

Testimony to the Steering and Rules Committee  
June 26, 2023

I am a resident of Alderman Jonathan Brostoff's district, and a former State Assembly Representative, having served for 14 years, as Assistant Majority Leader.

I have never seen a statute that is as demeaning and insulting to both you who lead and govern our city and to all of us living in this wonderful community.

I would like to make two major points.

First, our Mayor has provided the leadership needed to reform our police department by strengthening the Fire and Police Commission. He has appointed Commissioners to not only act as the strong governing body intended by the state law which created the Commission but that the Commission is key to ensuring that community concerns and engagement guide and create reform.

You must find a way, despite the new legislation; to ensure that community engagement still remains powerful in creating change.

Second, this new legislation is awful. But we must all know and understand that the bad parts of the law take effect no matter what action the Common Council and Mayor take. It becomes law regardless of whether or not you adopt the sales tax. At this point, only the sales tax is an option.

All of us in the City of Milwaukee have talked and worried for years about the fiscal cliff we are facing-how shockingly drastic and severe the cuts will need to be.

But, you have a chance—in fact our only chance to prevent that—to do something good for the city. None of us wants to slash our libraries, our health department, our building inspections, and the so many other vital services we need.

So as bad as this legislation is, know that you will not be endorsing those bad provisions if you adopt the sales tax. You will be doing what you need to do as our leaders and protectors to save this city. Please hold your nose and adopt the tax.

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