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POLL: Michigan voters show support for consolidating government services, not government

Efficiency a plus, but location and loss of community identity could be areas of concern

DETROIT, Mich. — September 18, 2012 - Michigan voters support the idea of consolidating government services, such as public transportation, police protection, and other administrative functions as the means of increasing the efficient delivery of public services, according to an August 2012 statewide survey commissioned by Business Leaders for Michigan (BLM).

These same voters, however, oppose consolidating township or village governments entirely and increasing the role played by Michigan counties.

"We find these results fascinating," said Doug Rothwell, President and CEO, Business Leaders for Michigan. "The data seem to indicate that voters value and support increased sharing and consolidation of local services, but not the consolidation of governments themselves- particularly at the county level."

Voters were asked if they support or oppose efforts to consolidate services provided by villages, townships or cities that are adjacent to each other as a way to save money. By a margin of 66 percent to 26 percent, voters support the consolidation of services.

When asked if they support or oppose eliminating township or village governments and turning their functions over to county government, however, respondents overwhelmingly oppose the effort by a margin of 33 percent to 56 percent.

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“During tough economic times, every penny counts,” Rothwell said. “We believe these results reflect sound prioritization among Michigan residents.”

The poll asked voters if they would support or oppose consolidation of specific services in their own community with a neighboring community or communities in order to save money. The list below ranks those services from highest support for consolidation to lowest support for consolidation.

Public Transportation	75.4%
Parks and Recreation	71.7%
Administrative Functions	67.0%
Police Protection	60.4%
Emergency Services (Ambulance)	59.8%
Fire Protection	58.2%
School Districts	51.5%

“These numbers don’t vary much based on the type of municipality voters live in—township, village, or city,” Rothwell said. “We also did not see a tremendous amount of variation based on voters’ party affiliation.”

Please see the attached survey. BLM contracted with Glengariff Group, Inc. to conduct the poll, which surveyed 600 Michigan voters at the end of August. The survey has a margin of error of +/- 4 percent with a 95 percent level of confidence.

About Business Leaders for Michigan:

Business Leaders for Michigan (www.BusinessLeadersforMichigan.com), the state's business roundtable, is dedicated to making Michigan a "Top Ten" state for job, economic and personal income growth. The organization is composed exclusively of the chairpersons, chief executive officers, or most senior executives of Michigan's largest companies and universities, which contribute nearly 25% of the state's economy and provide over 320,000 jobs in Michigan, generate over \$1 Trillion in annual revenue and serve over 135,000 students. The organization's work is defined by the Michigan Turnaround Plan, a holistic, fact-based strategy to get Michigan's economy back on track. Visit www.michiganturnaroundplan.com for more information.

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