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Ald. Michael J. Murphy
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Support For Election Commission Changes

Alds. D'Amato and Murphy Back Change in State Law

In the past few weeks, the embattled members of the City of Milwaukee Board of Election Commissioners have been accused of abusing their discretion, ignoring legal advice and taking actions that do not conform to state law.

Those criticisms have brought about a call for change. Aids. Michael J. Murphy and Michael S. D'Amato said today they agree with Mayor Tom Barrett that there needs to be a change in the way members of the commission are appointed, and that they will support asking the state legislature to amend the law.

Currently the mayor appoints the three members from names submitted by the chairs of the Democratic and Republican parties for Milwaukee County, and if the chairs submit only a minimum amount of names, there can be little or no latitude in making the selections. The Common Council then votes whether to approve the appointments.

"Giving the mayor the opportunity to select from a wider list of members of both parties would give him and the Council more of a choice in selecting the best possible candidates," said Ald. Murphy.

On Tuesday the city panel voted to allow the name of a candidate for Municipal Court to be placed back on the ballot, even though he had not filed a required ethics form. On Wednesday the State Elections Board ordered the Milwaukee board to rescind its action. "By ignoring the advice of its own attorney, the commission's decision would create a number of problems," said Ald. D'Amato. "The February 20th primary ballots have already been printed, some absentee ballots have been mailed and some people have already voted." In addition, the aldermen noted that reprinting would cost taxpayers at least \$18,500 plus the cost of reprogramming voting machines.