

Milwaukee County Board: Lipscomb offers solutions to avoid bus route cuts

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Questions Abele's Transit Cuts in Light of \$2.75 Million Transit Surplus

MILWAUKEE – The County Board will vote Thursday on a resolution that offers several options the Transportation Department and the Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) can use to avoid route cuts announced by County Executive Chris Abele. Board Chairman Theodore Lipscomb, Sr.'s resolution calls on MCTS to identify efficiencies that led to recently revealed \$2.75 million surplus in Transit for 2017, study modifications to certain bus routes, and use higher than anticipated wheel tax revenue to maintain service for transit riders.

“Citizens are counting on us to find solutions, and I am proud of my work to identify several alternatives that will preserve transit service. Given the recent disclosure of a large transit surplus, the Abele Administration will need to explain to taxpayers why they announced their route cuts despite knowing that alternative solutions were available.” said Lipscomb.

A January 22 [report](#) from the independently elected County Comptroller revealed that the Abele Administration hid the extent of MCTS's \$2.75 million budget surplus for 2017 until after the transit division announced, on January 15, that it was cutting several routes.

Establishing which factors contributed to the \$2.75 million surplus in 2017 could

help identify potential savings this year and avoid the route cuts, without interrupting service for riders. The \$2.75 million surplus is more than three times greater than the department's budget cut for 2018, which the Abele Administration has used to justify [eliminating](#) nine bus routes.

Lipscomb's resolution also calls on the Transportation Department to dedicate what could be higher than expected Vehicle Registration Fee revenue for 2018, to transit.

As another possible solution, Lipscomb's recommends modifying existing adjacent routes to preserve service. This is what he previously proposed to maintain service for the Brown Deer Business Park, currently served by Route 276.

Lipscomb's resolution calls on MCTS to preserve UBUS Route 42U, to ensure continued service to the MATC North Campus in Mequon and Concordia University, and warns of the loss of \$1 million in annual revenue generated by MATC students who participate in the UPASS program.