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Next Week at the Capitol

The Advocate is published by the Oklahoma Municipal League. Forward your comments or suggestions to:

Oklahoma Municipal League

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COMMITTEE DEADLINE APPROACHING

Next Thursday, April 11 is the deadline for bills to be heard in committee in the opposite chamber of origin. OML's priority bills awaiting a hearing include <u>SB 400</u>, <u>SB 824</u>, <u>SB 881</u>, and <u>SB 1030</u>. Our legislative team also continues to work with committee chairmen regarding bills that would be harmful to municipal governments. We are requesting these bills not be given a hearing in their committee.

Because so many bills are in play this coming week, there could be several Action Alerts sent out. With each Action Alert, we will provide the bill number, the list of committee members to be contacted, and OML's position on the bill. We appreciate the time you take to contact these committee members about these bills. Your voice is vitally important in safeguarding municipal government.

Send copies of any correspondence you have with your legislators to <u>ilewis@oml.org</u> or fax to 405-528-7560, attn: Jodi for our records.

Bills On The Move

A Snapshot of Bills Impacting Cities and Towns

Rights-of-Way/Bypassing Municipalities: SB 824 by Sen. Kim David (R-Porter) and Rep. Avery Frix (R-Muskogee) amends 69 O.S. Section 1205 for all new construction of state highways that have a primary purpose of bypassing municipalities. The Department of Transportation shall conduct an economic impact study on the affected municipalities. The impact shall be delivered to the governing bodies of the municipalities. Only upon a written official letter of support formally approved by the municipal governing body from the majority of the affected municipalities, shall the construction project be added to the Department's 8-year Construction Work Plan.

The bill passed the House A&B Subcommittee on Transportation by a vote of 9-1. It has since been referred to the full House A&B Committee.

Nursing Home/Reimbursement Plan: HB 1902 by Rep. Marcus McEntire (R-Duncan) and Sen. Frank Simpson (R-Ardmore) amends current law by giving exclusive authority to the Oklahoma Health Care Authority to develop an incentive reimbursement rate plan for nursing facilities. The detailed bill provides an incentive of extra funding from funds reserved from per patient day and deducted from the nursing facility's per diem rate, establishment of an advisory group and a pay-forperformance program. Changes are also made for reimbursement for Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities, staffing ratios, base year prospective direct care rate component, calculation of new average rate and new training requirements. All regulated entities providing long-term care services shall utilize a single assessment tool to determine client service needs. The bill contains details.

With the enacting clause stricken, the bill passed the Senate Appropriations Committee by a unanimous vote. It is now waiting to be heard on the Senate floor.

Marijuana/Licensing: HB 2601 by Rep. Jon Echols (R-OKC) and Sen. Greg McCortney (R-Ada) amends state-issued medical marijuana licenses. A referring physician is authorized to notify the Oklahoma Medical Marijuana Authority to revoke a license under conditions in the bill. Physician is also defined. A county may assess fees from licensees or caregivers who, upon request and approval by the county where the person currently resides, exceed the maximum possession limits established by law. The

Department of Health is given a number of duties including investigation, inspection and the like.

The bill passed the Senate Health & Human Services Committee by a unanimous vote. It is now waiting to be heard on the Senate floor.

Pension/Firefighters: HB 2269 by Rep. Josh West (R-Grove) and Sen. Paul Rosino (R-OKC) amends the Firefighter Pension System regarding the calculation of straight life annuity in 11 O.S. Section 49-106.2 by adding language on interest rates. In addition, all pension benefits including payments from the deferred option plan shall be paid from the general assets of the Fund. Also, changes are made to probate procedure following a member's death.

The committee substitute passed the Senate Retirement & Insurance Committee by a unanimous vote. It is now waiting to be heard on the Senate floor.

Health Insurance/Prescription Access: HB 2632 by Rep. Jon Echols (R-OKC) and Sen. Greg McCortney (R-Ada) is new law creating the Patient's Right to Pharmacy Choice Act to establish minimum and uniform access to a provider and standards and prohibitions on restrictions of a patient's right to choose a pharmacy provider. The focus is on retail pharmacy networks including coverage percentage requirements for retail pharmacy designated as a preferred participating pharmacy, regulation of pharmacy benefits managers including prohibitions on contracts, with job duties for health insurers and the Oklahoma Insurance Department. The bill provides details.

