



Legislation Text

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200035
SUBSTITUE 1

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Substitute resolution directing the Commissioner of Assessments to freeze property assessments at pre-reassessment values until further notice.

This resolution directs the Commissioner of Assessments to freeze real property assessments at 2019 values until further notice, with the exception of commercial properties and new construction.

Whereas, The Assessor's Office is responsible for estimating the market value of all locally-assessable property in Milwaukee each year; and

Whereas, The Assessor's Office recently completed the revaluation process and issued 2020 notices of assessment to Milwaukee property owners; and

Whereas, According to the Assessor's Office, consecutive years of increasing market values in Milwaukee have led to, for the first time, a combined value of residential and commercial properties exceeding the value prior to the 2008 financial collapse; and

Whereas, According to the Assessor's Office, property values in all 15 aldermanic districts increased by 9.14%; and

Whereas, The average 2020 residential property assessment increased by 11.95% from 2019, more than double the average commercial property assessment increase of 5.33%; and

Whereas, Many residential property owners have been surprised by significant increases in their property's assessed value due to the 2020 revaluation; and

Whereas, The 2020 property revaluations have come at a particularly trying time, as Milwaukee has been impacted by local and state-wide business shut-downs and stay-at-home orders related to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

Whereas, Unemployment has soared in Wisconsin and Milwaukee due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with nearly 443,000 new unemployment claims filed state-wide since March 14, representing 14.2% of the state's labor force; and

Whereas, Economic activity has likewise sharply decreased in Milwaukee and Wisconsin, corresponding to a nationwide 4.8% reduction in the gross domestic product in the first quarter of 2020; and

Whereas, There is significant uncertainty as to the pandemic's long-term local economic impact; and

Whereas, Against the backdrop of a suddenly-struggling economy and surging unemployment, increases in assessed property values may add undue financial stress to Milwaukee taxpayers, particularly for owners of residential properties that have been subject to a larger percentage increase in property assessments compared to commercial properties; and

Whereas, The Wisconsin Department of Revenue recognizes the difficulty in maintaining full value assessments, and thus does not require taxation districts like the City of Milwaukee to conduct property assessments annually; and

Whereas, Rather, under s. 70.05(5)(b), Wis. Stats., taxation districts are only required to assess property values at full value once every 5 years; and

Whereas, The Department of Revenue's assessment monitoring program is only triggered when a taxation district has non-compliant for 4 consecutive years; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, By the Common Council of the City of Milwaukee, that, until further notice, the Commissioner of Assessments is directed to freeze all real property assessments in Milwaukee at 2019 levels, with the exception of commercial properties and properties with new construction; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the Commissioner of Assessments is directed to issue revised notices of assessed value to property owners rescinding 2020 notices of assessed value issued prior to adoption of this resolution.

LRB176012-2
Dana J. Zelazny
May 7, 2020