

To: Assembly Committee on Local Government

From: Curt Witynski, J.D., Assistant Director, League of Wisconsin Municipalities

Date: March 8, 2017

Re: AB 27, Multiple Jurisdiction Health Departments Clean-Up Bill

The League of Wisconsin Municipalities supports AB 27, clarifying that when local governments agree to collaborate on combining their health departments, the agreeing parties have full discretion to determine how best to share between them the cost of providing the service. Legislation passed last session, 2015 Act 175, requires that a multiple jurisdiction health department use either equalized valuation or a per capita method to determine how to share the cost of the health department between the agreeing local governments. This bill eliminates that requirement. The bill instead requires a governing body for a multiple jurisdiction health department to determine a budget in a manner agreed upon by the governing bodies of the participating entities.

The North Shore Health Department consists of seven communities and was created by an Intergovernmental Agreement adopted by the seven communities' elected boards effective January 1, 2012. The Agreement was a result of dialogue, negotiation, and compromise to create a Board of Health that would provide high quality services and be cost effective. The communities' taxpayers received improved services at a lower cost.

The negotiations included a funding formula adopted by the elected officials to specifically address the geography, demographics, and service level requirements of the seven community members. The agreed to formula was not consistent, however, with the Act 175 language requiring that the funding be divided between the agreeing communities exclusively on the basis of equalized valuation or population. Enactment of AB 27 would clarify that the North Shore Health Department may continue to operate under its agreement and that other local governments may develop whatever funding formulas they determine work best for the collaborative service delivery arrangement they have agreed upon.

We urge the committee to recommend passage of AB 27. Thanks for considering our comments.