With the title stricken, the bill passed the Senate Retirement & Insurance Committee by a unanimous vote. It has since been referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Law Enforcement/Mobile Phone: HB 1044 by Rep. Ryan Martinez (R-Edmond) and Sen. Adam Pugh (R-Edmond) amends 47 O.S. Section 11-901c impacting operating a commercial motor vehicle or public transit while using electronic communication devices. An exception is made for using a hand-held mobile telephone by drivers of a commercial motor vehicle to and from a central dispatch school transportation department or its equivalent.

The bill passed the Senate Public Safety Committee by a unanimous vote. It is now waiting to be heard on the Senate floor.

Law Enforcement/Dumping Trash: HB 1110 by Rep. Kevin West (R-Moore) and Sen. Chris Kidd (R-Addington) amends 21 O.S. Section 1205 regarding throwing garbage, tin cans, junk rubbish or refuse and the like within 100 feet of occupied dwelling of another with an exception. The penalty in 21 O.S. Section 1206 for any person or any officer of any municipality violating any provisions of this act is increased from \$100 to not less than \$200 nor more than \$500. In addition, 21 O.S. Section 1761.1 regarding dumping garbage, trash, waste, rubbish, refuse, debris or other deleterious substances on any public property, his or her own private property in violation of any county or state zoning or public health regulations shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and fined. Current law does not contain the limiting language of violation of any county or state zoning or public health regulations. The penalty is increased from \$200 to not less than \$500 nor more than \$5,000.

The bill passed the Senate Public Safety Committee by a vote of 7-3. It is now waiting to be heard on the Senate floor.

Firearms/Self-Defense Act: HB 1161 by Rep. Rande Worthen (R-Lawton) and Sen. Greg McCortney (R-Ada) amends the Self-Defense Act by amending current law regarding the court adjudication that a person is mentally incompetent or that orders involuntary commitment due to mental illness. In lieu of sending a certified copy of a court order or document, the court clerk may transmit the information required by using an electronic method or data exchange authorized by the FBI, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and the OSBI.

The bill has been enrolled.

CLEET/Certificate Reimbursement: HB 1207 by Rep. Sherrie Conley (R-Newcastle) and Sen. Greg McCortney (R-Ada) impacts reimbursement to the original employing agency who paid for CLEET training and the salary of the person while completing the basic police course. If the person leaves within one year after initial employment, in addition to the salary, reimbursement will also include the cost of CLEET training. In addition, if the person leaves the original employing agency later than 1 year, but less than 2 years, after initial employment, the second agency or the person receiving the training shall reimburse the original agency 50% of

the cost of CLEET training and salary paid to the person while completing the basic police course by the original employing agency.

The bill passed the Senate Public Safety Committee by a unanimous vote. It is now waiting to be heard on the Senate floor.

Law Enforcement/Electric-Assisted Bicycle: <u>HB 1265</u> by Rep. Carol Bush (R-Tulsa) and Sen. Adam Pugh (R-Edmond) amends several sections of Title 47 and creates new law regarding electric-assisted bicycles. The bill contains details including definitions, different classes of bicycles, underage driving of these bicycles, provisions for operators' rights and privileges including exemption from financial responsibility, insurance and the like. 47 O.S. Section 11-805.2 is repealed.

The bill passed the Senate Public Safety Committee by a unanimous vote. It is now waiting to be heard on the Senate floor.

Law Enforcement/Telecommunication System: <u>HB 2037</u> by Rep. Dean Davis (R-Broken Arrow) and Sen. Dave Rader (R-Tulsa) amends the Oklahoma Law enforcement Telecommunication System by authorizing a county sheriff who offers hosting services to assess and collect costs and fees from any agency who subscribes to the System. The bill contains details.

The bill was laid over in the Senate Public Safety Committee on Monday.

Law Enforcement/Missing Persons Duty: HB 2640 by Rep. Rhonda Baker (R-Yukon) and Sen. Julie Daniels (R-Bartlesville) is new law creating Francine's Law requiring special duties from law enforcement. Law enforcement must enter the report of the missing person in any database of missing persons required by the agency and into NamUs, obtain biometric records and other specified means of identification. It is prohibited for a law enforcement agency to delay in taking a missing person report or establish any policy requiring a waiting period before investigating a missing child report. There are exceptions. CLEET shall establish law enforcement training for missing persons.

