

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF MAINE

MARY ADAMS, et al., )  
 )  
 Plaintiffs )  
 ) CIVIL NO. 1.10-CV-258-JAW  
 v. )  
 )  
 MAINE MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION, )  
 )  
 Defendant )

SUMMARY OF CAMPAIGN-RELATED MATTERS  
PURSUANT TO F.R.EVID. 1006  
FROM MAINE MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES  
(55% SCHOOL FUNDING INITIATIVE 2002-2004)

May 30, 2002

**Tax Reform** - Gary Brown indicated that a special meeting of the MMA Legislative Policy Committee was held on May 16, 2002 to provide direction to the MMA Executive Committee regarding the possibility of moving forward with the development of a citizen initiative for tax reform. He noted that several Executive Committee members participated in the May 16 meeting and encouraged all members of the Executive Committee to foster an open discussion about the many issues that are involved. Chris Lockwood provided a lead-in noting that MMA is embarking into areas in which it has not had previous experience (i.e., coordinating the circulation of initiative petitions, conducting a statewide referendum campaign, etc.) He stressed that MMA needs to have a clear organizational focus and willingness to commit the necessary resources. Geoff Herman provided an overview of the motions and discussions held at the MMA Legislative Policy Committee Meeting on May 16, which concluded:

1. That MMA should continue to advocate for comprehensive tax reform;
2. That the comprehensive tax reform effort should be advanced to the voters directly, through a citizen initiative, rather than submitted only to the Legislature; and
3. That the citizen initiative to achieve comprehensive tax reform developed by MMA should establish, as a matter of law, the property tax relief municipalities are seeking, but should leave to the Legislature the changes to the tax system that would need to be implemented to provide that relief.

Geoff Herman provided a review of the proposed Plan of Action as outlined in his memorandum and reviewed the motion that is being recommended to the MMA Executive Committee. An in-

depth discussion was held by members of the MMA Executive Committee on an array of issues, which included:

- > Providing written communication to the MMA membership in July/August
- > Schedule regional meetings in August/September and holding a rally at the MMA Annual Convention as means to gain membership understanding and support
- > Keeping the language simple so that municipal officials and citizens can understand the issues
- > Repetitious mailings to keep the issue in front of our membership throughout the next several months
- > Concerns relating to getting the membership involved
- > Communication kits to promote efforts
- > Using MMA Annual Convention for ratification of the membership
- > Involving Maine Service Centers Coalition
- > Bill Bridgeo indicated that the MMA Legislative Policy Committee also voted in favor of the Maine Service Center Coalition's recommendation that MMA augment the dynamics of the Tax Reform efforts by having municipalities include an advisory question on the ballot during the Primary Election on November 5, 2002. It was noted that if high support were reflected during the 2002 Election, when the Legislature convenes it would have some indication that the voters are interested in tax reform efforts and may encourage the Legislature to work with the Maine Municipal Association to pass tax reform legislation, which could ultimately determine that MMA would not need to move forward with the citizen initiative. Chris Lockwood provided information on concerns expressed by Chris Potholm, who is a consultant specializing in citizen polling, noting that an advisory question that does not get overwhelming support by the voters may hinder MMA's tax reform efforts in the long run. Discussion was held on the Palesky Initiative and the fact that MMA and the Legislature would want to avoid competing questions on the 2003 Election Ballot.
- > Composition of the Tax Reform Initiative Steering Committee
- > Whether there is a need to form a separate Political Action Campaign or whether reporting directly through Maine Municipal Association lobbying efforts.

**Dana Lee MOVED that the Executive Committee of the Maine Municipal Association endorse the development of a comprehensive tax reform proposal to be advanced as a citizen initiative by authorizing the President to appoint a Tax Reform Steering Committee made up of elected and appointed municipal officials from the Executive Committee, Legislative Policy Committee and general municipal membership. The charge to the Steering Committee is as follows:**

- 1. To develop a comprehensive tax reform proposal to be advanced as a citizen initiative and to provide that recommended proposal to the Association's Executive Committee and Legislative Policy Committee.**

- a. **To identify the basic concept and core components of that initiated proposal for the purposes of providing an initial recommendation to the Executive Committee by June 20,2002.**
  - b. **To fully develop and finalize the recommended tax reform proposal for the purposes of providing the final recommendation to the Legislative Policy Committee by July 15 for consideration at the July 23, 2002 Legislative Policy Committee meeting.**
2. **To serve as the Steering Committee to provide ongoing advice to the Executive Committee and the Legislative Policy Committee with respect to the implementation of the citizen initiation process throughout 2002 and the promotion of citizen initiated tax reform proposal in 2003 should the petition drive be successful.**

**The motion was seconded by Bill Bridgeo.**

Discussion was held on the process for getting formal ratification by the Maine Municipal Association membership. Chris Lockwood indicated that the MMA Bylaws require that each municipality appoint a voting delegate and alternate for the MMA Annual Business Meeting. The voting delegates would be the only municipal officials authorized to vote at the MMA Annual Business Meeting. He noted that municipalities would have the option of sending in their advanced mail ballot, which would also be included as an actual vote during the MMA Annual Business Meeting.

MMA President Gary Brown called for a vote on the motion. **The motion passed unanimously.**

June 20, 2002

### **Tax Reform Initiative**

Dana Lee, Chair of the Tax Reform Initiative Steering Committee, provided an overview of the June 13 Steering Committee meeting. Based on discussions held at the June 13 meeting, Geoff Herman developed three options for consideration by the Steering Committee at its June 26 meeting. He reviewed the memorandum outlining the three options (Handout 2). Option A focuses on education promises, education mandates; Option B focuses on shifting taxes evenly to accomplish 1/3, 1/3, 1/3; and Option C focuses on a smorgasbord of property tax relief measures. Geoff Herman then distributed a copy of a memorandum regarding Governor King's Shortfall Proposal (Handout 3) for the Executive Committee's information. Chris Lockwood noted that he has invited Dr. Chris Potholm to provide private consultation to the Steering Committee on successful steps to be taken during ballot measures.

