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MTA Responds to Gov. Snyder's "Special Message" on Government Reform

Lansing, Mich. — The Michigan Townships Association (MTA), which has been actively involved in best practices by shared services with government entities, generally supports Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder's "special message" on government reform.

Please attribute the following statement to Larry Merrill, executive director of the Michigan Townships Association (MTA).

"While the Michigan Townships Association (MTA) remains concerned about the 1/3 cut of statutory revenue sharing, we are encouraged by the realistic and reasonable incentives for communities to maintain the two-thirds portion of state funds for local governments (formerly statutory revenue sharing). MTA is also supportive of Gov. Snyder's efforts to streamline the process of sharing services by reforming the collective bargaining process. In relation to binding arbitration reforms the governor's identification of a communities' ability to pay will help ensure that contracts are affordable for local units of government.

"MTA appreciates the governor's approach and support related to state unfunded mandates placed on local governments. His idea to establish and require a fiscal note process to be developed by the House and Senate fiscal agencies for legislation that affects local governments is a positive step. His statement that no new legislation, which imposes new, costly requirements on local governments, will not go into effect until a complying fiscal note process is completed (state financial support appropriated) demonstrates the governor's strong support for Michigan's Headlee Amendment."

Townships are characteristically low-cost entities, and shared services are far more prevalent than local governments are given credit for. Examples include:

- Of the townships that provide fire services, 57% have a joint fire operation with another government unit.
- Of the townships that provide police services, 74% have police patrols through contract or some other agreement with another local government unit.
- Of the townships that operate ambulance services, 80% have services through joint operations or by contract.

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