



Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors *Supervisor Sequanna Taylor, 2nd District*

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Supervisor Taylor Presses for Action on HIV/AIDS

MILWAUKEE – County Supervisor Sequanna Taylor is calling for stepped up HIV/AIDS awareness, outreach, and prevention efforts in the wake of a spike in cases in Milwaukee.

Supervisor Taylor has proposed an [amendment](#) to the 2019 Milwaukee County budget that requests the county's Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) work with the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin (ARCW) to increase HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention in high risk ZIP codes.

"We have a moral imperative to take action and reduce the alarmingly high rates of HIV/AIDS in our community. The recent spike in HIV/AIDS cases is a wake-up call that we need to do more to eliminate the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS testing, and step up public education, awareness, and prevention efforts to reduce the number of cases," said Taylor.

Milwaukee has one of the highest STD rates in the country, including more than 4,000 cases of gonorrhea in 2017. A cluster of 125 people who had contracted AIDS, syphilis, or both was discovered in March, and health officials said the number could climb after more testing.

Nine Milwaukee ZIP codes each had 20 or more HIV diagnoses and accounted for more than half of all new diagnoses among Milwaukee residents during 2015-2017: 53209, 53208, 53216, 53212, 53218, 53210, 53215, 53206, and 53204. Taylor's budget amendment calls for focusing outreach efforts in seven ZIP codes identified with the greatest risk by ARCW.

Supervisor Taylor's amendment also recommends considering a clean needle exchange program.

An appropriation of \$100,000 to the ARCW for HIV/AIDS prevention was cut from the 2014 county budget with the expectation that the county's Behavioral Health Division (BHD) would perform similar services. Taylor's amendment directs DHHS to work with BHD to identify if resources are available to help boost the work of the ARCW.

The County Board's Committee on Finance and Audit unanimously recommended (7-0) inclusion of Taylor's amendment, which is co-sponsored by Supervisor Supreme Moore Omokunde, in the 2019 county budget. Final consideration of all proposed budget amendments will take place at the County Board's budget adoption meeting on November 5 at 9:30 a.m.

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