

On Jul 8, 2023, at 1:31 PM, Jacob Frick <jfrickpd@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Alderman Bauman,

I wanted to write to you about concerns that I have with this years state budget. Although the governor has done nothing but work to improve it, I have significant concerns about the leftovers.

There seems little question that Milwaukee needs to secure additional funding to function as a modern city. Although it probably would have been better to get more general revenue sharing from Madison, it seems unlikely to occur until the gerrymander is broken, and I believe it is 20 years now that my vote in Wisconsin has meant nothing. Instead, we were given finally the 'gift' of a local sales tax, something that should have been an option ages ago. I personally don't mind paying the sales tax if it will improve life in the city, but for people on fixed incomes it is a regressive tax. Still, reading about the financial issues facing Milwaukee, there is little choice but to implement a sales tax increase. My advice would be to increase the tax as little as possible to maintain services.

My larger issue with the sales tax is the restrictions from Madison that were added to the locally collected money. By freezing shared revenue with the city for the last 20 years and not allowing Milwaukee to levy any sales tax, the legislature has steadfastly worked to destroy the largest city in the state. Now they are throwing breadcrumbs in our direction before the city declares bankruptcy and causes collateral damage to the WOW counties. My understanding is that even the new sales tax money comes with tight restrictions requiring Milwaukee to hire guards for city schools and hire police, even setting the numbers and departments they would work in. Somehow the sales tax revenue is also tied in to a gut of the power of the F & P Commission, apparently because they Commission was actually doing their job. And of course there was plenty written about not using an tax money for the streetcar expansion.

I am not a lawyer, but I have a medical degree so I'm positive that I can read and understand most legal concepts. Best I can tell, what they are doing violates the Wisconsin Constitution. In just a few months you might even have a chance of convincing the WI Supreme Court that this is true.

By restricting Milwaukee alone with their dictates, the legislature is creating an Apartheid State. And if they deny that there is any Apartheid, then I will say for certain this is 'Milwaukee resident' apartheid. Why is our city singled out by the legislature to have local decisions imposed on us by a group of people who couldn't point to Milwaukee on a map even if it was labeled? Is this truly the party of 'limited government' and 'freedom'? I guess It's their freedom over ours and they are good with that.

I say this: Impose the sales tax that you need, and then sue them!

They streetcar is less of an issue, but emblematic of the types of issues the legislature picks up on. I believe the logic is, 'I hate cities and the people who live there, public transport in in cities and so I hate public transport, the best and most efficient public transport is rail so I hate rail transport'. And yet they have never been on the streetcar, they have never travelled anywhere

where public transport is robust (Portland, Boston, Paris, London, and ANY city in China. Even Phoenix of all places is making amazing investments in rail transit. They have become used to conclusions based on what they want to believe and the facts or life experience is irrelevant. These are the folks who believe the earth is flat, chem trails are real, COVID was a hoax (which killed 7 million people), Vaccines don't work (resulting in 30 deaths / 100k in the US vs. 1 death/ 100k in Japan during omicron) and science is bad. But they use electricity, fly on planes. The facts are pretty clear if they ever developed an interest in facts.

Quick Facts

1. [In 2019, Americans took 9.9 billion trips](#) on public transportation.
2. 34 million times each weekday, people board public transportation.
3. Public transportation is a \$79 billion industry that employs more than 430,000 people.
4. [Approximately 6,800 organizations provide public transportation in the United States.](#)
5. 45% of Americans have no access to public transportation.
6. Millennials consider public transportation as the best option for digital socializing and among the best for connecting with communities.

Public Transportation Provides Economic Opportunities

1. [Every \\$1 invested in public transportation generates \\$5 in economic returns.](#)
2. Every \$1 billion invested in public transportation supports and creates approximately 50,000 jobs.
3. Every \$10 million in capital investment in public transportation yields \$30 million in increased business sales.
4. Every \$10 million in operating investment yields \$32 million in increased business sales.
5. [An estimated \\$39 billion of public transit expenditures flow into the private sector.](#)
6. Home values were up to 24% higher near public transportation than in other areas. Hotels in cities with direct rail access to airports raise 11% more revenue per room than hotels in those cities without.

Public Transportation Is a Safer Way to Travel Than by Automobile

1. Traveling by public transportation is **10 times safer per mile** than traveling by automobile.
2. A person can reduce his or her chance of being in an accident by more than 90% simply by taking public transit as opposed to commuting by car.

Public Transportation Saves Money

1. The average household spends 16 cents of every dollar on transportation, and 93% of this goes to buying, maintaining, and operating cars, the largest expenditure after housing.
2. A household can save nearly \$10,000 by taking public transportation and living with one less car.

I use the street car 3 times a week when we are in Milwaukee. We NEVER drive to the Third ward anymore and always use the streetcar to get there. I would love to see the service extended from downtown through Walkers point, Bayview and directly into the airport terminal. A line to UWM along Oakland, A line to the casino(maybe the tribe would pay for that?) and the baseball stadium and possibly one going up fond du lac ave all make sense.

Thank you for your time and efforts for the city.

I say, take the sales tax money and sue to return local control to local officials on how local funds are spent locally!

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Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows