

On Monday, November 6, 2006, 14 of the 19 members of the Milwaukee County Board passed their version of a county budget. Listed below are a number of my concerns with the "County Board Budget." In addition to the fact that the property tax levy goes up by nearly \$9 million, I am gravely concerned about the budget being out-of-balance at the start of 2007 and am gravely concerned about major structural problems for future budgets.

The County Board Budget restores positions that were eliminated or outsourced in the original budget without providing full funding for those positions. This creates a \$6.55 million shortfall beginning in 2007.

The County Board Budget under funds the pension contribution. Specifically, it reduces the pension contribution for 2007 by \$6.25 million based on the savings generated from the use of Pension Obligation Bond (POB). The County Board Budget, however, does not include action to enact POBs. In fact, the Finance and Audit Committee Chair specifically said that the budget does not approve POBs. This creates an additional \$6.25 million hole in the next budget and increases the future pension liability.

The County Board Budget includes spending on an outdated aquatics system. It pours money into pools that were built as far back as the 1930s. The original budget called for moving the pools into the 21st century. All across America, parks systems are moving to aquatic centers and splash pads and away from deep well pools and wading pools yet the County Board Budget goes in the opposite direction.

The County Board Budget restores county funds for the Farm and Fish Hatchery for inmates at the House of Corrections. Inmates already have a chance to work on projects like a printing press and welding - areas that have practical uses in the real world and that actually save the county money.

The County Board Budget exceeds the limits on the capital budget that were set as part of the debt restructuring initiated in 200X. A cap of \$30 million was set by 2008 and the 2007 County Board Budget exceeds that cap by \$XX million.

Overall, the County Board Budget raises the tax levy too much, does little to address legacy costs, restores positions without adequate funding, creates an immediate deficit in 2007 and puts additional funds into outdated systems. While the line-item veto authority of the County Executive is strong, it is not enough to repair the tremendous damage done by the County Board Budget. **With this in mind, I veto the entire County Board Budget for 2007.**