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Senator Carpenter Introducing Milwaukee Property Taxpayer Protection Act

Madison – State Senator Tim Carpenter (D-Milwaukee) announced today that he will be introducing legislation called the “Milwaukee Property Taxpayer Protection Act” which will remove unfair and expensive state mandates imposed upon City of Milwaukee property taxpayers.

“First, under state law, taxpayers are actually forced to pay for the salary and fringe benefits of the Milwaukee Police union's lobbyist/negotiator,” said Carpenter. The City estimates this mandate will cost them \$215,000 in 2013 alone.

Next, state law also mandates “issue by issue” arbitration for Milwaukee law enforcement unions, a mandate imposed on no other municipality in our state. (After Act 10, all public employee unions were stripped of their collective bargaining right, except for police and firefighters.) Issue by issue arbitration gives law enforcement unions the unique benefit of being able to go to arbitration on each separate issue rather than an entire compensation package. This provides the union little incentive to be reasonable because there is absolutely no risk that entire compensation package would be denied.

“These mandates apply only to the city of Milwaukee – and to no one else in the entire state. These mandates have cost Milwaukee property taxpayers millions of dollars since they were enacted under Governor Tommy Thompson’s administration as a payoff to the Milwaukee Police Association,” said Carpenter.

Senator Carpenter’s Milwaukee Property Taxpayer Protection Act will repeal these mandates.

Senator Carpenter noted that Milwaukee’s police union successfully fought to have a provision added into the state budget that repealed the 75 year-old requirement that officers live in the city that pays their salary, benefits, and retirement. Milwaukee's Mayor and Common Council firmly believe that the state law is unenforceable due to home rule provisions of the state constitution.

“It was bad enough that taxpayer-paid union representatives actively worked against the best interests of the City of Milwaukee on repealing residency, but now it is revealed that the police union is actually suing the City to enforce this unconstitutional provision. Once again, Milwaukee property taxpayers are stuck paying the bill for the police union’s thumbing their nose at the City,” said Carpenter.

“This is outrageous and an injustice to Milwaukee taxpayers. The Milwaukee Property Taxpayer Protection Act is the appropriate way to right this wrong,” said Carpenter.

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