

# County Exec Abele: County Exec Abele to seek court remedy on illegal action by the County Board

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Milwaukee, Wisconsin – Following an illegal action taken by the Milwaukee County Board, Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele today announced that he would seek a remedy from the court that would halt the Board’s illegal action and prevent imminent harm to County employees.

As an example, the Board today heard the story of a public safety employee who works with victim witnesses in the District Attorney’s office who would have her salary cut by 23 percent because of their illegal action. They chose to ignore this testimony and opt for petty political games, sending a message to employees that their contributions don’t matter.

Last month, Milwaukee County Circuit Court Judge John DiMotto ruled on a lawsuit filed by County Board Chairman Theo Lipscomb that the County Board exceeded its legal authority in trying to interfere on certain administrative functions, and specifically stated that the Board’s “meddling and second-guessing” on such administrative decisions is “impermissible.”

The Chairman’s lawsuit — the second one he filed after his initial filing was dismissed when the Court ruled decisively that Chairman Lipscomb did not have the authority to unilaterally file a lawsuit against the county executive on behalf of the

County — has already cost taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars. The Board also took action today to authorize an additional \$50,000 in taxpayer-funded legal services for the Chairman's lawsuit.

Despite concerns about this needless lawsuit, the county executive was willing to accept the Court's decision that the Board has the authority to create pay ranges but the executive sets salaries for individual employees within one of the approved ranges. He has always believed that he and the County Board have much more on which they agree than disagree, and would prefer to devote time, energy, and taxpayer resources to solving problems, not creating them.

However, today's illegal action by the Board directly conflicts with the Court's decision and would cause imminent harm to County employees. In order to protect County employees and prevent further legal damage to the County, the county executive will seek an immediate stay from the Court to halt the Board's illegal action and will also appeal the Court's decision from last month.

County Executive Abele released the following statement:

"My top concern is that the County has a fair compensation system that allows us to attract and retain top talent. Our workforce and County residents deserve no less.

"It's disappointing that Chairman Lipscomb won't abide by the Court ruling he sought and instead is forcing the County to spend additional taxpayer money on this lawsuit.

"To be clear, the Board's illegal action will not only harm individual County employees who have been targeted for pay cuts, it threatens the County's ability to provide needed services in the community. I fear that the Board's attack on County workers may result in public employees feeling so threatened and intimidated that we will see a mass exodus of talent."

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