



Milwaukee County Board

Task Force on the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Transit Authority Recommendations

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COUNTY BOARD APPROVES PLAN TO EMBRACE REGIONAL TRANSIT

Task Force recommendations approved, strengthened

Milwaukee, WI – The Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors, on a 13-5 vote Thursday, has endorsed the concept of a Regional Transit Authority while expressing concern regarding governance and addressing encumbrances including debt, legacy costs and contractual obligations.

“I commend my colleagues for approving these recommendations by a veto-proof majority,” said Supervisor Patricia Jursik, Chair of the Task Force on the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Transit Authority Recommendations. “My fellow Supervisors and I worked together to come up with workable solutions on how Milwaukee County can play a role in regional transit. We encourage Governor Doyle to consider these RTA improvements as he prepares his upcoming budget proposal, which is expected to include an RTA component.”

The Milwaukee County Board’s support for an RTA concept is contingent upon the Racine and Kenosha County Boards also endorsing these recommendations, including the enactment of a sales tax dedicated for transit. The County Board made further changes to the governance model of the RTA to reflect Milwaukee County’s concerns of serving the largest population in the region.

The priorities as developed by the Task Force after a public hearing in January include:

- Buses have the highest priority in a transit plan
- Dedicated funding for transit should be from a sales tax and must replace property tax support
- A Regional Transit Authority is endorsed
- Transit money raised in a county must stay in the county to support transit
- It is necessary to address governance of the RTA regarding Milwaukee County, which has the largest population
- It is necessary to address encumbrances including debt, legacy costs and contractual obligations

The County Board also preserved the 1% sales tax request with a provision that any dedicated transit funding for an RTA in Milwaukee County be included within this sales tax.

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