

You made a difference. Your contacts to members of the County Board were heard and they voted against creating a new wheel tax.

Now, we need your voices to be heard again on the final version of the 2010 budget. On Wednesday, the Supervisors will vote on my vetoes. Ask them to uphold our common sense plan to restore a no tax levy increase budget.

The budget passed by the County Board (on a 10 - 9 vote) last week would raise the property tax levy by 3.8%. My vetoes will get it back to 0%.

We bring back a series of reasonable ideas to save the taxpayers' money while preserving core services too. Contracting out for housekeeping and security alone saves some \$1.7 million that can be used to support public safety, transportation, safety net and quality of life programs.

Name a company in town and you are likely to find that they contract out for housekeeping. Even the City of Milwaukee bids out their cleaning services.

As for security, just stop in the federal courthouse in downtown Milwaukee or visit the Reuss federal plaza and you will find private security firms providing quality coverage. We have done the research and know that the county will not only save money but service will improve too.

Our budget is also built on creating a better balance between public and private sector wages and benefits. Currently, the scales are tipped against the taxpayers in the private sector. This budget seeks to level the field.

Our vetoes also remove one-time federal funds that were added by the County Board to the operating budget. These funds will be gone in 2011 and will create a major hole in the next budget.

This is exactly the kind of budget gimmick that a recent Pew Center report cited when it listed Wisconsin as one of the 10 worst states in terms of its budget. Now that the county has a stable bond rating, we don't want to mess it up like they did in state government.

We do all of this while maintaining the core services that people expect from their county government.

Public safety services remain intact in this budget with the Sheriff getting additional equipment and the EMS system fully funded.

Transportation remains a priority as we improve our roads and bridges, strengthen the airport and keep intact bus routes throughout the county.

Safety net programs to help those in need – such as older adults, people with disabilities

Restore a no tax levy budget.

Return reasonable ideas to contract out for services.

Fix budget gimmicks that create future budget holes.

Maintain core services for public safety, transportation, safety net and quality of life services.