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May 28, 2017

The Honorable Dale Kooyenga
State Capitol
Room 324
Madison, WI 53708

Michael Mayo, Sr.

**County Board Supervisor,
7th District
Chairman, Transportation,
Public Works and Transit**

Dear Representative Kooyenga:

As the State's largest County, Milwaukee County has the highest number of vehicle miles traveled, manages the state's largest transit system, and maintains hundreds of miles of the state's trunk highway and Interstate system. Milwaukee County's transit infrastructure is not only used by Milwaukee County residents, however. Commuters and tourists from across Southeast Wisconsin and the tri-state region use its systems each day. Despite this common usage, however, Milwaukee County remains largely responsible for maintaining its local system.

As you know, on May 4, 2017 Assembly Republicans unveiled their long-term plan to finance transportation infrastructure in this state. We appreciate your caucus' efforts to help stabilize Wisconsin's Transportation Fund. Such stability is a critical component for local governments across the state to implement reasoned strategic plans to modernize, update and repair their transportation infrastructure. However, we have grave concerns about the provision in your plan that would effectively eliminate Milwaukee County's \$30 vehicle registration fee ("VRF") in mid-2017.

Milwaukee County implemented its VRF as a last resort. For years, state funding has declined at the same time expenses have increased. Levy limits have further constrained our ability raise revenues sufficient to meet the County's growing transportation needs. As you may be aware, Milwaukee County Executive originally proposed a \$60 VRF, but the County Board reduced that proposal by half in order to reduce the burden on taxpayers, while still providing sufficient funding to operate and maintain the transportation infrastructure they have come to expect.

By eliminating Milwaukee County's VRF in 2017, the County will have no choice but to make approximately \$8 million programmatic cuts across County services. This is effectively the County's only recourse since the 2017 levy has already been set and the corresponding budget has already been adopted. As you might imagine, such cuts will have enormous impacts on a broad cross-section of Milwaukee County's residents.

Given severe impacts of your proposal on Milwaukee County, I invite you to attend the next meeting of Milwaukee County's Transportation, Transit, and Public Works Committee scheduled to occur on Wednesday, June 7, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. in Room 201 of the Milwaukee County Courthouse. During this meeting we would invite you to share your rationale for your proposal to eliminate Milwaukee County's VRF and to request that you hear from Committee members about their concerns for such a proposal.

We recognize that as a member of the Legislature's Joint Finance Committee your schedule is demanding; however, we hope that you will join us on June 7 to discuss this important issue. You may RSVP your attendance to me at Michael.Mayo@milwaukeecountywi.gov or (414) 278-4222.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Mayo Sr.", written over a white background.

Michael Mayo Sr.
Chairman, Committee on Transportation, Transit and Public Works

Cc: Members, Milwaukee County Transportation, Transit and Public Works Committee