

**CITY OF WISCONSIN RAPIDS
RESOLUTION No. 18 (2017)**

**In Support of SB 291 and AB 387 to Reverse the Walgreens
State Supreme Court Decision and SB 292 and AB 386 to
Close Loopholes that Shift a Greater Property Tax
Burden from Commercial to Residential Homeowners**

Whereas, home owners in Wisconsin already pay 70% of the total statewide property tax levy; and

Whereas, that disproportionate burden is about to get much worse unless the Legislature addresses tax avoidance strategies that national chains like Walgreens, and big box retail establishments like Target and Lowe's are using across the country to gain dramatic reductions in their property tax bills at the expense of homeowners and other local property taxpayers; and

Whereas, a carefully-orchestrated wave of 100s of lawsuits in Wisconsin is forcing assessors to slash the market value of thriving national retail stores, shifting their tax burden to local mom and pop shops and homeowners; and

Whereas, Walgreens and CVS stores in Wisconsin have argued in communities across the state that the assessed value of their property for property tax purposes should be less than half of their actual sale prices on the open market; and

Whereas, in many cases the courts have sided with Walgreens and CVS, requiring communities to refund previous years' tax revenue back to the stores; and

Whereas, there are over 200 Walgreens stores located in Wisconsin's cities and villages; and

Whereas, Target, Lowe's, Meijer, Menards and other big box chains are using what is known as the "Dark Store Theory" to argue that the assessed value of a new store in a thriving location should be based on comparing their buildings to sales of vacant stores in abandoned locations from a different market segment; and

Whereas, the Republican-controlled Indiana state Legislature has on two occasions in the last two years overwhelmingly passed legislation prohibiting assessors from valuing new big box stores the same as nearby abandoned stores from a different market segment; and


Whereas, the Michigan state house overwhelmingly passed similar legislation in May of 2016; and

Whereas, the Wisconsin State Legislature has introduced SB 291 & AB 387 and SB 292 & AB 386, respectfully, to address these loop holes; and


Whereas, the League of Wisconsin Municipalities is in approval of these bills.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the Common Council of the City of Wisconsin Rapids urges the Governor and the Legislature to protect homeowners and main street businesses from having even more of the property tax burden shifted to them by passing SB 291 & AB 387 and SB 292 & AB 386.

APPROVED: 06/20/2017



Zachary J. Vruwink, Mayor



Paul Przybelski, City Clerk

Ayes: 8

Nays: 0