

1 By Supervisor Holloway

2  
3 **A RESOLUTION**

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5 Stating opposition to Assembly Bill 329 relating to changing the Milwaukee County  
6 Treasurer to an elected Comptroller position  
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8 WHEREAS, Assembly Bill 329 renames the office of Treasurer only in  
9 Milwaukee County as Comptroller, makes it an elective office in the fall with a four year  
10 term, mandates certain education requirements for the position, assigns certain duties  
11 to the position including preparing fiscal notes for all legislation, performing all audit  
12 functions, countersigning all contracts, reporting on the condition of county funds, and  
13 related financial responsibilities; and  
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15 WHEREAS, AB 329 is patterned to some extent on the City of Milwaukee  
16 Comptroller although that position earns \$141,000 a year, about \$54,000 more than the  
17 Milwaukee County Treasurer; and  
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19 WHEREAS, although AB 329 imposes new educational requirements for an  
20 overhauled Treasurer / Comptroller position, it does not address compensation for  
21 the position and, although the bill mandates the appointment of a Deputy  
22 Comptroller position, whose salary is to be set by the Board of Supervisors, it does  
23 not provide any funding for these changes or the other responsibilities of the  
24 office, thereby creating an additional unfunded mandate; and  
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26 WHEREAS, AB 329 transfers certain legislative and executive functions to this  
27 new elected position, including audit functions (currently under the legislative branch)  
28 and accounting and finance functions (currently under the executive branch), thereby  
29 entangling Treasurer and other financial functions and disrupting and confusing the  
30 separation of powers – and creating a different structural division of functions than the  
31 State of Wisconsin itself has with its Legislative Audit Bureau; and  
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33 WHEREAS, by placing auditing functions in the same office with accounting and  
34 finance functions, a situation is created whereby the Comptroller would be auditing his  
35 own department, thereby violating generally accepted auditing standards; and  
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37 WHEREAS, Milwaukee County currently has a Controller who provides many of  
38 the functions that AB 329 would place under the Comptroller, and the current Controller  
39 is a certified public accountant with over 20 years of financial experience; and  
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41 WHEREAS, Milwaukee County has already taken various proactive steps to  
42 protect the independence of the Controller, including making removal of the incumbent  
43 contingent on agreement of both the County Executive and County Board, or a two-  
44 thirds vote of the County Board, and making it a Civil Service position upon vacancy by  
45 the present long-term incumbent; and  
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47           WHEREAS, as presently drafted, AB 329 would place the new elected  
48 Comptroller on the fall election ballot, where only partisan offices are elected, thereby  
49 turning a professional position into a political, partisan position; and  
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51           WHEREAS, Milwaukee County's current financial challenges are not due to not  
52 having a political position of Comptroller, but rather to the pressures of certain financial  
53 liabilities and severe reductions in State revenues, and AB 329 does nothing to address  
54 these matters; and  
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56           WHEREAS, as presently drafted, AB 329 would result in there being no  
57 Treasurer in Milwaukee County, as prescribed in the Wisconsin Constitution, and  
58 replacing it with an elected Comptroller, thereby raising concerns of whether such  
59 legislation can go into effect without a change to the State Constitution; and  
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61           WHEREAS, AB 329 relates only to Milwaukee County, does not address any of  
62 the key issues that need to be addressed in Milwaukee County, and creates an  
63 additional political and potentially costly layer of Milwaukee County government that is  
64 not in the best interests of the citizens of Milwaukee County; now, therefore,  
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66           BE IT RESOLVED that the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors does hereby  
67 state its opposition to Assembly Bill 329 and hereby directs the Division of  
68 Intergovernmental Relations to exert all efforts opposing this legislation; and  
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70           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the County Clerk is hereby directed to  
71 forward copies of this resolution to the Governor of Wisconsin and to all members of  
72 the Milwaukee delegation in the Wisconsin Legislature.