1 By Supervisor Taylor (District 17), Martinez, Logsdon, Clancy, File No. 23-559 2 Taylor (5), Vincent, and Burgelis 3 4 **A RESOLUTION** 5 Opposing the use of Milwaukee County tax levy to fund long-term renovations at American Family Field to secure a lease extension with the Milwaukee Brewers after the 6 7 current stadium lease expires in 2030 8 9 WHEREAS, Wisconsin Act 56 (1995) created the Southeast Wisconsin Professional Baseball District to oversee the building of Miller Park, a new baseball 10 stadium to replace Milwaukee County Stadium, and authorized a five-county local sales 11 12 and use tax of 0.1 percent to help pay for the construction of the new facility designed to keep Major League Baseball in Milwaukee; and 13 14 15 WHEREAS, in August of 1995, Milwaukee County agreed to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the State of Wisconsin, City of Milwaukee, and Milwaukee 16 17 Brewers that among other things, committed \$18 million in additional County funding to 18 support infrastructure improvements for the new stadium (which was later lowered to \$16 million in exchange for demolition and salvage rights to County Stadium granted to 19 20 the Southeast Wisconsin Professional Baseball Park District); and 21 22 WHEREAS, Milwaukee County and their taxpayers have long partnered with the 23 Milwaukee Brewers and related entities to ensure Major League Baseball remains in our 24 community for the benefit of the community, region, and entire state; and 25 26 WHEREAS, the Milwaukee Brewers' lease includes a requirement that the 27 Stadium District pay for the 22-year-old ballpark's major capital improvements, as the current lease with the Milwaukee Brewers expires at the end of 2030; and 28 29 30 WHEREAS, renovations to American Family Field over the next 20 years or so are expected to cost approximately \$448 million dollars, to maintain current stadium 31 32 features such as the retractable roof and covering upgrades such as seats, concourses, 33 and gathering spaces that aims to rival other major league baseball stadiums; and 34 35 WHEREAS, Governor Evers has proposed state support of \$290 million for the Southeast Wisconsin Professional Baseball District in his biennial budget to partially 36 37 fund the maintenance and improvements upgrades at American Family Field to secure 38 an additional 13-year lease commitment, through 2043, from the Brewers; and 39 40 WHEREAS, Governor Evers stated that keeping the Milwaukee Brewers in the 41 county would generate an estimated \$400 million in state sales and income taxes over 42 20 years; and 43

WHEREAS, the State of Wisconsin reached a record surplus of \$7.1 billion in 2023, enabling the state legislature flexibility in spending and policy measures; and

WHEREAS, the Wisconsin Assembly Speaker recently suggested the Governor's budget proposal to fund American Family Field should be replaced with stand-alone legislation resembling the bill to pay for the new Fiserv Arena, with financial contributions from the state, county, and city; and

WHEREAS, Milwaukee County is facing a fiscal cliff in 2025 severely hampering its ability to provide essential services to its residents such as transportation and support for the County Parks System; and

WHEREAS, these fiscal challenges were made more difficult with the passage of Wisconsin Act 60 in August 2015 which, among other things, mandated Milwaukee County taxpayers provide \$4 million per year for 20 years to the building of the new Milwaukee Bucks arena, known as the Fiserv Forum; and

WHEREAS, it was recently reported that one of the Bucks owners was selling his 25 percent share in the team based on a valuation of \$3.5 billion, which is significantly more than the \$550 million the ownership group paid for the team in 2014; and

WHEREAS, the \$4 million annual tax levy contribution to Fiserv Forum has helped fuel the estimated value of the Bucks basketball franchise and made wealthy people even wealthier; and

WHEREAS, the \$4 million annual contribution to the construction of the Fiserv Forum represents almost 20 percent of the tax levy support of the entire Milwaukee County Parks system; and

WHEREAS, the County's budget crunch, exacerbated by flat state aids and high inflation, is reducing the County's ability to fund all programs and services, especially quality of life amenities such as parks that already require hundreds of millions of dollars in capital deferred maintenance investment; and

WHEREAS, Milwaukee County, along with other local governments, operate under strict state-imposed tax levy limits which limited the County's increase to less than 1.2 percent this year, which is significantly less than the rate of inflation; and

WHEREAS, Milwaukee County is unable to provide scarce tax levy dollars to contribute to improving American Family Field when other higher and urgent priorities exist; and

WHEREAS, the Committee on Intergovernmental Relations, at its meeting of May 8, 2023, recommended adoption of File No. 23-559 (vote 5-0); now, therefore,

89 BE IT RESOLVED, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors hereby opposes the use of County tax levy dollars to help fund long-term renovations at American 90 Family Field as more urgent, higher funding priorities exist in Milwaukee County; and 91 92 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Office of Government Affairs staff is 93 authorized and requested to communicate the contents of this resolution to State 94 policymakers and to support legislation to keep the Brewers in Milwaukee without local 95 96 property tax levy support. 97

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