



Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Chairman Lipscomb Responds to Five-Year Financial Forecast *Executive Mismanagement and Poor Arena Negotiations Led to Larger Budget Gap*

Milwaukee County Board Chairman Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., responded to today's release of the Five-Year Financial Forecast by the independent Comptroller by saying, "It's clear from this report that the Administration's continued mismanagement of the pension system and the Executive's unilateral negotiations on the arena made the 2016 budget gap much worse. If this forecast had been released just a couple of months ago, before we discovered more errors in yet another administrative pension debacle and before the Executive committed \$80 million from Milwaukee County to fund the arena, we would have been in a better position heading into next year's annual budget." These two items alone account for approximately \$20 million of the identified \$26.2 million budget gap.

Lipscomb further observed that the report highlights how holding the property tax levy flat over the next five years could require additional service cuts. Chairman Lipscomb noted, "Milwaukee County has responsibly met the challenge of levy limits imposed by the state, but it would be a mistake for local leaders to continue playing out of the Walker playbook. It's clear that any plan to flat-line the levy really means we fall behind. The report suggests following a flat levy could lead to \$38.6 million in service cuts.

The report also focused on the County's infrastructure needs, stating that without increases for maintaining or improving its capital assets, future liabilities would continue to grow. Overriding numerous Executive vetoes, the County Board has led the way with investments in the park system for capital improvements and routine maintenance. The Parks Director is slated to present a plan by September to utilize \$5 million recently allocated to the department to address seriously deferred maintenance and needed improvements.

"We need to move everyone, not just a select few, forward. If the Executive can commit \$80 million of public funds into the business of out-of-state billionaires, surely we can invest more in park restoration and transit improvements that benefit all Milwaukee County residents. It is these types of improvements to our public infrastructure that create a higher quality of life for all."