The bill passed the Senate Public Safety Committee by a unanimous vote. It is now waiting to be heard on the Senate floor.

Law Enforcement/Uniformed Controlled Dangerous Substances: <u>SB 421</u> by Sen. Stephanie Bice (R-OKC) and Rep. Garry Mize (R-Edmond) amends the Uniform

Controlled Dangerous Substances Act in a variety of ways. Included is synthetic substances, transportation of substances with an exception for marijuana, providing quantities for certain substances and penalty changes with exceptions/inclusions for marijuana of various quantities. The bill provides details.

The bill has been referred to the House Public Safety Committee for a second reading.

Law Enforcement/Sexual Assault Kits: SB 967 by Sen. Kay Floyd (D-OKC) and Rep. Jon Echols (R-OKC) is new law authorizing the OSBI to implement a statewide electronic tracking system for evidence collection kits used to collect and preserve evidence of a sexual assault or other sex offense. Any law enforcement agency, medical provider or forensic laboratory that has a previously untested collection kit used for a forensic medical examination shall comply with established protocols relating to all untested kits. Consistent with protecting victim confidentiality for unreported sexual assaults, a law enforcement agency having custody of a kit shall take reasonable measures to provide appropriate tracking information to the affected victim. The OSBI, no later than January 1, 2020, shall require participation in the tracking system by all medical providers, law enforcement agencies, forensic laboratories or others that have custody of a kit.

The bill passed the House Rules Committee by a unanimous vote. It is now waiting to be heard on the House floor.

Water/Groundwater Irrigation District: SB 998 by Sen. Casey Murdock (R-Felt) and Rep. Kenton Patzkowsky (R-Balko) new law creating the Groundwater Irrigation District Act for permit holders in a proposed District for procurement conservation grant funding. The bill contains details of the required petition to create the District plus duties for county commissioners and OWRB including rulemaking.

The committee substitute passed the House Energy & Natural Resources Committee by a unanimous vote. It is now waiting to be heard on the House floor.

Environment/Air Curtain Incinerators: <u>SB 1005</u> by Sen. Mark Allen (R-Spiro) and Rep. Terry O'Donnell (R-Catoosa) creates new law prohibiting the Department of Environmental Quality from requiring the use of an air curtain incinerator for fires purposely set for land clearing operations except in counties or areas that are or have been designated nonattainment for a National Ambient Air Quality Standard or in metropolitan statistical areas

with a population of greater than 900,000. The same prohibition is also made for air curtain incinerators purposely set for burning of clean wood waste or yard brush. The bill contains a definition of air curtain incinerator and authorizes rulemaking. The burning of clean wood waste or yard brush shall not create a public nuisance.

The bill passed the House Energy & Natural Resources Committee by a unanimous vote. It is now waiting to be heard on the House floor.

Underground Facilities/Excavate: SB 1008 by Sen. Mark Allen (R-Spiro) and Rep. Terry O'Donnell (R-Catoosa) amends the Oklahoma Underground Facilities Damage Prevention Act by adding to the definition of excavate. Current law provides an exception from the meaning of excavate for: the moving of earth by tools manipulated only by human or animal power. The bill adds: except in a private or public easement or right-of-way. This change also applies to an individual excavating on his own property who is not in the excavating business for hire. Changes are also made to notification requirements to operators to determine if they have underground facilities in or near the proposed area of excavation or demolition. Current law's 48 hours is augmented with not including the date of notification. Current law's 48 hour requirement for operators to locate and mark location of underground facilities is replaced with prior to the date and time work is scheduled to begin. The bill contains details.

With the title and enacting clause stricken, the bill passed the House Energy & Natural Resources Committee by a unanimous vote. It is now waiting to be heard on the House floor.

Sales Tax Exemption/Forestry Equipment: <u>HB 2303</u> by Rep. Johnny Tadlock (R-Idabel) and Sen. David Bullard (R-Durant) creates a new sales tax exemption for commercial forestry service equipment. The bill contains details.

With the enacting clause stricken, the bill passed the Senate Finance Committee by a unanimous vote. It is now waiting to be heard on the Senate floor.

