



January 17, 2012

Governor Rick Snyder
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Dear Governor Snyder,

Michigan Forward writes to express strong concern in which the financial review is conducted under Public Act 4 in Detroit and communities currently under financial review. This law has its clear points of contention across various groups, yet we cannot ignore the fiscal reality some municipalities and school districts are facing. One of our larger points of contention about Michigan's Emergency Manager Law is the failure of transparency and accountability throughout the financial review process. Since the beginning of your administration, communities facing or under emergency management has doubled. Following the review process in Flint, Highland Park and now Detroit, nearly one million residents have been exposed to implementation of Michigan's Public Act 4 of 2011. These communities continue to be excluded from the fact finding and resolution building process appointed review teams are charged with performing. Excluding the public at large from this essential step paints a picture of voter disenfranchisement that begins not when an emergency manager is appointed, but when this law is executed.

Our suggestions reduce voter disenfranchisement during this crucial period for communities in financial distress. Highlighting our concern is the January 10, meeting of Detroit's financial review team held in Lansing. Holding this meeting in our state's capital is a clear example of exclusion and voter disenfranchisement. Gov. Snyder, we are asking that all future meetings of review teams appointed for the city of Detroit, Inkster and future communities facing emergency management are public, follow the guidelines set in Michigan's Open Meeting Act of 1976 and implement these additional principles:

- Meetings held by review teams be held within the municipality or school district under financial review
- Financial review team meetings are publicly posted 10 days before the date, time and place of the meeting date
- Meetings of review teams under Michigan's Emergency Manager Law are posted on the official website of the Michigan Department of Treasury
- Minutes of review teams meetings are posted on the official website of the Michigan Department of Treasury
- Review teams use the entire 60-day review period to conduct an open, transparent review of municipal or school district finances and fiscal health.

We are committed to constructing progressive solutions to the financial crisis many municipalities and school districts face here in Michigan. Our suggestions encourage a review process that opens the door of transparency and accountability. We ask full cooperation from your office, delegates and appointees to implement these policy suggestions and strongly encourage immediate and full implementation as your office continues to execute Michigan's Emergency Manager Law.

For Democracy,

Brandon A. Jessup
Chairman & C.E.O

Michigan Forward is a non-profit, non-partisan organization for progressive, forward thinking public policy and initiatives.

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