

2018 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



TRANSPORTATION

- **Towns need at least \$15 million more per year for roads.** That amounts to only \$272 per mile per year.
- **Townships were largely left out of last year's transportation funding package.** The \$2 million cash payment to the Town Road Account amounts to only \$35 per mile of township road.
- **Towns faced increased weight limits.** Milk haulers received a weight limit increase even though many town roads are already unable to carry the weight.
- **Simultaneous under-funding and weight increases make the problem worse.**
- MAT seeks input in the permitting process for vehicles exceeding size and weight standard.
- County Road turn-backs increase the amount of town road miles, while several counties simultaneously take Town Road Funding for county roads, reducing the money available for other town roads.



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2018 Legislative Priorities

Transportation: At a cost of over \$170 million per year, townships maintain over 55,000 miles of roads & approximately 6,000 bridges, of which over 400 are on the deficiency list.

- Seek immediate and long term increased comprehensive funding that is sufficient, predictable, sustainable, constitutionally dedicated, and equitable for townships.
- Current spending is insufficient to meet and maintain the increasing demand placed on township infrastructure. Most recent study available says townships need at least an additional \$15 million per year above current expenditures to meet the demand.
- Provide funding to replace culverts when needed for environmental reasons, not road purposes.
- Require a written agreement with the township before a county can revert jurisdiction of a road to a township, which increase the township's responsibilities, liabilities, and costs.
- Restore 30 MPH speed limit option for Rural Residential Districts.
- Require funding adequate to build roads to a minimum 10-ton standard before approving any increase in truck weight limits or sizes.
- Restore right of way management powers related to flexible force mains used to transport animal waste.
- Seeks input in the permitting process for vehicles exceeding size and weight standard.

Broadband: Robust broadband is essential to the vitality of rural communities.

- Fund to equitable and affordable access to broadband services for all residents, at speeds not less than the State's goals for 2026. Unserved areas must remain the top priority.

Annexation: Township should be on equal ground with a city when faced with a proposed annexation.

- Protect orderly annexation agreements from interference by cities not a party to the agreement by limiting annexation of land subject to an orderly annexation agreement to only the parties of the agreement.
- Establish a detachment process to allow owners of qualified properties to revert to an abutting township in a manner like the annexation-by-ordinance process cities use to annex township land.

Taxes and Aids: Townships are efficient but 75% dependent on property taxes, which is not equitable or sustainable.

- Increase funding for Town Aid program to ensure full funding of the Town Aid formula.
- Hold townships harmless, dollar-for-dollar, from lost tax revenues by seeking increased, sustainable, and dedicated funding for the Payment-in-lieu-of-Taxes (PILT) program.
- Develop an alternative or supplemental tax reimbursement process based on a pay-as-you-buy approach for all future State acquisition of land resulting in lost or reduced tax revenues to the township.

Environment: Protecting our resources; providing healthy communities

Noxious Weed Control: Noxious weeds are a threat to the environment, destroying natural habitat.

- Allow townships to hold State and Counties responsible for weeds in their rights-of-way.

Government Operations: Grassroots governance at work.

Elections: Townships serve as local election officials and protect the integrity of elections.

- Allow townships to determine which four hours they will have an authorized person available to accept filings on the last day to file for office.

Mandate Relief & Cost Reductions

- Reduce costs of townships obtaining easements across state land, especially for roads sited on school trust land.
- Seek flexibility on MS4 permits so apply only to urbanized portions of a township.
- Implement 90-day notice periods for State agency hearings, actions, or comment periods.

Miscellaneous

- Enhance public notice and role of township in process used by State and counties before use of publicly owned land is changed or modified.
- Hold utilities responsible for damages they cause in or to road rights-of-way and related infrastructure including culverts, and hold road authorities immune for damage to utilities whose infrastructure is improperly placed or marked.