



MONROE COUNTY COUNCIL

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Eric Spoonmore, President
Kate Wiltz, President Pro Tempore
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Marty Hawk
Peter Iversen
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Cheryl Munson
Margie Rice, Legal Counsel
Kimberly Shell, Budget Director
Meghan Miller, Council Assistant

Dear Members of the City of Bloomington Common Council:

A letter distributed to the Monroe County Council by the Bloomington City Clerk on September 2, 2020 indicates that the Bloomington Common Council intends to hold a public hearing on September 16th for Resolution 20-13, which proposes an ordinance to increase the Monroe County Local Income Tax Rate from 1.345% to 1.595% for Economic Development purposes. We, respectfully, write to implore you to postpone any vote on the tax increase.

As your peers and with the utmost respect, the Monroe County Council would like to express our collective concern regarding the Mayor of Bloomington's proposed "Economic Development" Income Tax rate increase of .25% on all residents of Monroe County. For the following reasons, we urge all of our colleagues on the Common Council to devote substantially more time to collaborating with the Mayor and the full Local Income Tax Council membership to most effectively plan and consider this proposed income tax rate increase:

- Monroe County residents are experiencing a global pandemic, with no end in sight. The negative impacts of COVID-19 are real and continue to weigh heavily on all residents.
- In recent weeks and months, some of Monroe County's largest employers have announced plans for personnel furloughs and wage cuts due to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. In addition, many small local businesses have had to make the difficult choice to close permanently or lay-off staff indefinitely causing a loss of income to a significant number of Monroe County residents and families.
- During such uncertain times when evidence of stress and depression are all around us and hitting too close to home, it would be unwise to add to the stress our residents face, by increasing their tax burden without a manifest and widely supported plan for its use.
- The self-imposed timeline of September 16th is not required by law; however, it initiates a series of required, statutory actions involving the Auditor and the other members of the Local Income Tax Council.
- The self-imposed timeline is not tied to any locally-required timeline or need.
- The self-imposed timeline does not provide more time for the County Council to act; instead, it forces us to adhere to a predetermined schedule, which has no basis in law or necessity.
- The process for adopting and distributing the tax does not adequately reflect the statutory differences in the taxing units and their respective responsibilities. This provides an opportunity for us to advocate together, City and County, Executive and Fiscal, for reforms to the local income tax legislations that provides both units with the appropriate means to raise necessary revenue.

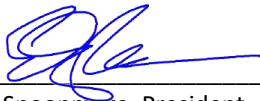
With the health and welfare of our residents in mind, we, respectfully, ask the Common Council to:

1. Slow the process down. Let us, please, take time to plan and take seriously the fiscal obligations we owe to all Monroe County Residents. There may be a time in the future when a tax increase is needed and the right action to take, but now is not that time. There is no need to fast-track this legislation.
2. Jointly advocate, with the County, for legislative reform that allows both units to raise revenue, with appropriate input from residents in a way that recognizes the difference in needs and representation among the units.

Please accept this letter in the spirit of collaboration which it is intended. Thank you for your consideration.

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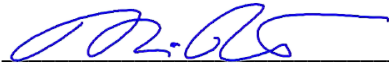
"AYES"



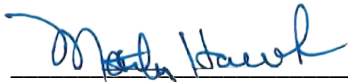
Eric Spoonmore, President



Kate Wiltz, President Pro Tempore



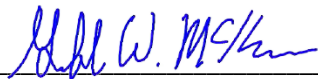
Trent Deckard, Member



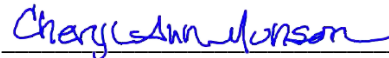
Marty Hawk, Member



Peter Iversen, Member



Geoff McKim, Member



Cheryl Munson, Member

"NAYS"

Eric Spoonmore, President

Kate Wiltz, President Pro Tempore

Trent Deckard, Member

Marty Hawk, Member

Peter Iversen, Member

Geoff McKim, Member

Cheryl Munson, Member

ATTEST:



Catherine K. Smith, Monroe County Auditor

September 8, 2020

Date