

WMC: Local governments participate in “Raise Your Taxes Day”

Posted on Monday, Dec 11, 2017

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

CONTACT: Nick Novak, 608.258.3400

MADISON – Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce (WMC) reinforced its opposition on Monday to a coordinated effort by the League of Municipalities, the Wisconsin Counties Association and the Wisconsin Towns Association to raise property taxes on local businesses and increase costs for consumers across the state.

The so-called “Dark Store Day” being pushed by these groups is in reality a statewide “Raise Your Taxes Day.”

“Local governments and overly aggressive assessors are simply looking for ways to raise taxes on employers because they cannot be fiscally responsible,” said WMC Senior Vice President of Government Relations Scott Manley. “Senate Bills 291 and 292 will do nothing more than increase the costs to do business in Wisconsin, making the products we buy each and every day more expensive.”

Statewide, Wisconsin businesses already pay an effective property tax rate that is 15 percent higher than residential property owners, and these bills would do nothing but increase that amount.

Additionally, supporters of “Raise Your Taxes Day” claim these bills are necessary to overturn a court case and stop the shift in property taxes from businesses to homeowners, but the exact opposite has happened since the case was decided. Since 2008, the statewide share of commercial and manufacturing property taxes has increased by three percent, while the share of residential property taxes has dropped by three percent.

These bills would also punish some small businesses looking to expand and create

more jobs. Many franchisees and other small business are not able to receive cost-effective financing from traditional lenders, so they use sale-leaseback arrangements to finance improvements, expansions and more. Under these bills, these lease amounts could become part of the property value - creating a local income tax on top of the state income tax.

“Don’t let them fool you. This is about raising taxes on all businesses, not just ‘big box’ stores,” Manley added. “Thanks to our state’s uniformity clause, these bills could raise taxes for the small manufacturer in your town or your favorite spot for Friday fish fry. Unfortunately, that means higher costs for all Wisconsinites.”

While the League of Municipalities, the Wisconsin Counties Association and the Wisconsin Towns Association have singled out a specific day to proclaim their support for higher taxes, WMC is proud to fight everyday on behalf of its members for lower taxes.

“Wisconsin continues to lower taxes at the state level, which has led to a booming economy. Now is not the time change course,” Manley concluded.