

**Legislative Commission on Government Efficiency
Public Hearing**

1:00 to 3:00 p.m. • Thursday, August 6, 2009
Grand Rapids State Office Building
Michigan Room • 1st Floor
350 Ottawa, N.W. • Grand Rapids, Michigan

Present:

James Curran, Co-Chair
Fern Griesbach
David Leonard

I. Call to Order

Co-Chair Curran called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

II. Public Participation

Twelve members of the public turned in participation request cards. Other individuals offered comments, but did not identify themselves.

Michael VanDenBerg
Gun Plain Charter Township

- opposed to the creation of a new oversight commission
- suggests it is more efficient to work at local level than state level

Don Stypula
Executive Director
Grand Valley Metro Council
678 Front Ave NW, Suite 200
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49504

- against consolidating or eliminating townships
- remove statutory impediments for cooperation and consolidation
- SEE ATTACHED WRITTEN DOCUMENT FOR MORE DETAILS

Jim Townsend
Alpine Township Treasurer

- local level is more efficient and more accountable to citizens
- opposed to mandated consolidation, but supports sharing of some services

Dan Danouse
11287 Black Road
Morley, MI 49336
Winfield Township

- giving locals taxing authority is not the answer

Dianne Berenbrock
3509 Sehler Street
P.O. Box 115
Conklin, MI 49403
Chester Township/Ottawa County

- use MTA and MML instead of creating a new agency
- supports pay-go system
- her community already supports services and each community is different

Jan Redding
3509 Sehler Street
Conklin, MI 49403
Chester Township/Ottawa County

- same as Ms. Berenbrock

Jerry Felix
52 152nd Avenue
Holland, MI 49424
Park Township

- local governments are already cooperating
- against restricting revenue sharing
- opposed to the state mandating services

David Bertram
Michigan Township Association
512 Westshire
Lansing, MI 48917

- looking at Speaker's health care plan proposal
- any plan needs cafeteria-style offerings and flexibility

Sandra Parker
UAW

- health care benefits vary and should be part of collective bargaining
- need to control health care insurance companies from increasing premiums
- consolidate state management
- need to fix tax structure for revenue
- pointed out that the Commission hearings are not scheduled to accommodate workers

Jim Pitsch
Salem Township

- local units work efficiently and many services are voluntary
- cuts in revenue sharing are hurting services
- remove obstacles that tie hands of local units

Bill Cousins
Cascade Township Manager

- need to fix taxing structure
- fix Act 312 and Act 7
- locals already share, but need to remove obstacles for more cooperation
- against forced consolidation and oversight committee
- local units of government are more efficient and directly accountable to citizens

Bill Burnham
Fulton Township

- against forced consolidations

Roy Killinger
12547 W. M-46
Lakeview, MI 48850
Winfield Township/Montcalm County

Dick Stauffer
Lincoln Charter Township

- against restricting revenue sharing

Judy Woodson
1001 N. 7th
Niles, MI 49120

- government is to serve its citizens
- DHS is understaffed

Ronald Jones
5496 Greenboro
Kentwood, MI 49508
Local 2600 UAW

Esther Turner
Retiree

- leave health care benefits in collective bargaining
- school employees gave up raises for benefits for years

Brian Bosak
3300 Leonard NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49525
UAW Employees of CMU, State of MI,
Kent County, KDL

- against redistribution of state k-12
- against mandated NE consolidation
- against elimination of Promise grant
- leave health care up to locals

Jeffrey R. Sorensen
1590 West D Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49009
Michigan Townships Association
Supervisor of Cooper Charter Township



The Grand Valley Metropolitan Council

2009-2010 Legislative Priorities for 95th Michigan Legislature

State Tax Policy and Local Fiscal Stability

- a. **Revenue Sharing:** GVMC supports the reauthorization of the formula for distributing the statutory portion of state shared revenues in a manner that restores revenue sharing payments to Michigan Counties and fully funds the state's historic revenue sharing obligations to Michigan's cities, villages and townships.
- b. **Business Tax Restructuring:** GVMC supports the restructuring of the state business tax code to provide incentives for business retention, expansion and recruitment while maintaining adequate revenues to support critical state and local government services.
- c. **County/Local Inducements for Business and Tourism Development:** The GVMC supports the creation of new, and re-authorization of existing, statutory funding mechanisms that enable county and local governments to assist in retaining existing businesses, attracting new businesses and promoting convention and tourism, provided that tax receipts and other funds are distributed based on an equitable formula that provides funding to all regions of the state.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

- d. **Elimination of Obstacles for Multi-Jurisdictional Service Sharing:** The GVMC supports amendments to current state laws that remove statutory obstacles faced by Michigan counties, cities, villages and townships desiring to form service sharing partnerships. In pursuit of that goal, GVMC seeks amendments to several existing state statutes that will make it easier for counties and communities to share resources and more efficiently deliver critical local services:
 - 1. 1967 Public Act 7 – Urban Cooperation Act
 - 2. 1967 Public Act 8 – Intergovernmental Transfer of Functions and Responsibilities Act
 - 3. 1969 Public Act 312 – Compulsory Binding Arbitration
 - 4. 1989 Public Act 292 – The Metropolitan Councils Act

Transportation Funding

- e. **State and Federal Funding:** The GVMC supports a substantial increase in both state and federal funding for transportation infrastructure improvements, public transit operations and regional planning activities through Metropolitan Planning Organizations.