

ALDERMAN Tony Zielinski

WINTER 2006-07

Making Things Happen



The View From Milwaukee's 14th District

Dear Neighbor,

Let me first wish you a happy and peaceful New Year.

2006 was a challenging but rewarding year. And with the many positive developments occurring in the 14th Aldermanic District, I'm optimistic that working together, the new year will bring even more opportunities for us to make our community a better place to live, work and play.

Taxes, public safety and community revitalization continue to be among my priorities. Once again, **I had to vote against the 2007 city budget, because the tax increase was too high.** But voting for budget cuts is not enough.

The rising cost of health care continues to intensify the city's budget dilemma, and last year my ongoing efforts to proactively save taxpayers dollars and make government more efficient paid off to the tune of \$2.8 million in health care savings. The Business Health Care Group of Southeastern Wisconsin said a resolution I authored that was passed by the Common Council was the "spark" that brought a competitive pricing approach to health care for city employees.

This year we must continue to streamline city government and make it operate more efficiently. We have to get more out of the taxpayer dollar. To that end, I am sponsoring a resolution that will study duplication of services in the City of Milwaukee and other local units of government. Once these services are identified,

we can save taxpayer dollars by eliminating these duplications.

In this newsletter you'll also find articles on my efforts to slow speeders in our neighborhoods and keep young people off the streets and in school. I've spearheaded some efforts that could make businesses less attractive to teens during school hours.

While this newsletter gives me the opportunity to share with you some of my thoughts on city government and my legislative initiatives, I want to also invite you to a community meeting February 19 at Bay View High School. There are details on the meeting in the brief article at right. And I want to again encourage anyone with concerns or comments on any issues facing the city and its neighborhoods to send an e-mail or give me a call. I am here to serve you.

Sincerely,

Tony Zielinski
Alderman, 14th District



Got a Complaint, Question, Concern? Community Meeting Planned

Bring your questions and concerns to a community meeting Ald. Zielinski will be holding on **Monday, February 19 at Bay View High School.**

The heads of many city departments will be on hand to discuss such issues as policing, parking, snowplowing, health, garbage collection, forestry, building inspection and street lighting and maintenance. The meeting will begin at 6 p.m. in the high school's auditorium.

While the meeting is being held at Bay View High School, all 14th District residents are invited to attend.

*Please mark your calendar.
I hope to see you there!*

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Ald. Zielinski's Committee Assignments

CHAIR • Anti-Graffiti Policy Committee

VICE CHAIR • Community & Economic Development Committee

MEMBER • Public Safety Committee

MEMBER • Milwaukee Commission on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

Ald. Zielinski Calls For Police In Schools

Ald. Zielinski wants to see police officers assigned to specific public schools in Milwaukee. He is introducing a resolution that would reserve \$300,000 in the 2007 Common Council contingent fund for expansion of a school security initiative.

“It is critical that our students know that they are attending schools that are both safe and conducive to learning,” said Ald. Zielinski. “Violence and other disruptions cannot be tolerated.”

Beginning this year, Bradley Tech on the south side and a cluster of north side schools will be assigned police officers on a regular basis to deal with issues that arise inside the school. Ald. Zielinski would also like to see Bay View High School included in the program in the future. “The added benefit to having officers in the school buildings is that there will always be police available to patrol outside the schools and in the nearby neighborhoods,” the alderman said.



Ald. Zielinski Acts To Reduce High Truancy Rates

Citations for students or parents

On average about 40,000 Milwaukee Public School students have five or more unexcused absences during a semester. “We can no longer put up with this habitual truancy rate in MPS,” said Ald. Zielinski, who has introduced several initiatives to meet the challenge. To get to those who aren’t picked up by police, Ald. Zielinski wants to use school attendance records to identify truant students and mail citations to them or their parents.

His initiative, which would make it possible for schools to call police and share the names of truant students, is under consideration by Police Chief Nan Hegerty and MPS Superintendent William Andrekopoulos. Bay View would be one of two high schools to serve as pilot schools for the initiative.

“If the citation is not paid by the student, the parents would then be sent a citation,” said Ald. Zielinski, “And I think that would result in a noticeable improvement in student attendance.” Social workers would work with truant students and their families to discuss the importance of education and to determine the reasons the students decided to skip school.