Taxation/Remote Sellers: <u>HB 2352</u> by Rep. Chad Caldwell (R-Enid) and Sen. Stephanie Bice (R-OKC) removes remote sellers from various sections of Title 68 regarding the collection of remote sellers and marketplace facilitators. Among the changes is new law for remote sellers with aggregate sales within this state or

delivered to locations within this state worth at least \$100,000. The bill contains details.

With the title stricken, the committee substitute passed the Senate Finance Committee by a unanimous vote. It is now waiting to be heard on the Senate floor.

Sales Tax Exemption/Private Social Welfare Agency: HB 2593 by Rep. Jon Echols (R-OKC), Rep. Nicole Miller (R-Edmond), and Sen. Frank Simpson (R-Ardmore) creates a new sales tax exemption for a 501(C)(3) organization formed primarily for performing functions as a private social welfare agency to foster and strengthen family life and the like.

The bill passed the Senate Finance Committee by a unanimous vote. It is now waiting to be heard on the Senate floor.

Bond Oversight/Bond Advisor: <u>HB 2668</u> by Rep. Mark Lepak (R-Claremore) and Sen. Adam Pugh (R-Edmond) amends the Oklahoma Bond Oversight and Reform Act in a variety of ways including substituting the Deputy Treasurer for Debt Management for current law's State Bond Advisor in some statutes and the State Treasurer as a substitute in other provisions.

The bill has been referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Transportation/Funding: SB 400 by Sen. Lonnie Paxton (R-Tuttle) and Rep. Mark Lepak (R-Claremore) amends 11 O.S. Section 36-113 by expanding transportation funding in municipalities. It removes current law's limitation for eligibility from greater than 5,000 population but less than 15,000 population and substitutes 5,000 persons and greater, provided the county has a population of less than 150,000. Current law is unchanged for municipalities in counties in excess of 150,000.

The bill was laid over in the House County & Municipal Government on Wednesday.

Open Meetings/Public Notice: <u>SB 740</u> by Sen. Adam Pugh (R-Edmond) and Rep. Tammy West (R-Bethany) amends the public notice portion of the Open Meeting Act. 25 O.S. Section 311 is amended to correct a statutory reference by inserting 74 O.S. Section 3106.2. This Section requires public bodies to make available on their website a schedule and information about the regularly scheduled meetings of the public bodies or their governing bodies. In addition, any municipality that pays any type of compensation to their mayor or city councilors shall post

on the homepage of the municipal website information regarding the mayor's or city councilors' compensation, including salary, benefits and any other item of value. The bill contains details.

The committee substitute passed the House County & Municipal Government Committee by a unanimous vote. It is now waiting to be heard on the House floor.

Inspector Act/CIB: SB 733 by Sen. Dave Rader (R-Tulsa) and Rep. Carol Bush (R-Tulsa) amends the Oklahoma Inspectors Act by deleting from the definition of building and construction inspector current law which requires managerial and superintending control over building codes as the code official for the purpose of enforcing and having the authority to enforce compliance with applicable building codes. In addition, deletions are made from the definition of inactive building and construction inspector by removing who is currently not employed by a political subdivision and the definition of provisional license by reducing term from 2 years to 1 year, the definition of report writer by adding any person or agency recognized by a political subdivision having managerial control. Finally, authorized provider is amended. The Construction Industries Board is added to applicants for certification and license. Please note, 59 O.S. Section 1036 is amended to reducing from 2 years to 6 months the term of a provisional license. The bill contains details.

The committee substitute passed the House Business & Commerce Committee by a vote of 14-2. It is now waiting to be heard on the House floor.

Sales Tax Exemption/American Legion: <u>SB 8</u> by Sen. Roger Thompson (R-Okemah) and Rep. Sean Roberts (R-Hominy) adds a sales tax exemption for the American Legion.

With the title stricken, the bill passed the House A&B Committee by a unanimous vote. It is now waiting to be heard on the House floor.

Employment/Prohibition: HB 1259 by Rep. Kyle Hilbert (R-Depew) and Sen. Lonnie Paxton (R-Tuttle) amends voting within an election enclosure and absentee by authorizing the voter to take a digital image or photograph of his/her marked ballot. It may be shared via social media or other means if performed voluntarily and incompliance with the law. If voting absentee, specific prohibitions are made regarding testimony. No employer, supervisor, or a person with authority or influence over another person shall require that person to

distribute or share an image of the voted ballot. There is a penalty provision.