**Dana Lee MOVED that the MMA Executive Committee grant the Executive Director authority to establish a budget unit within the 2002 total operating budget appropriation, to which all internal costs of the development of a comprehensive tax reform proposal will**

**be charged. The Executive Director is instructed to present during the 2003 budget process a projection of such costs beyond 2002 and a plan for funding them. The motion was seconded by Tim King and passed unanimously.**

**Tim King MOVED that the MMA Executive Committee grant the Executive Director authority to make expenditures from the Legislative Initiatives Fund, in a total amount not to exceed \$5,000, in such manner and for such purpose as he deems necessary to support the development of a comprehensive tax reform proposal; and further, that the Executive Director be authorized to spend additional amounts from the Fund for that purpose, without limitation, with the concurrence of both the MMA President and the Chair of the Tax Reform Steering Committee. The motion was seconded by Elaine Aloes and passed with all in favor.**

August 7, 2002

**Tax Reform Initiative** - Dana Lee, Chris Lockwood and Geoff Herman provided an update on the Tax Reform Initiative. Dana Connors, President of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce and Michael Stillings from Baker, Newman, and Noyes joined the Executive Committee at 2:20 p.m. Discussions of the Chamber's interest in collaborating with the Maine Municipal Association on the Tax Reform Initiative took place. The Executive Committee was asked to consider approval of the membership resolution/ratification process as outlined in the working time line; to consider authorizing the Executive Director to establish a Political Action Committee; and, to work with the business and educational communities to seek their participation in the campaign.

**Bill Bridgeo MOVED that the Executive Committee of the Maine Municipal Association hereby votes to authorize the Executive Director, with the concurrence of the MMA President and the Chair of the MMA Tax Reform Steering Committee, to proceed with the establishment of a Political Action Committee for the purpose of submitting a citizens petition for a statewide referendum on a Tax Reform Initiative to the Office of the Secretary of State, the form of the initiative to be as determined by the MMA Tax Reform Steering Committee and as ratified by the MMA Legislative Policy Committee and, further, to do so in collaboration with the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, and/or other organizations, in such manner and to such extent as they may determine appropriate. The motion was seconded by Ryan Pelletier and discussion was held. MMA President Gary Brown called for a vote on the motion. The motion passed with all in favor.**

September 25, 2002

**Tax Reform Initiative** -Dana Lee, Chair of the MMA Tax Reform Steering Committee, MMA staff and Jill Duson from Perkins & Thompson Consulting provided a detailed update on the progress to move forward with the Tax Reform citizen initiative. It was noted that there is a good communication system in place to keep interested parties informed on the various steps being taken. Chris Lockwood provided an update on the progress to date and noted that Jeff Nevins was not able to attend the meeting due to a family wedding. He indicated that Dr. Chris Potholm has been retained to provide expertise and overall guidance with regard to the citizen initiated

petition campaign and strategic direction. Perkins & Thompson Consulting has been retained by the Political Action Committee to provide a strategy and implementation process for the actual signature gathering campaign. He noted that regional meetings are being held throughout the state to provide municipal officials and other interested parties information on the proposed initiative and encouraging them to volunteer to assist with signature gathering on Election Day - November 5, 2002.

Geoff Herman provided an update on the status of the application with the Secretary of State and noted that the original language has just been returned from the Reviser's Office striking some of the language.

Chuck Jackson and Geoff Herman are working with Chris Potholm to review the changes and provide feedback to the Secretary of State's Office. Geoff Herman noted that staff is hopeful that the Question and Title will be certified by the Secretary of State in the time for the MMA Convention. Chuck Jackson provided a brief overview of the PAC filing process, registering as a non-profit organization, and working with the Commission on Ethics regarding the timing, filings, etc. He noted that staff is reaching out in advance to the regulatory agencies to assure that there is good communication and positive working relationships. He noted that at a prior meeting of the MMA Executive Committee, the Committee authorized the Executive Director to expend \$5,000 out of the fund for development of the initiative and authorized the Executive Director, with concurrence with the MMA President and Chair of the Tax Reform Initiative Steering Committee, to expend a greater amount. He indicated that staff would like to expand the motion to include the development and implementation of the initiative. An in-depth discussion was held on how the tax reform initiative is being perceived at the municipal regional meetings and by legislators.

Jill Duson of Perkins & Thompson Consulting provided an update on their work with Jeff Nevins relating to the signature gathering campaign. She indicated that her firm looked at the last eight elections for comparisons in order to structure the signature gathering strategy for this campaign. This strategy has identified the top 100 municipalities that are to be targeted as "necessary" sites for the signature gathering campaign. She noted that to date there are approximately 100 volunteers that have indicated an interest in collecting signatures at the polling places. A county-by-county calling system has been put in place to recruit coordinators in each of the non-targeted municipalities with a population of more than 1,000. She indicated that key MMA staff have been given assignments to contact the top 100 targeted municipalities to assure that coordinators are identified in those areas and if necessary, to identify non-municipal contacts to work those areas.

Chris Lockwood provided an update on the various mailings that have been sent to key municipal officials, school administrators, and MMA's efforts to contact the Maine Education Association and the Maine School Management Association to support the campaign.

**Bruce Benway MOVED that the Executive Committee of the Maine Municipal Association authorize the Executive Director to make expenditures in an amount not to exceed \$5,000 from the Legislative Initiative Fund to support and contribute to the efforts of the Citizens to Reduce Local Property Taxes Statewide and, further to make additional expenditures**

**from that fund without limitation for that purpose with the concurrence of the MMA President and the Chair of the MMA Tax Reform Initiative Steering Committee. The motion was seconded by Ryan Pelletier and passed with all in favor.**

**Policy Issues & Legislative Policy Committee Process** - Chris Lockwood indicated that the first meeting of the Legislative Policy Committee was held in early September and that the Committee voted to have the Tax Reform Initiative as its sole legislative platform and to take a reactive role to legislative bills introduced during the session that would impact on municipalities. He noted that a list of the new Legislative Policy Committee was included in the packet materials for the Executive Committee's reference.

September 26, 2002

Gary Brown summarized the discussion as follows:

- 1) Tax Reform is and will remain MMA's top priority for 2002 and 2003
- 2) Once the signature gathering campaign is complete, the next step will be to work on the details of the tax burden management piece and promote the citizen's initiative; and conduct an analysis of raw data on joint/services ventures and seek help from other groups such as the Muskie Institute, State Planning Office, etc.

#### **Executive Director Update**

1) Advocacy Efforts - Chris Lockwood noted that the tax reform initiative is the Association's highest priority and that he is heavily involved in the policy development and communications strategy; the collaboration with other organizations, and providing the necessary resources throughout the organization to support this effort.