Parental Responsibility Ordinance

Ald. Zielinski has fought to add enforcement powers to problems involving young people, and last year he co-sponsored the Common Council enacted “Parental Responsibility for Misconduct of Juveniles” ordinance. It **requires parents to exercise proper supervision** in order to reduce the number of ordinance violations by juveniles. “But after seven months I checked with the police department and found that no citations had been issued,” said Ald. Zielin-



Milwaukee Police Captain Eduardo Negron of the 2nd police district and Ald. Zielinski talk about public safety issues on a day when they walked through the S. Kinnickinnic Ave. and S. 13th and W. Oklahoma Ave. neighborhoods in the 14th District. The alderman works closely with Capt. Negron and police officers in the area to reduce crime and address all public safety concerns.

ski. Police told the alderman they could not enforce the ordinance unless they had access to juvenile conviction records, and that required court approval.

City officials contacted the presiding judge of Children’s Court who agreed police should have access to these records. The judge signed an order giving police officers the authority to inspect juvenile court records of those convicted on non-truancy-related ordinance violations, two times within a six-month period, or three or more times within a 12-month period.

“Most parents are doing their job,” said Ald. Zielinski, “But many are not, and that leads to the kind of juvenile related problems that we see.”

Nuisance warnings and fines for businesses

Ald. Zielinski is **warning restaurants in the Bay View High School neighborhood** about serving kids during school hours, saying that businesses could now be declared a “chronic nuisance.” A measure sponsored by the alderman and approved on a 5-0 vote of the council’s Public Safety Committee **adds truancy to the list of chronic nuisances**, such as barking dogs, litter or disorderly

conduct that can result in fines for property owners.

Under his ordinance, if three students are cited in a one month period for truancy, the business owner would get a letter from police warning the business could be declared a nuisance property. The property owner would then have to develop a plan with the local police captain to correct the problem or they could be billed for the cost of future police calls. Businesses that receive multiple citations for serving students during school hours could receive fines of \$1,000 to \$5,000 for each violation.

Responding to complaints from neighbors, Ald. Zielinski and police showed up recently at the Bay View McDonald’s restaurant looking for kids who should have been in class. Police had been encouraged by Ald. Zielinski to crack down even more than they had been doing on truants, and the alderman said their efforts have been successful. “There has been a noticeable drop in the number of students lingering in the neighborhoods around schools and a significant increase in the number of truancy citations,” Ald. Zielinski said.

New Developments Bring More Variety to the District

Tannery Turns with the Times

The former J. Greenebaum Tanning Co. property known as the Hide House is getting a makeover, and will become a \$20 million housing development. Officials with General Capital Group said the growth of new developments in the Bay View area led them to purchase the former tannery at 2625 S. Greeley St., and that they will cater to Milwaukee's creative class of entrepreneurs such as artists, graphic arts, photography and design firms.

Construction on the project's \$5 million first phase, which would create 24 to 30 condos, is expected to begin by summer. The condos, in the \$150,000 to \$225,000



The Hide House.

range, will be marketed to first-time home buyers looking for affordable, loft-style housing with studio or other work space.

"I thank General Capital Group for their investment and confi-

dence in Bay View and the City of Milwaukee by developing this underutilized historic landmark," said Ald. Zielinski. "The development fits the Bay View plan for attracting more creative businesses," the alderman added.

Slowing Speeders With Traffic Calming

Residents of the 14th District now have another tool to slow down cars that are speeding in their neighborhoods. The Milwaukee Common Council in December passed a measure which Ald. Zielinski co-sponsored, that will allow "traffic-calming" devices such as speed humps or mini-roundabouts to be installed in their neighborhoods.

Under the plan, residents would petition for a traffic calming device and if the city agrees it is necessary, they would be given several choices. A speed hump would cost about \$3,000, while a mini-roundabout, or traffic circle, would cost about \$10,000. If affected homeowners agree, 90% of the cost would be split among residents with the city paving fund paying the remaining 10%. Any 14th District residents who are interested can contact the alderman's office.



Traffic calming devices.

