



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

DAVID CROWLEY

MILWAUKEE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

DATE: July 23, 2025

TO: Chairwoman Janice Wilberg and Commission on Aging

FROM: Tim Schabo, Deputy Chief of Staff

SUBJECT: County Executive Office Report

PASSAGE OF STATE BUDGET

July 3, 2025 - Governor Tony Evers signed into law the 2025-27 Biennial Budget that was passed by the Wisconsin State Legislature. The biennial budget includes several priorities that Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley advocated for. That budget includes more than \$38 million over the biennium in annual State funding for highway patrol services in Milwaukee County, a service performed by State Patrol and funded by the State of Wisconsin in every other county. It also includes more than \$2 million in annual operating dollars to support critical Assistant District Attorney positions in Milwaukee County.

- **Approximately \$18 million in State funding for Milwaukee County highway patrol services in 2025–26, increasing to \$20 million in 2026–27.**
- **More than \$2 million annually to fund critical Assistant District Attorney positions in Milwaukee County.**
- **\$6.3 million in savings for DHHS with partial veto of daily rate increase for DOC youth placements**

PASSAGE OF FEDERAL BUDGET BILL

MILWAUKEE – Following the U.S. House of Representatives' approval of President Donald Trump's federal budget bill, Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley issued the following statement.



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"In Milwaukee County, we depend on federal funding to invest in our community and provide essential services that our residents rely on every day. Federally-funded programs like Medicaid and Medicare ensure access to healthcare, prescriptions, and mental health services. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, helps to put healthy, nutritious foods on the table for children and families. Federally-funded housing programs help residents build generational wealth and keep our neighborhoods stable and thriving.

"Federal funding supports the health and well-being of our residents, our community, and our neighborhoods. But with the passage of this federal budget, all of that is under attack.

"I am deeply concerned about the negative impacts that the budget heading to President Trump's desk will have on Milwaukee County, Wisconsin, and the entire nation. It strips away critical support that helps people survive, especially in our most vulnerable communities. Residents in both urban and rural areas will lose healthcare coverage. Children and families will lose access to healthy foods. Any meaningful efforts to reinvest back into our community are now in jeopardy. This is not just bad policy. These cuts will cause real harm to real people. It is a betrayal of the people we were elected to serve.

"While we don't have the power to undo the federal budget, we are committed to doing everything in our power to soften the blow to our community. My administration will monitor the impacts of the budget as its implemented and continue engaging our partners to identify resources, fight for every dollar we can, and advocate for long-term investments in the community.

"At the end of the day, I am committed to working to invest in our people, foster stronger neighborhoods, and build the bright, healthy future we all deserve. We will keep fighting, even in the face of decisions that make that fight harder."

Milwaukee County Wins Six 2025 NACo Achievement Awards

The National Association of Counties (NACo) recently announced the 2025 Achievement Awards and recognized six Milwaukee County programs. The awards honor innovative, effective county government programs that strengthen services for residents. Awards for Milwaukee County are as follows:



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Transforming Public Spaces: The Wehr Nature Center Accessibility and Engagement Initiative

To celebrate its 50th anniversary, Milwaukee County's Wehr Nature Center launched an initiative to improve accessibility and community engagement. Upgrades included a redesigned website with features like Superzoom and Dark Mode, along with new bilingual, accessible park signage. These efforts led to a 60% increase in visitors and expanded the center's reach to more diverse communities. The project set a new benchmark for inclusive public space design.

Milwaukee County Overdose Data Analytics

Milwaukee County's EMS Overdose Data Analytics Program uses real-time data to identify and respond to opioid overdose hotspots. Supported by opioid settlement funds, the program integrates EMS, medical examiner and law enforcement data to inform public policy and interventions. This data-driven approach has reduced overdose fatalities and improved access to harm reduction resources. It builds on lessons from the COVID-19 response to address the opioid crisis with speed and precision.

Milwaukee County Eliminates \$67 Million in Birth Costs to Support Fathers

In 2024, Milwaukee County eliminated over \$67 million in Medicaid birth cost debt for 32,718 low-income fathers. These debts, previously tied to paternity judgments, often limited fathers' ability to support their children. The initiative allows more funds to stay with families and reduces financial barriers for engaged parenting. It was made possible through collaboration with the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families.

