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October 21, 2011

County Executive Joseph Parisi  
421 City County Building  
210 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Madison, WI 53703

Re: Proposed Intergovernmental Agreement for Radio-Assisted Expenses

Dear Executive Parisi:

On behalf of the Dane County Towns Association, we wish to express dismay about the payment provisions in the proposed intergovernmental agreement which was sent to the towns and other communities on October 18, 2011. The IGA proposes to have the towns which join the system pay for those that do not.

Although we believe the County probably intended to attempt to encourage towns to join, we believe that the structure of the proposed charges in the IGA are counterproductive. This is actually causing a negative incentive. Why would anyone want to accept the heavy burden of paying for the towns which choose not to join? We think that another solution needs to be found. We are also very concerned that the negative effect and impact of this agreement may undermine the progress that has been made toward building support for participation.

Therefore, we respectfully request that the County withdraw the proposed IGA and give us the opportunity to work with our member towns. We recognize that this was a divisive issue between the County and the municipalities in Dane County. No one in the municipal community is happy about paying a share of what we have long regarded as a County responsibility. That sentiment has not changed and is not going to change.

The issue of funding, however, is settled. We now know that the County simply will not pay for the entire cost of the radio system. We believe the radio system is important and that it must be funded. Communities representing 79 percent of the County's population agreed by adopting resolutions in support, if reluctantly. We are willing to make the effort to work with the towns to

commit to funding their share of the operation and maintenance of the new system until the costs are set as user fees. For that to work, however, the County has to approach this in a manner that is not counterproductive. The Agreement is acceptable except for section 4 F (b).

More broadly, we believe that we have spent far too much effort tinkering around the edges of what are some major structural problems in the financing of a number of regional services. We think that if the towns, the County, and our other communities get together to approach some of these regional funding issues, we could craft a long-term solution that would create necessary financial support for public services for a generation. We request that you participate in a meeting to discuss these options with us.

We urge you to attend or send a senior representative to our membership meeting on Wednesday, November 9, 2011, where this topic will be discussed. We appreciate your continued interest in this matter and look forward to discussing it with you toward a satisfactory resolution.

Very truly yours,

Gerald H. Derr,  
President

Cc: Dane County Towns, Cities and Villages  
Dane County Board of Supervisors

