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BUSINESS LEADERS, ELECTED OFFICIALS APPLAUD GOVERNOR EVERS' INCLUSION OF LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX IN STATE BUDGET

MILWAUKEE – Feb 12, 2021 – The following statements were issued today in support of Governor Evers' inclusion of a half-cent local option sales tax in his proposed budget. The proposal, which would enable both Wisconsin counties and any Wisconsin municipality with a population greater than 30,000 to enact a half-cent increase to local sales taxes after approval by voters in a referendum, provides a critically necessary tool to local governments seeking to reduce property taxes and invest in local priorities.

Tim Sheehy, President, Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce (MMAC)

"Milwaukee County and its municipalities house 60 percent of the jobs in our metro area. In order to provide property tax relief, maintain critical services and support our infrastructure, MMAC applauds Governor Evers for including a local option sales tax in his budget proposal. With voters approval, this could lead to a new way to move Milwaukee forward with a more balanced fiscal structure and make the investments necessary to keep metro Milwaukee a region of choice."

David Lubar, Past Board Chair, Greater Milwaukee Committee (GMC)

"The Greater Milwaukee Committee supports the tax reforms incorporated in Governor Evers' budget. These are well-researched reforms which give local governments the authority to raise revenues needed to supplement the revenue sharing received from the State of Wisconsin. This proposed tax reform will enable increased investment in expected and necessary services that Milwaukee County, the City of Milwaukee and other municipalities provide such as greater access to public and mental health services, transportation, parks, and other municipal services. We thank Governor Evers for his leadership in putting forth this important tax reform."

Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley:

"Thanks to Governor Evers, Milwaukee County, the economic engine of the State, is one step closer to having the tools necessary to invest in our communities, our residents and our businesses to ensure that this region, and our State, continues to grow. What's more, the ability to invest in Milwaukee County will help us achieve our vision of racial equity and help make Milwaukee the healthiest County in Wisconsin."

City of Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett:

"We are very appreciative of the Governor's efforts and his recognition that we need to hit the reset button in our fiscal relationship. The inclusion of the proposal to increase a sales tax via referenda allows diversification in our revenue stream, at the desire of our citizens. Clearly, placing Milwaukee in control of its own future.

An increased sales tax will reduce our reliance on property taxes which would position our revenue structure closer in alignment with similar size cities. It will also offer an opportunity to capture local revenue from tourists and commuters that impose costs on the City, but do not pay property taxes."

Milwaukee County Board Chairwoman Marcelia Nicholson:

"Milwaukee County urgently needs to diversify our sources of revenue or we'll see annual budget cuts that are even deeper and more painful than what we've experienced over the last 10 years. Governor Evers has provided us with an opportunity to solve a local problem with a local solution, at no cost to the state. I'm optimistic that this provision will remain in the final version of the state budget so we can go to the voters and ask them to decide if this solution is the best path forward."

City of Milwaukee Common Council President Cavalier Johnson:

"I want to thank Governor Tony Evers for including a local sales tax option for communities across Wisconsin in his biennial budget. I ask the Legislature to maintain this provision as the budget cycle progresses. A local sales tax will help alleviate the heavy reliance that local governments have on the property tax and provide some needed relief to our property taxpayers. This proposal will provide an additional and critical revenue source to Milwaukee as the cultural, population, and commercial center of the state so that we can continue to provide essential services to our residents, commuters, and visitors who enjoy our amenities and infrastructure every day."

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