**MMA Strategic Business Plans Goals, Objectives & Priority Initiatives** - Chris Lockwood noted that enclosed within the packet materials was a status report on the 2002 priority initiatives. He noted that rather than providing a written report, he has asked each of the management group members to provide a verbal update on the anticipated areas warranting attention during the next year. He noted that this discussion would provide members of the full Executive Committee with an opportunity to provide input to staff and members of the Strategic & Finance Committee as MMA moves into our 2003 budget preparation cycle. Chris noted that Geoff Herman and Jeff Nevins were not able to attend today's meeting, however both departments are heavily involved in the tax reform initiative and that most of their time and efforts are being spent on it.

November 21, 2002

#### **Executive Director Update**

Chris Lockwood provided information on the number of MMA staff that participated in the signature gathering campaign for the tax reform initiative. He noted that 48 staff members traveled to the needed voting sites and put in long days collecting signatures for this effort.

MMA arranged for an opportunity on Wednesday morning to gather for a light continental breakfast and share experiences.

**Tax Reform Initiative Update** - Dana Lee and Jeff Nevins provided the MMA Executive Committee with an update on the status of the signature gathering campaign. Bill Bridgeo noted that Tom Sotir of Augusta did an outstanding job organizing the signature gathering efforts in Augusta. Dana Lee provided information on and recent discussions with Dr. Potholm regarding the Political Action Committee's (PAC) communication strategy. Chris Lockwood reported on his efforts to encourage the Maine Education Association to join the PAC to provide both organizational and financial support. Gary Brown noted that it would be beneficial to call a meeting of the Tax Reform Steering Committee to provide members with an update and discuss future direction. Geoff Herman provided an overview of how he foresees the tax reform initiative being received by the Legislature. An in-depth discussion was held on issues surrounding MMA's strategy throughout the Legislative Session. It was the consensus of the Executive Committee that it would be in MMA's best interest to meet with Governor-Elect Baldacci early in 2003 to gain his support and understanding of the tax reform initiative. Chris Lockwood shared information on some anti-MMA activists who are questioning MMA's active involvement in the PAC and using taxpayers' money to support the PAC efforts. He cautioned that MMA might experience some negative reaction from its own membership.

December 10, 2002

Bill Bridgeo questioned whether the Expendable Fund Balance level is appropriate, particularly with regard to transfers made for the tax reform initiative. Dana Lee indicated that the MMA Fund Balance Policy calls for an expendable fund balance equal to a minimum of 1 month to a maximum of 3 months operating budget and that the preliminary project budget reduces the Expendable Fund Balance to one month's operating costs. Chris Lockwood noted that the MMA Executive Committee voted during the summer to move forward with the referendum based upon projections to draw from the Legislative Initiative Fund, projected 2002 surplus, and the Expendable Fund Balance to fund the tax reform initiative. He noted that the Tax Reform Initiative budget is based on worse case scenario and that a total of \$1,082,000 has been potentially identified for this project (\$522,000 from the Expendable Fund Balance; \$200,000 from the Legislative Initiative Fund; and \$360,000 from the projected 2002 surplus). Mr. Bridgeo asked for clarification of the authority the Executive Committee has granted to the Executive Director regarding the expenditure of funds from the Tax Reform Initiative Fund. Dana Lee noted that it is his understanding that the MMA Executive Committee granted the Executive Director authority to make expenditures from the Legislative Initiatives Fund, in a total amount not to exceed \$5,000, in such manner and for such purpose as he deems necessary to support the development of a comprehensive tax reform proposal; and further, granted the Executive Director authority to spend additional amounts from the Fund for that purpose, without limitation, with the concurrence of both the MMA President and the Chair of the Tax Reform Steering Committee. Chris Lockwood noted that he would recapture the decisions made by the Executive Committee on this matter and present information to the full Board at its meeting on December 19, 2002.

Dana Lee noted that the Citizens to Reduce Local Property Taxes Statewide Political Action

Committee is moving forward with Phase II which will include filing the necessary number of petition signatures with the Secretary of State, including a press release and press coverage of the event and determining an effective legislative strategy for the current Legislative Session. By June 2003 the PAC should have a good idea where it needs to be focusing its energies as it moves closer to the November 4, 2003 Election Day.

December 19, 2002

**Tax Reform Initiative** - Dana Lee and Chris Lockwood provided an update on the signature gathering campaign and the strategy for moving forward to file the petitions with the Secretary of State's office in mid January 2003; to work with the Legislature in March through June; and then move forward with a media outreach/citizen information campaign in September through the November Election. They provided information on the Tax Reform Initiative Steering Committee meeting to be held January 3, 2003. Chris Lockwood noted that the Maine Education Association has officially joined the political action committee and has agreed to make an initial modest financial contribution. He noted that Mark Gray, MEA Executive Director, has been appointed to the Board of Directors. Chris noted that Mr. Gray has asked him to review a draft proposal for funding and to possibly accompany him to Washington DC to present information on the proposal to the National Education Association.

January 23, 2003

**Tax Reform Initiative** - Dana Lee provided an update on the progress of the Tax Reform Initiative. He noted that Governor Baldacci requested a meeting with Chris Lockwood in late December where he requested that MMA not file the petitions and provide him an opportunity to address tax concerns over the next year. Based on the consensus of the MMA President, MMA Vice President, and Chair of the Tax Reform Initiative Steering Committee, MMA declined. Last week Jack Cashman, Legislative Coordinator to the Governor, contacted Chris Lockwood again with basically the same request. Chris Lockwood informed Mr. Cashman that the political action committee did not intend to delay filing the petitions, but that representatives would be willing to attend a meeting to listen to their concerns. A meeting was arranged between Mr. Cashman, Chris Lockwood, Susan Lessard, Dana Lee, and Geoff Herman. Chris Lockwood noted that the discussion focused around the Governor's strategy to deal with comprehensive tax reform, his request to have us hold back on filing the petitions with the Secretary of State Office, and the state budget shortfall. Susan Lessard noted that also discussed during the meeting were the various mandates on municipalities. She noted that MMA has been asked to gather information from municipalities and provide that information to the new administration for their review. Chris Lockwood noted that Geoff Herman has placed a message on the Town/City Managers' Listserv requesting that municipalities identify any state or federal mandates that they believe could be scaled-back, redesigned, or eliminated altogether in an effort to save the expenditure of local tax dollars.

