



CITY OF MILWAUKEE

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December 28, 2016

City Attorney's Office  
ATTN: Grant Langley, City Attorney  
200 E Wells St, Room 800  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

RE: Communication File #161148

Dear City Attorney Langley,

We consider Communication File #161148, scheduled for hearing before the Judiciary and Legislative Committee on January 9<sup>th</sup>, a crucial first step in improving the City's game plan for dealing with the problems posed by unscrupulous landlords who hide behind LLCs while they exploit our most disadvantaged residents, and squeeze the last ounces of value from the properties they own. Renters of these properties are forced to tolerate unhealthy, appallingly squalid conditions. The refusal of these shameless landlords to adhere to even minimal standards of upkeep is aggressively blighting our neighborhoods.

The City needs an effective strategy to hold these LLC-shielded landlords accountable for the human misery and urban blight their actions cause.

Broadly speaking, we want to hear from the City Attorney's Office through this communications file on:

- What difficulties does the City have in identifying the owner of a problem LLC, and what are we doing to overcome these obstacles?
- What steps have been taken to "pierce the veil" of these LLC miscreants, and what options are available in the future?
- What is the burden of proof the City must achieve to pierce the veil of an LLC?
- Could changes to State statutes governing the organization and operation of LLCs make it easier to hold problem LLCs accountable?

We can only have a productive discussion on how to shape policy to meet this attack on the vitality of our neighborhoods if all pertinent options are presented for consideration during this hearing.

We look forward to hearing from you and your staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Terry L. Witkowski'.

Terry L. Witkowski  
Alderman, 13<sup>th</sup> District

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Michael J. Murphy'.

Michael J. Murphy  
Alderman, 10<sup>th</sup> District