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CAVALIER JOHNSON
COMMON COUNCIL PRESIDENT
ALDERMAN, 2ND DISTRICT

Big cities and small towns sing the same tune at Joint Finance Committee hearing

**Statement of Common Council President Cavalier Johnson
April 21, 2021**

Earlier today I traveled to Rhinelander, WI to testify at the State of Wisconsin's Joint Finance Committee public hearing on the Governor's proposed 2021-2023 biennial budget.

My message was a simple one. The way we currently fund local government is no longer working. State law restricts our revenue sources to the property tax and shared revenue, and over time shared revenue has not been increasing at the rate of inflation. In fact, Milwaukee receives \$20 million less in shared revenue than we did in 2003.

Frozen shared revenue payments have required us to rely far too heavily on the property tax, and while an increase in shared revenue is preferable, allowing municipalities like Milwaukee to generate additional revenue through a sales tax is a great alternative.

Milwaukee serves as the cultural and commercial center in the most populous region of the state, and a local sales tax is a fair and reasonable way for visitors to contribute to the services that they use.

Perhaps most notably at today's public hearing were the calls from other elected officials from municipalities of all sizes asking for the same ability. This is not just a Milwaukee problem as it is sometimes portrayed, and that was made clear today.

I continue to urge those in Madison to adopt the local sales tax option and the 2% increase in shared revenue proposal outlined in the Governor's proposed budget so municipalities can start to see the relief they sorely need.

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