The day after the meeting with Mr. Cashman, the Citizens To Reduce Property Taxes Statewide

filed the petitions with the Secretary of State's Office and put out press releases throughout the State of Maine. There was good press coverage during the filing process and editorial board meetings have been held with the Sun Journal, Bangor Daily News, and the Central Maine Newspapers. Dana Lee noted that the tax reform initiative has been highly successful to date and that we will now move into the next phase of working with the Legislature and monitor its progress. Chris Lockwood provided information relating to polling results conducted by the Potholm Group, which has provided guidance in developing our strategy for moving forward. Chris Lockwood noted that the Maine Education Association has voted in support of the Citizens Initiative and has made a financial contribution of \$2,500. He noted that the Maine Service Centers Coalition has also voted in support of the Citizens Initiative and has made a financial contribution of \$1,000. Mark Gray, Executive Director of the Maine Education Association, and Ed Barrett, Chair of the Maine Service Centers Coalition have been appointed to serve on the Board of Directors of the Citizens group. Chris Lockwood indicated that he would continue to work on identifying other groups to support the Initiative. He noted that he would also continue to meet with Dana Connors of the Maine State Chamber to keep the lines of communication open and to help their leadership understand our proposal.

February 26, 2003

**Update on Tax Reform Initiative** - Dana Lee indicated that the initiative is going well and that the Citizens To Reduce Local Property Taxes Statewide has received official word from the Secretary of State verifying that 96,151 signatures were certified and presented to the 121st Legislature as a petition entitled "School Finance and Tax Reform Act of 2003." He provided a brief overview of the editorial board meetings held during January and early February with Bangor Daily News, Kennebec Journal /Morning Sentinel, and Lewiston Sun Journal. Chris Lockwood noted that Dana Lee is doing a tremendous job leading the tax reform initiative. He distributed copies of the Secretary of State's Certification (Handout 1). Mr. Lockwood provided information on his progress to develop partnerships with other key organizations. He noted that the Maine Education Association, Maine School Boards Association, Maine School Principals' Association, Maine Service Centers Coalition, and the Maine PTA have endorsed the referendum. He also noted that he is in the process of building the Letterhead Committee, which is well underway with the tri-captains being Dana Lee, Jennifer Wixson, and Nicholas Mavodones, along with confirmation of 22 individuals from throughout the State of Maine to have their name and residential community listed on the letterhead of the Citizens to Reduce Local Property Taxes Statewide. He indicated that the Letterhead Committee strategy was developed by Dr. Potholm as a mechanism to show statewide support. Chris Lockwood indicated that during the legislative process the PAC would most likely maintain a low profile. He provided a financial report (Handout 2) on the revenues and expenses to date. He noted that he would be working with Jeff Nevins, Marty Hanish and Chris Potholm over the next several weeks to develop an anticipated budget for the next phase of the campaign noting that MMA is looking for MEA to be a significant financial supporter. He provided information on his work with Mark Gray to develop a proposal, including the anticipated budget, to be presented to the National Education Association. He indicated that a meeting date has not yet been confirmed, but that he is expecting to hear from Mr. Gray in the near future. Chris Lockwood noted that he and Geoff Herman met with Mark Gray and Steve Crouse regarding a common strategy for working with the Legislature. A brief discussion was held on how to proceed with the Maine Education

Association to confirm its commitment to the initiative. Bill Bridgeo asked for an explanation of the \$25,500 for Consultant Fees under the Legislative Initiatives Fund, which appears on the financial report. Chris Lockwood noted that he believed the amount represents polling done by Chris Potholm for the Maine Municipal Association prior to the formation of the political action committee.

May 13, 2003

### **Executive Director Update**

Tax Reform Update - Chris Lockwood noted that he has a meeting with Jeannine Guttman, the Editor of the Portland Press Herald, to follow-up with her regarding the distasteful cartoon displayed on their editorial page as well as the Press Herald's negativity toward the tax reform referendum and MMA in general. He noted that he would report back to the MMA Executive Committee at their next scheduled meeting.

June 6, 2003

**Tax Reform Update** -Dr. Christian Potholm and his associate Tom Black were present to provide an update on the referendum campaign strategy. **Jolene Lovejoy MOVED that the MMA Executive Committee go into Executive Session at 2:59 p.m. The motion was seconded by Elaine Aloes and passed unanimously.**

**Gary Brown MOVED that the MMA Executive Committee come out of Executive Session at 3:08. The motion was seconded by Jolene Lovejoy and passed unanimously.**

**Report from MMA Strategic & Finance Committee** - Dana Lee, Chair of the MMA Strategic & Finance Committee, provided an overview of the May 21, 2003 meeting. After some brief discussions, **Gary Brown Moved that the MMA Executive Committee accept the following proposal:**

**The Executive Committee authorizes the transfer of \$475,049 from the 2002 General Fund operating gain to the Legislative Initiatives Fund, effective December 31, 2002.**

**The Executive Committee authorizes transfers from the General Fund Expendable Fund Balance to the Legislative Initiatives Fund not to exceed \$339,617, such transfers to be implemented by the Executive Director as funds are required.**

**The Executive Committee authorizes the Executive Director to draw on the Legislative Initiatives Fund for contributions to the Citizens to Reduce Local Property taxes Statewide political action committee, in an aggregate amount not to exceed \$989,166, including \$110,000 contributed to date and \$879,166 to be transferred as required, with the concurrence of the MMA President and the Chairman of the Tax Reform Steering Committee.**

**The motion was seconded by Elaine Aloes and passed with all in favor.**

September 2, 2003

[Entire meeting about initiative]

MMA President Susan Lessard called the special meeting of the MMA Executive Committee to order at 10:05 a.m. She thanked members for their efforts to be available on short notice for a special meeting of the Executive Committee. She noted that Anne Swift-Kayatta was unable to participate due to traveling out of state. She called on Geoff Herman to provide an overview of the agenda and purpose of the meeting.

Geoff Herman noted that the Legislature has adopted its competing measure and the campaign season is now underway. Some members of the Legislature and key opponents of the citizen initiative have asked the initiative supporters to consider shifting their support to the competing measure to avoid the need for a full-blown and potentially contentious referendum campaign. He noted that based on informal and incomplete polling, the consensus opinion of the Executive Committee, the PAC, and the campaign strategy team is that the competing measure falls far short of the citizen initiative with respect to the breadth and immediacy of property tax relief and the depth of the tax reform and tax burden structural changes that should be implemented.

