



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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Milwaukee County Board still ignoring voters

MADISON, Wis. – The Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors is once again thumbing its nose at taxpayers by ignoring the will of the people.

Board Chairman Theodore Lipscomb Sr. forced a resolution on Thursday’s agenda of the Judiciary, Safety and General Services Committee that authorizes him to spend up to \$150,000 in taxpayer money.

Lipscomb wants to use those funds to hire a high-priced attorney to stop his pay cut and the pay cuts of county supervisors which voters overwhelmingly approved in 2014.

State Sen. Alberta Darling (R-River Hills) says voters already sent a strong message to the county board.

“Not only is the Milwaukee County Board ignoring state law, they are ignoring the will of the people,” Darling said. “The voters overwhelmingly decided county board members should earn a part-time salary for doing a part-time job.”

2013 WI Act 14, authored by Darling and Rep. Joe Sanfelippo (R-New Berlin), allowed voters in Milwaukee County to set the salaries for their county supervisors. In April 2014, voters responded overwhelmingly in favor of the pay cut. A staggering 71 percent supported the plan to reduce the salaries for board members from about \$50,000 to around \$24,000.

Sanfelippo called the latest attempt to ignore the law both sad and arrogant.

“The voters have spoken on the issue through the referendum, yet the board is going to poke a finger in the voters’ eye and say, ‘The heck with you, we are going to do what we want and use your money to do it because in the end, all we care about is getting our big paychecks and our benefits,’” Sanfelippo said.

This is not the first time the county board has tried to push back against Act 14 since the state Legislature passed the legislation in 2013 by a vote of 79-52. That same year, the board rebuked the legal opinion of the county’s former top attorney after she advised that Act 14 was legally sound. Shortly thereafter, the board voted to fire her.

Also in 2013, board members authorized former Chairwoman Marina Dimitrijevic to select an outside law firm and spend up to \$25,000 in taxpayer money to review and possibly challenge the legality of Act 14. Later that year, Dimitrijevic bumped the total up to \$99,999. The board is no longer using that firm’s services.

“It’s kind of like fire everybody until you get the person who gives you the answer you want to hear, but the answer they want is not correct,” Sanfelippo said. “The county board is the creation of state statutes and the state Legislature, and what the state creates, the state can undo. So, the authority is clearly there for Act 14, and the board is just flushing taxpayer money down the drain by continuing to pursue this unwarranted fight.”

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