



Tom Barrett
Mayor, City of Milwaukee

October 18, 2017

To the Honorable, Common Council
Of the City of Milwaukee

Honorable Members of the Common Council:

I am vetoing File# 170634, which is a Resolution directing the Department of Administration's Intergovernmental Relations Division to seek introduction and passage of State legislation relating to how fire and police chiefs may be removed from office.

My veto reflects several concerns. Since its establishment in 1885, the Fire and Police Commission has been responsible for appointing and removing the fire and police chiefs of the City of Milwaukee. This arrangement is mandated under State law (s.62.50, Wis. Stats.) with cooperation from City government.

The membership of the Fire and Police Commission is comprised of City of Milwaukee residents from different parts of the city and from diverse backgrounds. They are appointed by the Mayor and are confirmed by the Common Council. They are community members who have the responsibility of overseeing the procedures of the fire and police departments. It is a system that has worked, has transparency and accountability. This resolution will remove the authority of a citizen appointed board/commission.

Furthermore, the Resolution File # 170634 will have an impact of politicizing the positions of the fire and police chiefs. The fire and police chiefs are independent and nonpartisan appointees. The respective chiefs should be responsive to members of the Common Council. That being said, we must continue to allow the citizen member Fire and Police Commission to make non-political decisions, decisions that impact our current and future fire and police chiefs and the operations of their respective departments.

I respectfully request you sustain my veto for the reasons stated above. Thank you for the consideration.

Sincerely,

Tom Barrett
Mayor