The purpose of this meeting is to provide an opportunity for a full discussion of the campaign implementation issues that the Executive Committee believes should be addressed at this critical stage of campaign development.

**Brief overview of the competing measure.** Geoff Herman provided a description of the competing measure, along with some informational materials that help explain its various elements. He distributed the following handouts:

- Key Education Funding Components in the Governor's Competing Tax Relief Measure Preliminary Comparison Estimates Totals (Handout 1)
- Comparison of Essential Programs & Services Preliminary Estimates by Municipality (Handout 2)
- Legislature's Proposal- Impact by Municipality (Handout 3)
- Summary of Stanley Amendment to Competing Measure (Handout 4)

**Comparison of the Competing Measure and Citizens' Initiative.** Geoff Herman then reiterated that some members of the Legislature and key opponents of the citizen initiative have asked the initiative supporters to consider shifting their support to the competing measure to avoid the need for a full-blown and potentially contentious referendum campaign.

John Rohman indicated that he received this morning, and asked permission to distribute to MMA Executive Committee members, a draft analysis prepared by Julie Jones, a State of Maine Research Analyst, that provides a Comparison of the Citizens' Initiative and the Committee Amendments to LD 1629, Resolution, Proposing a Competing Measure Under The Constitution of Maine to Reduce the Cost of Local Government Through Increased State Education Funding and Provide Property Tax Relief. (Handout 5).

Dana Lee noted that supporters of the initiative have consistently maintained since last January that they would review a competing measure in good faith and decide if it met the core goals (pillars) of the citizen initiative as follows:

- (1) To provide significant, immediate and sustainable property tax relief;
- (2) To compel comprehensive overall tax reform;
- (3) To create an incentive system to achieve reasonable and effective restructuring of governmental service delivery systems for the purpose of creating efficiencies; and
- (4) To implement a comprehensive and collaborate plan to reduce Maine's overall tax burden.

He noted that from his perspective, the competing measure does not fulfill three of the four pillars and the fourth is weak. He indicated that he does not believe there is enough offered in the competing measure to compromise the citizens' initiative, however the purpose of today's meeting is to hear from all MMA Executive Committee regarding any issues or concerns they would like to discuss.

Bill Bridgeo indicated that he would like to have the benefit of hearing the various key components outlined in the meeting agenda before being asked to take a position.

**Post-Session Polling.** Geoff Herman indicated that after the Legislature adjourned on August 22, 2003 the campaign consultant immediately prepared and implemented a poll that was designed to probe the strengths and weaknesses of both the competing measure and the citizen initiative. He noted that the preliminary results of that poll were given to staff by the campaign consultant via conference call just prior to this meeting. He noted that the polling instrument was designed to test both strengths and weaknesses of both measures. The preliminary results, 320 of 400 responses, conclude that the competing measure would be to our advantage and has strengthened the citizens' initiative. Chris Lockwood thanked Geoff for summarizing the preliminary results so accurately, and indicated that the polling results have shown that MMA has been on point from the beginning, and that the citizens' initiative needs a strong execution as we move forward. An in-depth discussion has held on the post-session polling results and the proposed media campaign to make distinctions between the two measures so that citizens are well informed when they go to vote on November 4, 2003.

**Membership Expectations.** Dana Lee indicated that the interests and expectations of all of MMA's members is obviously a key consideration with respect to any proposal to move municipal support from the citizen initiative to the competing measure. It was noted that the Maine Education Association is maintaining strong support for moving forward. Geoff Herman provided information that Steve Crouse provided to him regarding a discussion he had recently

with the Governor. A lengthy discussion was held by the Executive Committee to consider whether there continues to be overwhelming support for the citizens' initiative. Elaine Aloes indicated that she has spoken to the other two selectmen in Solon regarding these concerns, and they have indicated full support to move forward with the citizens' initiative. Bill Bridgeo indicated that he is concerned that MMA may win the battle, but lose the war and suffer repercussions from the Legislature in the upcoming legislative session(s). John Rohman indicated that his council would not have any particular allegiance to MMA on the Governor's proposal, but rather would look at the community concerns. Galen Larrabee indicated that the Waldo County municipal officials met on August 28 and discussed the competing measure and the consensus (27/1) was to move forward with the citizens' initiative. Clint Deschene noted that his council met on August 20 and voted to support the citizens' initiative based on the four core elements of the proposal. He stressed the importance of avoiding a smear campaign. Chris Lockwood noted that an ongoing relationship with the Governor and Legislature is very important to the Maine Municipal Association and noted that the tone of the debate needs to maintain high standards. Dana Lee provided information on a session held at the Managers Institute last week where approximately 40 town/city managers participated in an exercise to identify their top issues relating to community strategic planning. He noted that the issue receiving the greatest support was tax reform/tax relief.

**Election Day Scenarios.** Geoff Herman noted that the vote on November 4th would result in 5 possible outcomes. Discussion was held on the consequences of either measure getting the highest plurality and the run-off in 2004.

**Relationship Issues.** Geoff Herman indicated that some concern has been expressed about the degree to which an all-out referendum campaign may damage long-term municipal administration and municipal-Legislature working relationships for next year and over the years to come. An in-depth discussion was held on the need to maintain high standards during the campaign and to work with the Governor and Legislature to the best of our ability without jeopardizing the campaign. It was generally felt that the relationship with the Legislature will withstand the campaign, however concerns were expressed about the fact that the Governor is taking this as a personal attack and will likely cause strain in the relationship throughout his term.

**Tone of the debate.** Geoff Herman noted that there is an inherent tension within the dynamic of a campaign between quiet, rational discourse and the rhetoric of populist advocacy. He noted that some would hope the dialogue of the debate would be highbrow, informative, detailed and accurate. The consultants insist on poll-tested, heavily distilled and simplified sound bites that effectively shape public opinion. Some of the campaign rhetoric (which will all be attributed to "MMA") would both challenge the Legislature's willingness and ability to keep its promises and suggest that there is excessive waste in state government. He noted that walking the line between a civilized debate and overly simplified, negatively perceived sound bites will not be an easy task.