"People want safer streets and this ordinance is a safety measure which will encourage slower driving, enhance pedestrian safety and allow residents to gain control of busy and dangerous streets," said



Ald. Zielinski. Speed humps and traffic circles have been in place in several city districts on a trial basis and have received positive reactions from residents.

"NO" to the Budget – Ald. Zielinski

For the third year in a row, Ald. Zielinski felt **he had no choice but to vote against the City of Milwaukee budget.** "I understood loud and clear from the majority of my constituents that taxes are too high, and that we're taxing people out of their homes and out of the city," said Ald. Zielinski, who cast his "no" vote on Nov. 10, 2006.

"When I feel that the increase in the budget is too high, I must make a stand and say no," said Ald. Zielinski. "You may remember that after adoption of the 2006 city budget, the Journal Sentinel ranked me as the **top alderman in terms of voting for the most budget cuts,**" Ald. Zielinski said, and added his goal is to work to convince other members of the Council to take the same stand against higher taxes. But in voting against the 2007 budget, Ald. Zielinski made it clear that **public safety is an area where he would not compromise.**

Ald. Zielinski led the charge that resulted in having 40 additional police officers trained during 2007 so they would be on the street this year to provide needed police services. The alderman supported the fire department's budget and voted against the mayor's plan to reduce staffing on eight fire department ladder companies from five firefighters to four.

"If you think of the Common Council as a board of directors charged with overseeing an annual budget of more than \$1 billion, you begin to see how critical it is for me and other aldermen to make sure city dollars are spent in the most effective and efficient manner," Ald. Zielinski added.



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Ald. Zielinski has been working hard to bring a good business to the S. 13th St. and W. Oklahoma Ave. intersection to help revitalize the S. 13th St. business area. He's pictured with John Thoresen, a developer, who is in the process of finalizing an agreement to bring an auto parts store to the corner.

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Protect American Workers and Human Rights

Concerned that Milwaukee and other American cities are being flooded with products that are below market rate costs (because of the prevalence of sweat-shop products from other countries), Ald. Zielinski is proposing a number of initiatives to help protect American jobs and human rights.

One of the ordinances he is introducing would prohibit the city from purchasing any sweat-shop produced goods. "Some foreign workers are being taken advantage of by having to work under inhumane conditions and wages," said Ald. Zielinski, "And in turn, the sweat-shop practices of other countries are costing Americans family supporting jobs. If there is to be a level playing field, government must use its purchasing power to lead the way to social justice."

In addition to city purchases, Ald. Zielinski is also introducing a resolution to have the City of Milwaukee join the fledgling "Sweat Free Consortium." This consortium will be comprised of a

number of governmental entities that are committed to purchasing **Fair Trade products**. The alderman said by pooling resources, governments can have more of an impact on reducing sweat-shop produced goods because of their buying power, and by providing independent monitors who would be charged with the responsibility of verifying that sweat-shop goods are not slipping through the cracks.



"We can pass all the ordinances in the world, but if we do not have a mechanism in place to insure that the products we are purchasing are actually sweat-shop free, then we will not have accomplished anything," said Ald. Zielinski.

Ald. Zielinski is also introducing a resolution that will have the City of Milwaukee join the **Fair Trade Town movement**. "Not only does this require the purchase of fair trade identified products," said Ald. Zielinski, "But it also encompasses an aggressive outreach and educational campaign to encourage private

businesses to purchase fair trade identified products." There are over 300 **Fair Trade Towns** in Europe and Milwaukee would be one of the first in the United States. Presently cities such as San Francisco, Seattle, Boston, Chicago and others are working toward becoming Fair Trade Towns.

"I believe that a wave of the future will be **Ethical Consumerism**," Ald. Zielinski said. "People will become increasingly aware of how their purchasing power can help protect workers from being exploited and help protect American jobs. Fair Trade promotes a living wage while minimizing environmental impact. It helps prevent the middleman from taking advantage of farmers." Fair Trade Towns have logos and other methods of identifying businesses that engage in selling Free Trade products.

Because Ald. Zielinski is at the forefront of pushing these important initiatives, he believes the 14th Aldermanic District will be on the front line in the fight to protect American workers and human rights, and therefore also benefit from a commercial standpoint.