The bill passed the Senate Rules Committee by a vote of 7-4. It is now waiting to be heard on the Senate floor.

Elected Officials/Moving Wards: HB 1516 by Rep. Lundy Kiger (R-Poteau) and Sen. Chuck Hall (R-Perry) amends 11 O.S. Section 9-103 requires governing body members from wards to be actual residents of their respective wards at the time of their respective candidacies and elections. Removal of a councilmember from a ward to another ward after his or her election, or a change in ward boundaries, shall not disqualify the councilmember from completing the term for which he or she was elected.

The bill passed the Senate Rules Committee by a vote of 9-2. It is now waiting to be heard on the Senate floor.

Initiative and Referendums/Signatures: HB 2119 by Rep. Charles Ortega (R-Altus) and Sen. Brent Howard (R-Altus) amends 11 O.S. Section 15-103 by altering the number of required petition signatures for initiative and referendum. The election is the most recent preceding general municipal election or biennial town meeting. The total number of votes cast is the sum of the votes cast for all candidates in the race for the highest-ranking at-large municipal office appearing on the ballot. If such office does not appear on the ballot, then the total number of votes cast shall be the sum of votes cast for or against the municipal question or proposition receiving the largest total number of votes on a ballot. The bill contains details.

The bill passed the Senate Rules Committee by a unanimous vote. It is now waiting to be heard on the Senate floor.

Route 66 Commission/Appointments: HB 1774 by Speaker Charles McCall (R-Atoka) and Sen. Adam Pugh (R-Edmond) creates the Oklahoma Route 66 Centennial Commission Act to plan special events to celebrate historic Route 66 centennial in 2026. The bill contains details.

With the title stricken, the bill passed the Senate Appropriations Committee by a unanimous vote. It is now waiting to be heard on the Senate floor.

CLEET/Disability Training: <u>HB 2618</u> by Rep. Jon Echols (R-OKC) and Sen. Robert Standridge (R-Norman) amends 47 O.S. Section 3106.4 requiring public bodies to make available on their website, or on a general website, details of personally identifiable data collected by the

public body. This includes what data is stored, how it is stored and to whom the public body shares the data. The bill contains details.

With the title stricken, the bill passed the Senate Appropriations Committee by a vote of 13-7. It is now waiting to be heard on the Senate floor.

Next Week at The Capitol

Monday, April 8, 2019

Senate Health & Human Services Committee Room 535, AAI

Hospital/Districts: HB 1750 by Speaker Charles McCall (R-Atoka) and Sen. Roger Thompson (R-Okemah) is new law creating the Oklahoma Local Hospital and Health Care District Act of 2019. The District may be created by contiguous counties or a municipality located within a county which is part of a Local Hospital and Health Care District or which is contiguous to at least one county that has formed a District. The bill contains extensive details on governance, funding and the like.

Senate Public Safety Committee Room 419 C, AAI

Law Enforcement/Telecommunication System: <u>HB 2037</u> by Rep. Dean Davis (R-Broken Arrow) and Sen. Dave Rader (R-Tulsa) amends the Oklahoma Law enforcement Telecommunication System by authorizing a county sheriff who offers hosting services to assess and collect costs and fees from any agency who subscribes to the System. The bill contains details.

Tuesday, April 9, 2019

House Rules Committee Room 512A, 10:30 a.m.

Cervidae Facility/Regulation: SB 551 by Sen. Casey Murdock (R-Felt) and Rep. John Pfeiffer (R-Mulhall) amends 2 O.S. Section 6-505 regarding Oklahoma Department of Agriculture rules regarding the application and licensing process, fees and regulation of farmed cervidae facilities. New law states any regulation relating to the import of nonnative cervidae by local government, authority or state agency or office shall be consistent with corresponding federal regulations.

Marijuana/Discrimination: SB 1030 by Sen. Lonnie Paxton (R-Tuttle) and Rep. Carol Bush (R-Tulsa) amends medical marijuana in a variety of ways. This includes changes to Uniform Controlled Dangerous Substances Act, municipalities restricting smoking or vaping marijuana in a public place, clarification of planning and zoning authority, medical marijuana taxation and penalty provisions. Licensure revocation hearings shall be recorded and the Department of Health must assist law enforcement, various applicants must submit a certificate

of compliance from the political subdivision. The bill contains details.