Development of Affordable Housing Across Milwaukee County

Milwaukee County has invested over \$45 million in new affordable housing developments across the county and seven suburbs. Many of these projects mark the first-ever county investments in suburban areas. The initiative focuses on reducing racial disparities in housing access and expanding choice for residents. It reflects a regional approach to equitable housing.

Milwaukee County Child Support Services' "Back On Track" Program

Milwaukee County's "Back on Track" program helps parents behind on child support reengage with the system and reconnect with their families. One-on-one support includes debt reduction, order modifications, job search help and warrant resolution. Since launch, the program has assisted 353 parents and eliminated over \$1.3 million in state debt. It encourages long-term financial support for children and family stability.



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Milwaukee County Aging and Disabilities Services Opioid Prevention Project

Milwaukee County Aging and Disabilities Service's Opioid Prevention Project targets opioid misuse among older adults using a harm reduction approach. Outreach teams with lived experience distribute Narcan, test strips and resources through data-informed door-to-door engagement. Since July 2024, they've reached 2,815 residents and distributed hundreds of prevention supplies. The project reduces isolation and improves safety for at-risk older adults in Milwaukee County.

STATEMENT FROM COUNTY EXECUTIVE CROWLEY: "It's an honor to have the work of Milwaukee County's changemakers recognized by the National Association of Counties. We are committed to investing upstream and ensuring county government is advancing equity in all measurable areas to benefit our entire community," **said Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley**. "From building more affordable housing in our neighborhoods, to combating the opioid epidemic and supporting long-term financial stability for families and children, I am proud Milwaukee County is deploying investments, policies, and solutions to the challenges we face today and beyond."

MILWAUKEE COUNTY TOURISM IMPACT

JUNE 2025 - State and local officials announced that Milwaukee County's tourism industry, which represents 16% of all tourism spending in Wisconsin, achieved unprecedented success in 2024. Milwaukee County's total economic impact reached \$4.321 billion, marking a 3.7% increase over the previous year and representing the third year of record-setting impact.

"Over the past year, Milwaukee County has witnessed unprecedented growth in our tourism industry. More large-scale, world-class events are driving increased tourism dollars to our region, that is in turn boosting economic activity, creating family-sustaining jobs, and bringing people together from across the country and world," **said County Executive Crowley**. "As a lifelong Milwaukeean, I am so proud we are home to such a dynamic tourism industry that showcases the very best of what our community has to offer. As we look to the future, I'm excited about the additional conventions, tourism opportunities, and unique experiences we will bring to residents and visitors in the years ahead."

According to [data](#) released by the Wisconsin Department of Tourism today, direct visitor spending in Milwaukee County last year totaled \$2.439 billion, which breaks down to \$6.6



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million in spending per day and represents a 4.1 percent year-over-year increase. According to Visit Milwaukee, Milwaukee County's tourism and hospitality industry in 2024 supported 28,091 full-time jobs and generated \$242.2 million in state and local tax revenue; in fact, each Milwaukee County household would need to pay \$622 to maintain the current level of government services supported by tourism.

Major events such as Connect Marketplace, the Republican National Convention, Harley-Davidson's Homecoming Festival, and the Hy-Vee Milwaukee Mile 250, along with the city's renowned festivals and "Top Chef"-starring culinary scene, played a pivotal role in attracting visitors.

For more information from Visit Milwaukee, please visit visitmilwaukee.org/tourism-insights.

2026 COUNTY EXECUTIVE BUDGET TOWN HALLS

Wednesday, August 13th at Kosciuszko Community Center (Hybrid)

5pm-6pm Resource Fair

6pm – Budget Presentation / Public Comment

Registration Link: <https://forms.office.com/g/WCbZG4NicY>

Virtual Registration Link: <https://forms.office.com/g/bC3jASiAbm>

Wednesday, August 20th at Washington Park Senior Center

5pm-6pm Resource Fair

6pm – Budget Presentation / Public Comment

Registration Link: <https://forms.office.com/g/Xjy1SUUGtB>

Commission on Aging Board Membership Update

We still are looking to fill one open seat on the commission. If members have recommendations for appointment, please email or call me with those names.