

# Brown County Taxpayers Association: Wisconsin Supreme Court upholds Brown County sales tax

Posted on Friday, Mar 4, 2022

**>> 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.](#)**

The Supreme Court of Wisconsin issued an opinion today ruling that Brown County's 0.5% sales tax is legal. The lawsuit, litigated on behalf of the BCTA by the Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty, was filed in 2018 shortly after the County adopted the sales and use tax, which is expected to raise \$147,000,000 dollars over its six-year duration. Although the County prevailed at the circuit court level in March of 2020, the BCTA appealed the decision to the State's Court of Appeals, which, in turn, referred it to the Supreme Court of Wisconsin without rendering a decision of its own.

In her dissenting opinion today –which Chief Justice Annette Kingsland Ziegler joined – Justice Rebecca Grassl Bradley characterizes the majority's action as “contorting a statute designed for property tax relief into a blank check for unaffordable spending. The majority may do so as the masters of law-declaring in Wisconsin, but the statute does not mean what the majority says.”

BCTA President Rich Heidel stated: “We completely agree with the dissenting opinion and are disappointed that a majority of the Supreme Court of Wisconsin agreed with the County's view that spending millions of hard-earned taxpayer dollars on new capital projects directly reduces property taxes. This now becomes a legislative effort to even better clarify, if that's possible, the language of the county sales tax statute to better protect Wisconsin taxpayers. As a one-of-a-kind watchdog organization, the BCTA will continue to safeguard taxpayers' interests, particularly when hundreds of millions of dollars are in the balance.”