Gary Brown indicated that this is a greatest concern. He stressed the need to use positive messages only, focusing on our strengths, not their weaknesses. Dana Lee shared that the news media has posed questions in a very negative fashion and then emphasized the negatives in their

stories. Geoff Herman provided information on advice being given by our media campaign to present information in an over simplified fashion to attract the common citizen. He noted that MMA would be conducting regional meetings throughout the state in September and October that will provide some of the more technical information for its members and other interested citizens.

**Financial Issues.** Bill Bridgeo indicated that he would like information on the citizens' initiative financial commitments authorized to date for the media campaign and information relating to the schedule for booking airtime of radio and television spots. Jeff Nevins indicated that no financial authorization has been given to move forward with placing airtimes for the television spots. He noted that Erik Potholm is awaiting final authorization from Chris Lockwood based on the outcome of today's MMA Executive Committee meeting. Jeff Nevins reviewed the financial aspects and implementation strategy of the radio and television media campaign. Chris Lockwood noted that he is pleased to announce that two installment payments from the Maine Education Association have been received and that we expect to receive the third and final payment on time.

**Other issues.** Jeff Nevins provided information on the process being used to review requests for speaking engagements and the process to provide rapid responses to editorials and news articles.

Susan Lessard asked if MMA Executive Committee members had any other questions or concerns that they would like to address. She stressed the importance of bringing forth any reservations and/or concerns at this time. Jolene Lovejoy indicated that it would be helpful to have a formal vote on the decision to move forward.

**Jolene Lovejoy MOVED that the Executive Committee of the Maine Municipal Association vote to fully support moving forward with the Citizens' Initiative in light of the fact that the competing measure does not meet the four core goals originally identified by the Citizens' Initiative, and that the tone of the debate be beneficial to the supporting organizations and concentrate on positive aspects of the Citizens' Initiative. The motion was seconded by Elaine Aloes and passed with all in favor.**

September 17, 2003

**Executive Director Update** - Chris Lockwood indicated that the tax reform initiative is heating up and staff in the Executive Office, State & Federal Relations, Communications, and Central Services areas are feeling the pull from their other regular responsibilities. He noted that the MMA Annual Convention is less than a month away and that many of the same staff members have key responsibilities in that area.

**Tax Reform Initiative** - Dana Lee, President of the Citizens to Reduce Local Property Taxes Statewide, and MMA staff provided an update on the campaign strategy for the referendum. An in-depth discussion was held on the campaign strategy and media strategy over the next few months. Discussion was also held on the Legislature's competing measure. Geoff Herman offered to show the PowerPoint presentation for the Tax Reform Initiative to members that were interested in viewing it when the Executive Committee meeting adjourns.

November 20, 2003

**Executive Director Update** - Chris Lockwood noted that the pace of work at the Maine Municipal Association has been very high. He noted that the tax reform effort has required a great deal of commitment by staff members directly involved and those other staff members that have had to assist to assure that our regular services and programs are receiving the same high level of commitment and dedication that the Association is known and expected to provide to its membership.

Chris Lockwood noted that due to the negotiations with the Governor's office on the tax reform initiative, he would not be able to attend the NLC Congress of Cities Conference in December.

**Policy & Legislative Issues** - Chris Lockwood & Geoff Herman provided a detailed overview of the November 4, 2003 election results pertaining to Question 1. It was noted that 1A received a plurality (38%) of the vote. Discussion was held on the pre-election polling results being in the 48% range and what happened during the election process that caused a decline in the support for 1A. Dr. Chris Potholm spoke on the election results and answered questions pertaining to the pre-election polling and factors that played in the percentage of support for 1A declining on Election Day. Chris Lockwood noted that the run-off election for 1A would be Tuesday, June 8, 2004.

Chris Lockwood indicated that he received a call from Governor Baldacci asking if the PAC would be willing to work on a compromise of 1A and 1B. Discussion was held on the Secretary of State's willingness to release information on the number of signatures collected by Carol Palesky and when the results would be certified. Chris Lockwood noted that meeting with the Governor went well, the tone was positive and he congratulated the Citizens to Reduce Local Property Taxes Statewide on running a clean and success campaign. He noted that Governor Baldacci asked that a select group of individuals take the next 30 days to negotiate a compromise of 1A and 1B. The team would consist of Chris Lockwood, Geoff Herman, Steve Crouse, Rob Walker, Dana Connors, Chris Hall, Martha Freeman, Laurie LaChance, Kurt Adams and Jim Rier. He noted that the parties were asked to confirm the parameters and receive authorization necessary to move forward on developing a package to bring to the Governor by the week of December 13, 2003. If accepted, the Governor would then bring to the Legislature in January 2004.

Chris Lockwood provided information on an invitation from Senate Majority Leader Beverly Daggett to meet with Legislative Leadership. He noted that participants from 1A invited to the meeting were Susan Lessard, Chris Lockwood, Geoff Herman, Mark Gray, Rob Walker and Steve Crouse. He provided information on the meeting and noted that the Governor has asked Legislative Leadership to allow 30 days for the Governor's office to work on the above noted negotiations. Chris Lockwood noted that the PAC has a Campaign Strategy Team meeting on

November 21, 2003 to discuss negotiations.

Chris Lockwood noted that at this time he would like to ask the MMA Executive Committee for direction on the Maine Municipal Association's parameters and authorization to move forward with negotiations. An in-depth discussion was held on the PAC's commitment to its respective memberships to see this campaign through, as well as the concerns on moving forward with another major campaign. Geoff Herman provided information on the terms he expects the Governor's office and the Chamber of Commerce will seek to propose in their negotiations. He noted that MMA and MEA are not optimistic of successful negotiations; however he noted that Jim Rier will be involved in the negotiations and is well respected and educated in school funding matters. MMA Executive Committee members shared their views and concerns.

**Dana Lee MOVED that the MMA Executive Committee hereby authorize the transfer of \$20,000 from the General Fund to the Legislatives Initiatives Fund and, further, authorizes the Executive Director, with the approval of the MMA President and the Chair of the Steering Committee, to expend an amount not to exceed \$20,000, as they may determine appropriate, to support the continuing activities of the Citizens to Reduce Local Property Taxes Statewide. The motion was seconded by Anne Swift-Kayatta and passed with all in favor.** Gary Brown asked that the MMA staff provide the MMA Executive Committee with a recap of the financial report for the Citizens to Reduce Local Property Taxes Statewide by the end of 2003.

