



## **PREAMBLE**

Federal, state and local government must work together. Local government can no longer sustain themselves fiscally or administratively without cooperation from state and federal governments. Likewise, to function best, state government needs to collaborate and communicate with local officials to deliver services both effectively and efficiently.

Local government needs sufficient resources and authority to contribute to the maintenance of a reasonable quality of life for all Vermonters. Local governments are able to fulfill these responsibilities when state and federal governments implement laws, policies and programs that help solve municipal problems and meet municipal needs.

We who administer, legislate and raise revenues at the local level believe that our service to the citizenry is most in tune with the needs of the community because we are knowledgeable and accessible.

## **1.01 EDUCATION FUNDING**

Given the fact that:

- Education finance is largely being controlled by the state,
- Local officials continue to spend significant time trying to understand, explain and implement the education finance system.

*VMCTA* recommends the creation of a new education finance system that takes into consideration both the Brigham decision and the lessons of the past 11 years. Local officials are willing and eager to work with the administration and the legislature to create a new education finance system.

## **1.02 ELECTION LAW CHANGES**

The state should reimburse municipalities for any local costs for implementation of any state election law changes (including voter and election official education), as well as subsequent administrative or technological costs. The implementation of any election law changes must also satisfy the requirements of local election officials to have an election system that functions smoothly and effectively on election day.

## **1.03 UNFUNDED MANDATES**

The state should provide reimbursement for state mandates on local governments. The Joint Fiscal Office must prepare and make public a fiscal impact statement showing the administrative and implementation as well as service costs imposed on local governments before any state legislative or administrative action affecting them can be approved.

## **1.04 OTHER PRIORITIES**

In addition to the priority issues listed above, *VMCTA* also supports legislation that would accomplish the following:

- A) Amend the school calendar so that Primary Election Day and General Election Day are either school holidays or in-service days in order to hold the election in their school gymnasium and provide the ability for accessibility and parking to voters.
- B) Require that all state rules, regulations, criteria and other administrative actions that have an impact on the operations of local government be implemented only after 30 days have passed since a publicly noticed hearing.
- C) Develop a uniform definition of residency for all state and local government purposes.
- D) With guidance from local officials, comprehensively rewrite the municipal financial management statutes.

- E) Require the House Ways and Means and Senate Finance committees to review all local fees set in statute in conjunction with their periodic review of state fees. The review should include significant local input.
- F) Enable towns to bill and collect from the state the costs associated with mandating inclusion of its notices or other inserts in town tax bills or other mailings.
- G) To refine the PTTR and have the fee be \$10 per page for recording.
- H) Seek matching contribution for NEACT&C Conference from State of Vermont through Secretary of State's Office.
- I) *Option* for Town Clerks to perform marriages.