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FOR INFORMATION CALL

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Ald. Michael Murphy
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Candidates should make position known on Disclose Act

Alderman Michael Murphy asks state's federal candidates to shed light on their stance

American politics today is bursting at the seams with money, and most of it is donated anonymously. That lack of transparency is troubling to **Alderman Michael J. Murphy** and to members of the Common Council.

In fact, last month the Common Council voted 14-0 to adopt file# 120499, which supports passage of the federal **Disclose Act** and encourages passage of legislation promoting transparency in spending in elections. Today, Alderman Murphy sent a letter (see attached sample) to **U.S. Rep. Tammy Baldwin** and **former Governor Tommy Thompson** (facing each other for the U.S. Senate seat being vacated by retiring Sen. Herb Kohl) as well as Republican vice presidential presumptive nominee **U.S. Rep. Paul Ryan**, urging them to disclose publicly whether they are in support of the Disclose Act, and urging their support for the measure.

“In my opinion, without a way for people to know who is spending millions of dollars to support candidates for office, our system of government becomes much less of a government for the people, and by the people,” Alderman Murphy said. “We have a strong tradition in Wisconsin of disclosure and transparency, and residents here want to know who candidates are counting on for their financial support during the run up to an election.”

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Disclose Act/ADD ONE

Alderman Murphy said he is hopeful the candidates will state publicly whether they are in support of the Disclose Act. “Governor Thompson has been a strong supporter of open government, as has Tammy Baldwin (a co-sponsor of the version of the bill in the House of Representatives). I would sincerely hope that Paul Ryan also believes in transparency and disclosure, traditions that have made our state a respected leader in open government,” he said.

The 2012 version of the Disclose Act requires all groups spending more than \$10,000 on election-related advertising to name donors who gave \$10,000 or more, and broadcast ads also would have to list the top funders of the groups running the ads.

Alderman Murphy said the Citizens United decision by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2010 (allowing corporations to make independent political expenditures) opened the door for billionaires to “have a powerful hand in greatly affecting the outcome of elections in the U.S.”

“At the very least, we should require groups spending millions on political attack ads to disclose their largest donors. That way voters can judge for themselves the attacks and the motivations behind them,” he said.