December 8, 2003

**Update on Tax Reform Initiative** - Geoff Herman provided a detailed update on meeting discussions and negotiations with the Governor's office since November 20, 2003. He noted that to date the Governor's offer was not up to MMA/MEA's acceptance level. The Executive Committee provided guidance in terms of key parameters and directed the staff to continue negotiations within this framework (Note: To maintain confidentiality during negotiations, the information on the Executive Committee's parameters will be retained in the Tax Reform files). Chris Lockwood noted that MMA has indicated to the Governor's office that the personal property tax cannot be part of this compromise and will need to be dealt with separately. Discussion was held on the progress of the Palesky campaign. Discussion was held on the Maine Education Association and the Maine School Management Association's acceptance of the EPS compromises being proposed. Geoff Herman noted that the Maine School Management Association is more concerned about it than the Maine Education Association and is being very cautious.

December 18, 2003

**Update on Tax Reform Initiative** - Chris Lockwood and Geoff Herman provided a detailed update on the negotiations with the Governor's office. Chris Lockwood indicated that there is a special meeting of the Campaign Strategy Team scheduled to meet this afternoon. He noted an early January meeting would be scheduled for representatives from the various partners of the PAC to discuss the outcome of the campaign, to discuss what it would take to gain support from

their respective constituencies, and to provide guidance on the strategies being considered. Chris Lockwood provided a summary financial report for the campaign (Handout 1).

January 15, 2004

**Update on Tax Reform Initiative** - Chris Lockwood provided an update and distributed copies of the e-mail sent out late yesterday afternoon providing information and background materials on the negotiations with the Governor's office (Handout 1). He noted that the threshold issue that remains unresolved pertains to the ramp-up from the current GPA funding level to reach 55% of EPS by FY 2010. He noted that he is awaiting an e-mail response from Martha Freeman on this issue, which should be available shortly. He provided information on other factors involved in the negotiations, which include the timing of release of information on the negotiations and the Governor's State of the State Address scheduled for Tuesday, January 20; and the Personal Property Tax being a side bar to the agreement. Executive Committee members were provided an opportunity to state their position on the progress and details of the negotiations.

Chris Lockwood distributed a copy of the e-mail received from Martha Freeman (Handout 2) and reviewed the three questions posed to the Maine Municipal Association as follows:

Question 1. Could the compromise include this: In statute, a commitment to ramp up to 55% by FY10, the ramping to be determined by the Implementation Group, with the FY 05 amount you and we have agreed upon to be budgeted for FY 05?

Question 2. Could the ramping up have a parallel mechanism for determining resulting property tax relief achievement, the mechanism to be determined by the Implementation Group (and I haven't run this by anyone, but my thought is that the basis for this mechanism would be the average mill expectation for the local share of school funding that accompanies the increased and increasing state share)?

Question 3. Could you publicly support the repeal of the personal property tax on business equipment and machinery, provided that the savings to the state are returned to affected municipalities so that the loss of that tax base is not shifted to residential property owners?

An in-depth discussion was held on the components of the negotiations and the need to develop a campaign strategy for the June 2004 election. Chris Lockwood provided information on the MMA finances and MEA proposed finances available for the campaign. Discussion was held on developing a campaign strategy.

It was the unanimous vote of the MMA Executive Committee that the Executive Director:

1. Report back to the Governor's office that the Maine Municipal Association will withdraw from the negotiations if the State does not adhere to the proposed Agreement as outlined and dated 12/31/03;

2. Respond to Question 1 - That there needs to be specific information on the ramp-up percentages for 2006-2008;
3. Response to Question 2 - The proposed agreement already includes this; and
4. Response to Question 3 - Could not publicly support the repeal of the personal property tax - Need to stick with the language in the proposed agreement that states "the Governor's Administration, the MMA and the Chamber of Commerce Implementation Group, in acting in concert with the charges given to it under Section IV, shall immediately establish a process of negotiation to seek to develop in good faith a re-design of the Governor's proposal acceptable to these parties."
5. Stress the importance of the time element.

The Executive Committee further directed the Executive Director to begin developing a campaign strategy for the June 2004 election, which would be brought forward to the MMA Executive Committee for their review at their January 22, 2004 meeting.

January 22, 2004

**Tax Reform Initiative** - Chris Lockwood and Geoff Herman provided an update on MMA tax reform efforts since the January 15, 2004 Executive Committee Conference Call and distributed an article that was prepared for the next issue of the Legislative Bulletin (Handout 1). Chris Lockwood noted that he has had an opportunity to talk with the Ed Barrett, President of the Maine Service Centers Coalition, to confirm that they are in agreement with the positions that the Maine Municipal Association and the Maine Education Association are taking on the negotiations with the Governor. He provided information on the January 15 meeting with the Governor and noted that the tone of the meeting was positive although there was no agreement on the resolved issues. Chris Lockwood provided information on the January 21, 2004 meeting of key staff from MMA and MEA to begin mapping out the strategy and funding for the June 8, 2004 campaign. The MMA Executive Committee engaged in a lengthy discussion on the strategy for the campaign and provided some guidance for moving forward.

February 19, 2004

**Update on Tax Reform Initiative and Property Tax Cap Initiative** - Chris Lockwood provided a detailed update on discussions with the Governor's Office and efforts to develop a campaign strategy for the June 8, 2004 election for the tax reform-school funding initiative. He provided information on the Governor's plan to introduce legislation to address tax reform and school funding efforts. The Executive Committee had an opportunity to share their thoughts on anticipated voter turnout in their respective communities for the June election as well as what they are hearing regarding tax reform issues. Geoff Herman provided information on the atmosphere at the Maine Legislature given that this is an election year, and discussions with legislators on tax reform efforts. Discussion was held on the tax cap initiative and when it will appear on the ballot. Chris Lockwood noted that MMA legal staff is providing a legal opinion on the constitutional provision governing the time for having a citizen initiative appear on the ballot. Bill Bridgeo suggested that the Maine Municipal Association consider having an outside legal opinion done as soon as possible in the event the Legislature puts the tax cap initiative on the June 2004 ballot. He noted that an outside legal opinion could not be challenged as a conflict of

interest for the Association. Geoff Herman indicated that the Governor's package includes three legislative bills, which basically are a result of the compromise and includes 80% of what MMA and MEA wanted. He also provided information on the Legislative Working Group formulated by Senate President Beverly Daggett and House Speaker Patrick Colwell. He noted that MMA and MEA were invited to have representatives join members of the Legislature from both parties in discussions to reach a compromise on these issues. He indicated that the first meeting was held February 19 and was disappointing. The next meeting of the Legislative Working Group is scheduled for February 24. Chris Lockwood indicated that he would keep the MMA Executive Committee updated on the progress of the campaign for the June election.

