arena be different for the Milwaukee community and the State of Wisconsin?
4. How did a professional basketball team help the Detroit area or the State of Michigan? <http://www.nba.com/teams/> Did a professional football team help the Detroit area? <http://www.detroitlions.com/ford-field/directions.html> Didn't Detroit file for bankruptcy? <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2013/07/18/detroit-prepares-bankruptcy-filing-friday/2552819/>
5. The current Bradley Center Arena is in excellent functioning condition and beautiful. (If you haven't seen it, take a tour. If you have not seen it yourself, you should not vote on such a large expense.) It would not make sense to demolish the current arena and to then build a new arena. On the other hand, have you visited some blighted neighborhoods in Milwaukee and other parts of Wisconsin? Many people, including children, are even homeless.
6. It is common knowledge that our U.S. government gives money to states and local governments. This money is not specifically related to arenas, but we need to look at the big picture of Federal money coming into our state/local governments and how our state spends money. What if our U.S. economy has more trouble so the Federal government can't, or the Federal government decides it won't, give states and local governments Federal aid as it has in the past? We should prepare for this possibility. More importantly, is our nation is already more than \$18 Trillion dollars in debt. <http://www.treasurydirect.gov/NP/debt/current>. Is the United States in a position to give money to Wisconsin, Milwaukee County, and the City of Milwaukee governments for any reason, when states and local governments would use large amounts of money for unnecessary sports entertainment arenas for the benefit of a sports entertainment basketball team owned by the extremely rich private people?
7. This is not even a loan, it is a gift of free money.
8. Some will argue that a new arena will bring more jobs. Any business can claim that if the State of Wisconsin, Milwaukee County and the City of Milwaukee give approximately \$250,000,000.00 to a private business, it will bring jobs. Why not just provide some direct public service, family supporting, jobs that do not involve a profits to billionaires? Why not just loan some of the money to small businesses in low-income neighborhoods that are owned by low-income people to help create jobs?

9. The private ticket market does not support a new arena. If it was true that the private ticket market was really in favor of a new arena, enough people would be willing to privately pay for enough sports arena tickets at a high enough price so that building a new arena would make economic sense to the private Bucks owners without the private Bucks owners requesting government money.

10. The use of public funds should not be given to private entertainment businesses. Again, this is a "private business" and an "entertainment business." The Bucks is a wealthy business owned by wealthy, billionaire, people. Do the Bucks owners even claim they need the money?

11. Economic growth will not come through a handout of free money to the extremely wealthy. Wisconsin will not really increase state tax revenue by giving away more money for a Bucks arena now. Our government is not of the corporations, by the corporations, for the corporations. We have "*that government of the people by the people for the people....*"

Abraham Lincoln, Draft of the Gettysburg Address: Nicolay Copy. Transcribed and annotated by the Lincoln Studies Center, Knox College, Galesburg, Illinois. Available at Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress, Manuscript Division (Washington, D.C.: American Memory Project, [2000-02]), <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/alhtml/malhome.html>. [Retrieved from the National Archives of the United States www.archives.gov; Page URL: <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=36&page=transcript> March 26, 2015.] (Emphasis added.)

12. No referendum was passed. Since this gift of money would be a large government expense for the benefit of a private company's profit, I suggest a referendum to see if the citizens of State of Wisconsin are really in favor of giving free government tax money for a new arena. I believe such a referendum would not pass. The people would not support a new arena if the facts were known.

13. The State of Wisconsin, Milwaukee County and the City of Milwaukee should not spend government money on a new arena because the NBA threatens that the Bucks will leave if the Bucks do not get a new arena. Our governments need to do the right thing regardless of such threats. If the Bucks leave because our governments prioritize the needs of people with low incomes ahead of the desires of a wealthy NBA sports team, our communities will be better recognized as communities that care about their residents.

14. The Bucks sports owners and NBA should support communities and jobs, not ask for money. How will it affect public relations for the NBA or the Bucks if they leave Milwaukee, WI because their demands for a new arena were not provided by the governments?

15. If the Bucks leave Wisconsin, the current arena could be used for more sports and other types of entertainment events. More people would go to UWM, Marquette, UW-Madison, other college, high school, and other basketball games. The Bucks are not the only entertainment in Milwaukee or Wisconsin. Money would be spent by local residents on substitute entertainments instead of the Bucks.

Please note: All opinions and information expressed in this email are my own, personally, and not any other organization's, entity's or person's.

Respectfully Submitted,

Theodore D. Kafkas