For Immediate Release   June 29, 2017
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County Officials Advocate for Property Tax Fairness Today in Madison
At Capitol to Testify on Bills to Close "Dark Store" Assessment Loophole

County officials from throughout the state traveled to Madison today to testify in support of Assembly Bills 386 and 387, which closes the "dark store" assessment loophole utilized by big-box commercial retailers to significantly reduce their property tax assessments.

Passage of this legislation is critical to ensuring residential homeowners are not forced to continue paying a disproportionate share of the local property tax due to unfair assessment strategies employed by commercial retailers.

"Counties recognize the value commercial businesses provide to local communities. However, property taxes are needed to provide services local taxpayers and businesses require and expect," said Wisconsin Counties Association Director of Government Affairs Kyle Christianson.

He continued, "Due to a nationwide strategy used by some big-box commercial retailers, property taxes are being shifted to residential homeowners. This issue is not about local governments collecting more in property taxes, considering that levy limits are still employed. Rather, this is about keeping property tax bills as equitable and low as possible for all taxpayers, not just commercial retailers."

Assembly Bills 386 and 387 are authored by Representative Rob Brooks (R-Saukville) while Senators Roger Roth (R-Appleton) and Duey Stroebel (R- Saukville) authored the respective Senate companion bills.

"Local governments throughout the state are eager to support these legislative efforts to protect all local property taxpayers," said Christianson. "Counties look forward to working with members of the Wisconsin State Legislature and Governor Walker to move these bills forward through the legislative process."

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