

March 17, 2022


Dear elected official,

Enclosed with this letter you will find a resolution that Vilas County has sent to all our elected officials including our Governor.

With rising inflation, the rising cost of energy, and the competition for labor from the private sector it's becoming harder and harder to keep a budget with the current levy in place on all of us to manage our cities, towns, townships that we are all responsible for. If you agree, please join Vilas County in protesting our current levy limits.

As you can see from our enclosed resolution, we are not asking for an ability to spend at will, we are asking for the ability to pay our bills and retain our people.

Your assistance is greatly appreciated,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Burkett", written in a cursive style.

Jerry Burkett  
Vice Chair  
Vilas County

**RESOLUTION 2021 - 63**

**Re: Request that the State Legislature Modify Levy Limits**

**WHEREAS**, in an effort to control and reduce the annual increase in property tax rates, the State of Wisconsin in 2006 imposed property tax levy limits on municipal and county governments; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2011 the State modified the levy limit requirement by allowing local governments an annual increase in the property tax levy based upon a percentage of the value of net new construction; and

**WHEREAS**, in Vilas County, the allowable increase to the tax levy attributable to the annual percentage increase in the value of net new construction averages out to \$95,182 per year over the last five years, and that amount fails to sufficiently fund annual increases in Vilas County operational costs; and

**WHEREAS**, 2020 census data indicates that the population of Vilas County increased by 7.55% or 1,617 individuals and estimated 2021 census numbers released by the Wisconsin Department of Administration on October 8, 2021, indicate that an additional number of 658 individuals now reside in Vilas County, resulting in a net gain in county population of 2,275 individuals since the 2010 census; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2016 – 2020 increase in Wisconsin's consumer price index (CPI) averages out to a 1.57% annual increase, according to data compiled by the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission; and

**WHEREAS**, the upswing in population is causing an increase in demand for additional county services affecting all county departments; most notably the Sheriff's Office and the Highway Department; and

**WHEREAS**, along with all other Wisconsin counties, Vilas County continues to experience annual operational cost increases, led primarily by higher fuel, material, insurance and labor costs as indicated by the annual rate of increase in the CPI; and

**WHEREAS**, all other sources of Vilas County revenues, including the annual allowable increase in the property tax levy, have now proven to be insufficient to fund annual operational cost increases; and

**WHEREAS**, there is no reliable means other than the annual tax levy to fund for the demand for services caused by the population increase, and to fund for the annual increases in the CPI as experienced by Vilas County; and

**WHEREAS**, the fifteen municipalities located within Vilas County are also experiencing similar operational cost funding shortfalls.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Vilas County Board of Supervisors in session this 26<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2021 that we hereby request the Wisconsin State Legislature to consider the following modifications to the levy limits imposed upon Wisconsin municipal and county governments:

1. In 2022 for 2023, permit all units of county and municipal government who have experienced an increase in population since the 2010 census, a onetime allowable increase to the county's base levy amount of no more than 10% above their adopted 2022 property tax levy.

2. Also in 2022 for 2023, permit an annual allowable increase in the property tax levy based upon the existing formula of a percentage of the annual increase in the value of net new construction plus the annual overall percentage increase in the Wisconsin consumer price index as compiled annually by the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the County Clerk provide a copy of this resolution to Governor Tony Evers, to all of the state legislators representing Vilas County and to the Wisconsin Counties Association.

**SUBMITTED BY: Vilas County Board Supervisors**

s/ Ron De Bruyne

s/ Jerry Burkett