

Wisconsin Towns Association

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Towns in Wisconsin Fight to Close Unfair Tax Loophole

Last Thursday, town officials from around the state testified in support of AB 386 and AB387, which will close tax loopholes that shift significant levels of property tax onto small businesses and homeowners.

“These bills will not create any additional tax revenue. They simply address a fairness issue. Without this effort to eliminate loopholes, big-box retailers will pay less than their fair share, while mom and pop stores, small businesses and entrepreneurs, and homeowners will have to shell out more of their hard earned money,” stated Mike Koles, Wisconsin Towns Association Executive Director.

Currently, residential property owners pay around 68% of all property tax in Wisconsin and 78% of all property tax in towns. Without this critical legislation, authored by Representative Rob Brooks and Senators Roger Roth and Dwey Stroebel, homeowners would pay an even greater percentage. For example, testimony revealed that the average homeowner in the Town of Brookfield could pay an additional \$1300 in property taxes annually without this legislation.

Koles added, “Unfortunately, some have inaccurately framed this issue and unfairly attacked legislative leaders for their efforts to preserve the status quo. Evidently, some business interests are comfortable forcing legislators to explain to the homeowners in their district why policymakers failed to prevent a huge increase in their property taxes. We are not comfortable with that approach.”

Local governments are excited for the opportunity to ensure a fair property tax system. We look forward to working with the Wisconsin Legislature and Governor Walker in advancing these proposals through the legislative process.

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