

2011-12 Legislative Session Wrap-up

The City of Milwaukee's Intergovernmental Relations Division (IRD) recently concluded its efforts for the 2011-12 Wisconsin Legislative Session. The following are some statistics regarding the City's legislative efforts.

- The Legislature introduced 1325 bills in the 2011-12 session, 748 in the Assembly and 577 in the Senate. In addition, 75 bills were introduced between the January and September Special Sessions.
- IRD reviewed all of those bills and the City of Milwaukee registered to lobby on 131 of them (roughly 10%), including 69 Assembly bills and 62 Senate bills. We supported 43 of those bills and opposed 39.
- Of the bills that were introduced, the Governor signed 286 into law and partially vetoed 3.

Items we Supported

- IRD was authorized to register in support of 43 bills plus their companions. Nineteen of those bills were enacted.
- Ten of the bills that were enacted were items from the City of Milwaukee legislative agenda. One additional item from our legislative agenda was enacted in the State Budget.
 - Act 3 – Provides tax credits for businesses relocating to this state
 - Act 4 - Expands economic development tax credits
 - Act 12 – Corrects the filing of forms related to Milwaukee's TID #72
 - Act 17 – Allows the City of Milwaukee to sell MPS real estate
 - Act 31 – Prohibits the sale of synthetic marijuana
 - Act 32 (State Budget) – Eliminates prevailing wage requirement for residential properties with less than 4 units
 - Act 98 – restrictions on disabled parking identification cards
 - Act 133 – Allows Milwaukee to participate in the state health insurance pool
 - Act 136 – Expedites the foreclosure process for abandoned properties.
 - Act 211 – Provides that veterans with the same test score are treated equally by our City Service rules.
 - Act 270 – Allows for sharing of juvenile records with law enforcement.

- An additional 9 of the bills that were enacted were supported through separate Judiciary and Legislation action.
 - Act 77 – Authorizes the creation of multijurisdictional tax incremental districts
 - Act 97 - Closing hours for certain alcoholic beverage retailers
 - Act 106 – Excludes expenditures made as a result of a purchasing agreement with a school district from the calculation of expenditure restraint payment expenditures
 - Act 132 - Extends immunity from liability to discretionary highway maintenance decisions
 - Act 134 – Extends the deadline for adopting a maintenance program for private sewage systems
 - Act 135 – Affirms municipal authority to set timelines for variances
 - Act 204 – Allows public depositors to use deposit placement programs
 - Act 267 – Increases penalties for prohibited contact in domestic abuse incidents
 - Act 269 – Allows police to recover costs from false information providers

- Another 14 items from the legislative package were introduced as bills or budget amendments but did not pass into law.
 - Allowing for red light safety cameras (State Budget)
 - Changing the format of vehicle registration stickers (study directed in State Budget)
 - Micro-stamping requirement for handguns
 - Increasing recycling grants
 - Allowing countywide residence of election officials
 - Restricting the interest rates on pay day loans
 - Repealing the maintenance of effort requirement for emergency services
 - Exceptions to levy limits for service consolidation
 - Municipal consolidation loans
 - Increasing municipal court fees
 - Creating a Joint Committee on State Mandates
 - Restoring indexing to the Homestead Credit
 - Licensing of taxi cabs
 - Allowing for booting of legally parked vehicles

- Another 5 items were drafted as bills but were not introduced.
 - Recommendations to the Waste, Fraud and Abuse Commission (includes 14 items)
 - Allowing a staggered timeline for the issuance of food licenses
 - Strengthening regulations for motor vehicle salvage transactions
 - Mandatory licensing of real estate appraisers
 - Concealed Carry trailer bill

Items we Opposed

- IRD was authorized to oppose 39 bills that were introduced. Seven of those bills were enacted, one of which was amended into the State Budget.
- Six of the bills that were enacted were items IRD was authorized by the Judiciary and Legislation Committee to oppose. One was an item we opposed in our legislative agenda.
 - Act 10 - Changes to collective bargaining for public employees
 - Act 23 - Voter identification requirement (now under legal challenge)
 - Act 32 (State Budget) – Expanding the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program
 - Act 35 - Concealed carry
 - Act 39 – Redistricting
 - Act 168 – Rules for spending stewardship funds
 - Act 216 - Changes to sexual education curricula
- We opposed 32 bills that did not become law. Some highlights of the bills we defeated include:
 - AB 44/SB 34 – Eliminating MPS residency requirements
 - AB 65/SB 30 – Restricting the residency requirement for Milwaukee police officers and firefighters
 - AB 234 – Restricting local ordinances restricting bow hunting
 - AB 262/SB 182 – Restricting the taxation of billboard licenses and permits
 - AB 219/SB 240 – Requiring local governments to actuarially fund postretirement health care benefits
 - AB 286/SB 207 – Permitting employers to refuse to employ felons under the state fair employment law
 - AB 295 – Requiring a local government to hold a referendum prior to enacting a vehicle registration fee
 - SB 58 – Eliminating liability of public utility customers for unbilled utility service.
 - SJR 48 – Taxpayer Bill of Rights
- We opposed one additional item in the version of the State Budget passed by the Senate and Assembly. We were able to obtain a partial veto of this item.
 - Provision requiring the City of Milwaukee to pay discharged police officers while their appeal is pending before the Fire and Police Commission.