



CITY OF MILWAUKEE MUNICIPAL COURT

Phillip M. Chavez, Presiding Judge
Branch 3

Valarie A. Hill, Judge
Branch 1

Derek C. Mosley, Judge
Branch 2

Sheldyn M. Himle
Chief Court Administrator

Jane E. Tabaska
Assistant Court Administrator

June 21, 2013

TO: Members of the Wisconsin Senate Insurance and Housing Committee

RE: **Wisconsin Senate Bill 179**

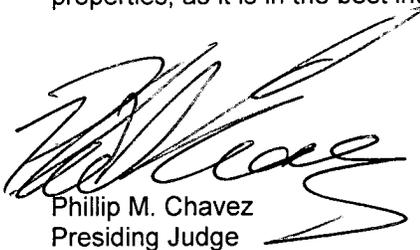
We strongly urge members of the committee to maintain a legal registration requirement on all rental properties.

Most simply put, for the health and safety of our communities, landlords must remain accountable for the upkeep of their rental properties. Without a legal registration requirement, cities would lack the means to pursue those individuals or corporations in violation of municipal Building and Zoning (B&Z) codes.

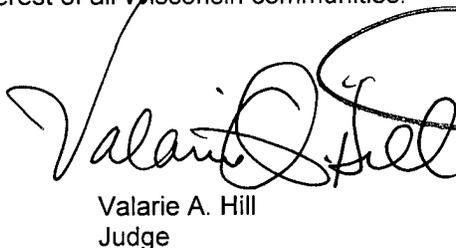
- Each year, between 3,000 and 5,000 cases are filed with the Milwaukee Municipal Court for B&Z violations. Several hundred of these cases are rental properties owned by absentee landlords.
- Currently, overdue Milwaukee Municipal Court judgments for B&Z violations on properties owned by absentee landlords is in excess of \$600,000.

This gets to the very heart of the health and well-being of our neighborhoods. Without the means to pursue landlords, in such cases, properties in disrepair affect the value of other properties in the neighborhood, thereby spreading the negative impact further into the community. We have seen properties in disrepair become sites for other criminal activities, safety hazards for children who decide to play in dilapidated structures, and vermin infested health hazards.

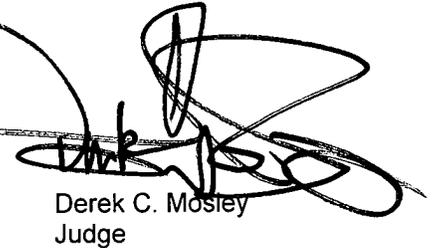
Therefore, we believe it is necessary to maintain a legal registration requirement for rental properties, as it is in the best interest of all Wisconsin communities.



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