Wednesday, April 10, 2019

House Transportation Committee Room 512A, 9:00 a.m.

Law Enforcement/Preemption: SB 365 by Sen. Micheal Bergstrom (R-Adair) and Rep. Ryan Martinez (R-Edmond) creates the Oklahoma Driving Automation System Uniformity Act by preempting counties or municipalities from regulating motor vehicles with driving automation systems. The Act supersedes any existing law or ordinance. The bill contains details.

House Business & Commerce Committee Room 432A, 3:00 p.m.

Alcoholic Beverages/Golf Courses: SB 113 by Sen. Micheal Bergstrom (R-Adair) and Rep. Marcus McEntire (R-Duncan) amends 37A O.S. Section 6-108 (4) regarding sales of alcoholic beverages by a holder of a Retail Wine License or a Retail Beer License. Beer and wine may be sold on credit when the license holder is a private membership club, marina, golf course or country club that normally charges food, drinks and other purchases to the member's monthly dues account in the regular course of business in lieu of actual cash payment at the time of purchase.

Employment/Unemployment Compensation: <u>SB 335</u> by Sen. Julie Daniels (R-Bartlesville) and Ryan Martinez (R-Edmond) makes numerous amendments to the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission impacting wages, supplemental unemployment benefit plan, claims, reemployment services, appeals, technology fund and the like. Also, 40 O.S. Section 4-314 is repealed.

Transportation/Contract Preference: SB 376 by Sen. Roberts Standridge (R-Norman) and Rep. Avery Frix (R-Muskogee) creates the Oklahoma First Act impacting all contracts for construction work upon the state highway system. In awarding a transportation project adjusted score design-build contract, greater value is assigned to a proposal in proportion to the extent it commits to using Oklahoma-owned businesses. There is an exception to prevent denial of federal monies or to eliminate inconsistency with federal law.

Bidding/Preference: <u>SB 762</u> by Sen. Roland Pederson (R-Burlington) and Rep. Kevin West (R-Moore) amends

bidding at 60 O.S. Section 176 and 61 O.S. Section 103 by providing that construction contracts may provide for a local bid preference of not more than 5% if the awarding public agency determines there is an economic benefit to the local area or economy. No preference shall be granted unless the local bidding entity is the second lowest qualified bid. The local bidder or contractor must agree to perform the contract for the same price and terms as the bid proposed by the nonlocal bidder or contractor. The bill contains details.

Advocating for Your Community

This year, several bills have been filed that will have a negative impact on our members, which means we need YOU more than ever. Here are a few tips to help you help us.

Stay vigilant, stay informed. Let OML be your clearing house for legislative information and news. OML sends out many GRIP Alerts to our members to let you know when a pressing issue needs your attention. Pay attention to these emails, as we send them for your benefit. You can also read any version of any bill on the Legislature's website at oklegislature.gov.

Be active. If you can't be at the Capitol, call, text, and email your legislators. They want to hear from you!

Act swiftly. Often times, bills heard in committee or on the floor can come and go very quickly. This means that you have a small window to communicate with your legislators. Same day action is paramount.

Send us your comments. Is a particular issue or bill important to your community? Tell us about it. We also frequently send out bills and ask for comments from you for guidance. These comments remain completely in- house, so don't be afraid to speak up. Your words are safe with us!

Build a coalition. Never has the phrase "strength in numbers" been more relevant. Discuss these issues with community leaders and surrounding municipalities. Collaboration is invaluable in the legislative process.

Build a relationship with your legislators. Legislators appreciate hearing from their constituents back home. They're also usually happy to give their phone numbers and email addresses out to remain in contact with you.

Future Issues

Look for the Legislative Advocate to highlight bills that exemplify the ways in which municipalities are squeezed dry. We will also highlight some positive developments from the Capitol including bills that we are lobbying on behalf of individual members.

Cities and towns either win or lose together at the State Capitol since it takes a majority of legislators from all over the state—whether urban or rural, democrat or republican—to carry the day. The number-one ingredient for success at the legislature and state agencies is a united collective municipal voice.