

Milwaukee Co. Chairman Lipscomb: Supervisors limit excessive pay for top political appointees

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MILWAUKEE – The Board of Supervisors took action today, on a vote of 16-1, requiring the Abele administration to apply previously adopted salary limits to highly compensated political appointees and return the directors of five major County departments to their approved pay grades.

The move could save the county about \$100,000 a year and eliminate an additional \$750,000 annually in potential salary expense, if fully implemented.

For nearly four years County Executive Abele has ignored the County's executive pay policy that limits excessive salaries for top department heads and instead awarded several illegal pay increases, now totaling nearly \$100,000 a year. Recently, Abele moved his appointees into a higher pay grade, opening the door for him to unilaterally increase their salaries to nearly \$300,000 each.

“County Executive Abele has refused to implement the pay limits that were approved in the 2014 budget and later upheld as legal by the courts,” said County Board Chairman Theo Lipscomb, Sr.

“When Abele awarded an unauthorized [\\$50,000 raise](#) to one of his appointees it was absurd, and the court agreed with us that it was improper. The County

Executive has circumvented the legislative and judicial branches of this government and set up a situation where he could unilaterally award even more obscene raises and more than double the pay of several of his top political appointees to nearly \$300,000.”

The County Board capped the salaries of the top five department heads at just over \$120,000 as part of the 2014 budget, using salaries of comparable state department heads as a guide. The Abele administration refused to implement that policy, and instead created a shadow pay structure that ballooned to include [more than two dozen](#) highly compensated employees.

On April 24, 2017, a Milwaukee County Circuit Court [upheld](#) the Board’s authority to adopt the executive pay provisions in the 2014 budget, concluding in part that “The Board’s request for a declaration that it has statutory authority to provide for, fix, or change the compensation of unclassified County employees, including department heads, is GRANTED.”