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Wisconsin Rapids, Wis. – The Common Council of the City of Wisconsin Rapids unanimously approved a resolution in support of SB291 & AB387 and SB 292 & AB286 Tuesday evening at their regular city council meeting. These bills reverse the Walgreens state Supreme Court decision and close loopholes that shift a greater property tax burden from commercial to residential homeowners, respectively.

The goal of these bills is to avoid a large tax shift from commercial properties to other classes of property, primarily residential and small business. Alderperson Thaddeus Kubisiak, the council member who introduced the resolution, said, “this legislation will ensure that the dark store tax strategy being used by big box retail chains to cut their property tax bills in half in Michigan and other states does not take hold in Wisconsin.”

The legislation clarifies that when assessors use sales of comparable properties for determining the value of a property they must use properties that are within the same market segment and similar to the property being assessed with regard to age, condition, use, type of construction, location, design, and economic characteristics. Mayor Zachary Vruwink added, “These bills explicitly provide that assessors may not use a dark and vacant store as a comparable for property that is not dark or vacant.”

If these bills are enacted, local governments will not receive one dollar more in tax revenue due to levy limits. The legislation will, however, prevent more of the tax burden from being shifted to homeowners. Currently, homeowners in the state of Wisconsin already pay 68 percent of the statewide property tax levy.

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