



## Legislation Text

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160444  
SUBSTITUTE 1

ALD. WITKOWSKI

Substitute resolution directing the Executive Director of the Election Commission to place on the Fall 2016 General Election ballot a referendum authorizing the City of Milwaukee to raise its levy by an annual amount sufficient to cover costs relating to public safety.

This resolution directs the Executive Director of the Election Commission of the City of Milwaukee to provide, on the Fall 2016 General Election ballot, a referendum authorizing the City of Milwaukee to raise its levy by an annual amount sufficient to cover costs relating to public safety. The amount authorized by the referendum shall be sufficient to recruit, train, equip and supervise 150 new police officers for a period of five years, and shall be sufficient to cover lost aid from the State of Wisconsin Expenditure Restraint Payment program.

Whereas, Public safety in the city of Milwaukee is among the highest priorities for maintaining tranquility, security and a positive quality of life for residents, and the lack of public safety is not only harmful to residents, but inhibits the City's social stability and economic growth; and

Whereas, An adequate number of police officers is essential for ensuring that the City meet its public safety requirements; and

Whereas, A temporary surge of 150 new police officers is necessary to address elevated crime and violence in the city and to renew residents' perception of public safety; and

Whereas, Once crime and violence has been reduced and neighborhoods have been stabilized with a heightened police presence, the number of police officers can be reduced through retirement and normal attrition to pre-surge numbers; and

Whereas, From initial recruitment and training of 150 new police officers, through deployment and increases in police presence and activity in the city, to subsequent reductions in crime and violence in Milwaukee and improvements in public safety, is a process that is expected to span 5 years beginning in 2017; and

Whereas, The cost of adding a new police officer includes salary and benefits, as well as the costs of recruiting, training, equipping and supervising that officer; and

Whereas, The estimated cost of adding 150 new police officers would be approximately \$3.6 million the first year and \$81.7 million over 5 years; and

Whereas, The decrease in inflation-adjusted state shared revenue to the City of Milwaukee in recent years, as well as limits imposed upon the City by the state relating to increases in the property tax levy, have created challenges in providing and funding public safety services at levels desired by the

residents of Milwaukee; and

Whereas, s. 66.0602, Wis. Stats., limits the increase in the City's 2016 property tax levy, to be collected in 2017, to no more than a percentage equal to the percentage change in equalized property value due to new construction, less improvements removed, which for the City of Milwaukee is XXX%; and

Whereas, The City of Milwaukee actual 2015 levy was \$248.9 million; and state law would limit the increase to \$XXX for a total allowable 2016 city property tax levy of \$XXX; and

Whereas, The Common Council of the City of Milwaukee believes it is in the City's best interest to exceed the state levy limit as described above by a greater percentage than XXX% to cover costs relating to public safety, and specifically the costs of adding 150 new police officers, without reducing or eliminating other essential City services; and

Whereas, An increase in the City's property tax levy sufficient to cover costs relating to adding 150 new police officers would represent an additional levy of 47 cents per \$1,000 in assessed valued each year from 2017 - 2021; and

Whereas, An increase in the City's 2017 budget over the 2016 budget through the addition of 150 new police officers will reduce or eliminate aid the City receives from the State of Wisconsin Expenditure Restraint Payment program, which has averaged \$8.7 million annually for the last 4 years; and

Whereas, State law permits municipalities to exceed their levy limit if a municipality's governing body adopts a resolution to that effect and if the resolution is approved by referendum (s. 66.0602(4), Wis. Stats.); and

Whereas, A referendum for the citizens of the city of Milwaukee would provide an important measure of support to raising its levy by an annual amount sufficient to cover costs relating to adding 150 new police officers to improve public safety; now, therefore be it

Resolved, By the Common Council of the City of Milwaukee, that the Executive Director of the Election Commission of the City of Milwaukee is directed to provide, on the Fall General Election ballot, November 8, 2016, a referendum authorizing the City of Milwaukee to increase its levy by \$XXX beyond the amount that is allowed under state law (s. 66.0602(2), Wis. Stats.) for the exclusive purpose of covering costs related to public safety; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the levy increase be applied on an ongoing basis by including it in the base used to calculate the levy limit through the 2020 levy, to be collected in 2021; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the following referendum question shall be submitted to a vote of the electors at this election:

"Under state law, the increase in the levy of the City of Milwaukee for the tax to be imposed for the next fiscal year, 2017, is limited to XXX%, which results in a levy of \$XXX. Shall the City of Milwaukee be allowed to exceed this limit and increase the levy for the next fiscal year, 2017, by a total of XXX%, which results in a levy of \$XXX, for the exclusive purpose of covering costs related to

public safety, and with the intent that the levy increase be applied on an ongoing basis by including it in the base used to calculate the levy limit through the 2020 levy, to be collected in 2021?”

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Dana J. Zelazny  
07/25/2016