



DANE COUNTY

Joe Parisi
County Executive

February 26, 2016

To: Dane County Board of Supervisors

Fr: County Executive Joe Parisi

Re: Veto of Resolution 444

The Dane County Alliant Energy Center (AEC) employs 25 full time employees. These are county employees, with all the same rights and benefits as their fellow county workers across all other Dane County departments. AEC employees work hard and are a big part of the reason why the campus made over \$9.3 million last year - - the best since the Great Recession.

County employees at the Alliant Energy Center are part of the newly formed Employee Groups adopted in our handbook and also members of the Building Trades of South Central Wisconsin, which recertified as a union following passage of the incredibly misguided Wisconsin Act 10.

In five years as your County Executive, I have never supported spending county dollars or allocating county staff time to explore privatizing or eliminating Dane County jobs. Unfortunately, a portion of Resolution 444 adopted last week calls for just that.

That's why I am issuing only my second veto in nearly five years serving as County Executive.

Given how the resolution was drafted, I am unable to partial veto this language. That is unfortunate because there is language in the measure I do support. Planning for the future makes sense. Making that planning contingent on a report evaluating whether to sell the Alliant Energy Center, does not.

Send me a resolution that calls for master planning - not a potential sale, not calling for new taxes, and not calling for the county to spend \$120 million - and I will sign it.

Of further concern, a new event that booked business for the first time after the AEC built the New Holland Pavilions recently balked at signing a three-year contract extension because of the uncertainty raised by the language in Res 444. Prospects for losing shows and revenue as a result of this action are real and shouldn't be dismissed as hyperbole.

There is a win here for everyone involved in this conversation - - most importantly the community. I sincerely believe this planning process informed in part by the results of the business development request for proposals (RFP) I issued last week will enhance the destination experience at the Alliant Energy Center. It's why I shared this RFP with hundreds of local and minority business and economic development experts. The future of the campus is made brighter by the prospect of new good paying jobs and more local businesses.

Best yet, we can do it all without spending \$120 million of the county's money. Suggestions that new taxing districts, new food taxes, or new taxes on beverages may be explored to fund such a venture aren't feasible and are completely unnecessary.

Let's acknowledge progress and plan for an even brighter future.

We can and should do that without creating uncertainty and doubt for more than two dozen county employees and the shows and guests who are counting on the Dane County Alliant Energy Center and the Veteran's Memorial Coliseum for decades to come.

###