

Milwaukee County: Supervisors testify at public hearing on shared revenue autonomy bill

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MILWAUKEE – On May 4, 2023, the Assembly Committee on Local Government held a public hearing on Assembly Bill 245, which proposes changes to county and municipal aid in Wisconsin. Supervisors Peter Burgelis, Ryan Clancy and Vice-Chair Sequanna Taylor attended the meeting on behalf of the County and made the following statements:

“More.” Supervisor Burgelis replying to a committee question about what specifically Milwaukee County needed.

“The authors of this bill claimed that this is a robust solution for local governments with significant inflationary increases. While that is accurate for many smaller communities, following decades of stagnant support, 14% and 10% for Milwaukee County and the City of Milwaukee falls far short of the needs for basic essential services. This is not only Fire and Police protection, but Milwaukee requires significant investment for seniors, veterans, housing, mental health, and transit.”

“I’m encouraged by this proposal as the start of meaningful conversation and policy improvements, but we must prioritize the needs of our constituents. Let’s continue the discussion.”

Supervisor Clancy stated *“Reasonable people can negotiate over the best levels and allocations of shared revenue. I’m glad that we seem to have broad consensus on changing and updating those allocations even if we differ about who gets what. It looks like some folks are getting mere scraps, but that’s an item that we can negotiate in good faith.”*

“The policy barbs in this legislation, though, are a clear attack on local control and the autonomy of local governments to set their own budget priorities. The ones specific to Milwaukee and Milwaukee County are petty at best, damaging at worst.”

According to Vice-Chair Sequanna Taylor *“Milwaukee has always been the driving force of Wisconsin’s economy, when Milwaukee wins and prospers so does the entire state. While I support many fiscal provisions in this bill, I don’t want it to be utilized to tie the hands of Milwaukee elected officials. I fear that doing so would be a disservice to the residents we serve. However, I remain hopeful that we can work together to find a solution that benefits both Milwaukee and the State. We succeed together!”*

The Assembly Committee on Local Government heard testimony and engaged in discussions about Assembly Bill 245 and its potential impact on various communities in Wisconsin. Assembly Bill 245 covers a broad range of topics related to county and municipal aid and has sparked a debate on the importance of local control and autonomy in setting budget priorities.

Milwaukee County Supervisors emphasized the need for fair shares of shared revenue and the autonomy to use them fairly, warning against adding stipulations that could further divide counties and state.

The Assembly Committee on Local Government heard testimony and engaged in discussions about the bill and its potential impact on various communities in Wisconsin.

The public hearing was an opportunity for stakeholders to voice their concerns and ideas regarding the proposed bill. The committee will consider the feedback received as they continue to deliberate and draft legislation on county and municipal aid in Wisconsin.