



# *Milwaukee County*

*County Executive Chris Abele*

*Supervisor Michael Mayo, Sr., 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-Chairman*

## **For Immediate Release**

December 19, 2011

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## ***Milwaukee County to Buy 136 Low-Emission Replacement Buses With Federal Funds, Updating One-Third of Aging Fleet Funding Includes \$36.6 Million in Federal Funds Unspent Since 1991***

**MILWAUKEE** – Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele and Supervisor Michael Mayo, Sr., announced Monday that the county is purchasing 136 low-emission replacement buses using federal funds, including \$36.6 million that has sat idle since being appropriated for area transit projects in 1991.

The planned purchases will result in replacing about one third of the county's fleet, much of which is considered beyond its useful life, over the next two years beginning in 2012.

The first 55 buses have been ordered and will be put into service over several months beginning this March, and an additional 55 will be ordered for 2013. Another 26 will be ordered for 2013 and beyond.

"These new, low-emission vehicles will modernize our transit system and improve the environment," Abele said. "I'm pleased that we're finally using the long-idle \$36.6 million to benefit Milwaukee County transit riders and are ensuring that these federal funds are kept here for our residents. These investments reflect my strong commitment to transit as a way to connect workers to jobs, students to education and other residents to their destinations."

Supervisor Mayo, chairman of the County Board's Transportation, Public Works and Transit Committee, said, "This announcement has been a long time in the making. I thank the supervisors for hanging in there and insisting that this money stay in Milwaukee County instead of being sent to other counties or states. We're working together to improve the environment, lower our costs and provide a better experience for our transit riders."

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## Milwaukee County Buying 136 New Buses Add One

The new vehicles will emit 80% less particulate matter (PM), 95% less oxides of nitrogen (Nox) and 88% less non-methane hydrocarbons (NMHC) than the older buses they will replace. The vehicles being replaced are considered beyond their useful life because they are at least 12 years old and / or been driven more than 500,000 miles.

The \$36.6 million was originally part of \$289 million in Interstate Cost Estimate Substitute (ICE) funds the federal government appropriated in 1991 for an area transit project. After the appropriation, area officials were unable to agree on the use of the funds. In 2009, the \$36.6 million was approved for Milwaukee County to purchase energy-efficient buses, but a decision on how to spend the funds could not be reached until now.

In addition to the \$36.6 million in ICE funds, the county will use \$ 7 million of recently awarded federal State of Good Repair program funding along with \$2.1 million of existing State of Good Repair funds to purchase the buses.

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