March 17, 2004

**Update on Tax Reform Initiative & Property Tax Cap Initiative** - Chris Lockwood and Geoff Herman provided an update on discussions with the Governor's office, efforts to work with the Legislature, the tax cap initiative, and efforts to develop a campaign strategy for the June 8, 2004 election for the tax reform-school funding initiative. Chris Lockwood noted that the situation remains incredibly fluid and that meetings are being held between representatives of MMA and Maine Education Association (MEA) to develop strategies for moving forward. He noted that the MMA Executive Committee budgeted \$400,000 to be used for the campaign, which is contained in the Legislative Initiatives Fund. He noted that MMA also built some additional costs into the 2004 operating budget for in-kind contributions. He indicated that the MEA has requested \$300,000 from the National Education Association (NEA) to help support that campaign, as well as \$50,000 from their budget that could possibly be used toward the campaign, if needed. He noted that MEA expects to hear a favorable response from NEA within the next week. Dana Lee noted that the proposed budget of \$750,000 includes \$550,000 to support Question 1A and \$200,000 to defeat the Palesky Tax Cap Proposal. Chris Lockwood outlined several assumptions considered in developing the proposed strategy. He provided an overview of the proposed strategy.

Executive Committee members had an opportunity to share their thoughts on the proposed strategy and to ask any questions regarding the initiatives. Executive Committee members expressed grave concerns regarding the anticipated negative implications that would be associated with a contractual relationship between MMA and the pro casino consultant (s). Dana Lee and Chris Lockwood provided information on the difficulty of identifying effective grassroots consultants that would be able or willing to work on the campaign. Dana Lee and Chris Lockwood indicated that they would not feel comfortable moving forward on the proposed strategy unless there was a unanimous vote of the MMA Executive Committee.

**Dana Lee MOVED that the Executive Committee of the Maine Municipal Association authorize the Executive Director to move forward with the proposed strategy which includes a contractual relationship between the Political Action Committee for the Citizens to Reduce Local Property Taxes Statewide and Grassroots Solutions. The motion was seconded by Ryan Pelletier. MMA President Lovejoy called for a roll call vote. The motion failed with 2 in favor (Dana Lee and Ryan Pelletier) and 10 opposed.** Chris Lockwood indicated that he would talk with MEA regarding the Executive Committee's position and would try to identify another grassroots consultant. He noted that a conference call of the MMA

Executive Committee would be scheduled in the near future to discuss an alternative strategy for the campaign.

**Bill Bridgeo MOVED that the Executive Committee of the Maine Municipal Association authorize the Executive Director to draw on the Legislative Initiatives Fund for contributions to the Citizens to Reduce Local Property Taxes Statewide political action committee, in an aggregate amount not to exceed \$100,000, with the concurrence of the MMA President and the Chairman of the Campaign Strategy Team for the purposes of promoting Question 1A and the ability to identify a possible grassroots consultant. The motion was seconded by Ryan Pelletier. MMA President Lovejoy called for a roll call vote. The motion passed with all in favor.**

May 26, 2004

**Tax Reform and Tax Cap Initiatives** - Jolene Lovejoy welcomed Erik Potholm (via speaker telephone) from the media firm, Stevens Reed Curcio & Potholm. She noted that Mr. Potholm has been invited to participate in the discussions on the tax reform and tax cap initiatives. Chris Lockwood provided an overview of the MEA and MMA grassroots efforts to get out the vote on June 8. He noted that there has been little support from the MMA membership in developing the phone tree approach. Chris Lockwood provided a detailed overview of the results from the recent Tom Kiley Poll focusing on the Palesky Initiative and Question 1. Discussion was held on the polling results. Erik Potholm provided information on the current media television ads being run in opposition to Question 1 and their recent media buy to increase their gross rating points. Chris Lockwood provided an overview of a proposed resolve (Handout 1) and a recap of the 2004 Tax Reform Initiative Financial Report dated May 26, 2004 (Handout 2). **Dana Lee MOVED that the Executive Committee of the Maine Municipal Association authorize the Executive Director to draw on the Legislative Initiative Fund for contributions to the Citizens to Reduce Local Property Taxes Statewide policy action committee, or to any anti-tax cap coalition as deemed appropriate by the MMA Executive Director, in an aggregate amount not to exceed \$150,000, with the concurrence of the MMA President and the Chairman of the Campaign Strategy Team. The motion was seconded by Nick Mavodones and passed with all in favor.**

May 28, 2004

MMA President Jolene Lovejoy called the special conference call of the Executive Committee of the Maine Municipal Association to order at 11:03 a.m. She noted that due to the urgent nature and short notice of the need for this conference call, the meeting would not be considered as part of the attendance records for the Executive Committee.

Chris Lockwood noted that the purpose of the conference call was to provide information on the opponents to Question 1 making a significant increase to their television media buy for the final week of the campaign. He noted that as a result their ad would air almost three times to each airing of the ads by the Citizens to Reduce Local Property Taxes Statewide. He noted that the Campaign Strategy Team would be meeting to discuss this and other campaign issues, but that he wanted to keep the MMA Executive Committee apprised of this new development. Chris

Lockwood noted that recognizing it would be exceptionally difficult to match this increased buy on a dollar for dollar basis, Erik Potholm had advised MMA that it would be very helpful if the political action committee could increase the buy to attain 1,000 gross rating points (an estimated cost of \$45,000 - \$50,000). The unanimous direction from the eight Executive Committee members who participated in the conference call was that MMA should contribute additional funds to increase the media buy for the final week of the campaign, with the hope that the Maine Education Association might be able to contribute to this effort. Chris Lockwood noted that he would follow-up with the Maine Education Association and would report back to the Executive Committee on their willingness and ability to contribute to this effort.

June 17, 2004

**Tax Reform Initiative** - Jolene Lovejoy congratulated the Maine Municipal Association staff and board members on the passage of Question 1. Chris Lockwood provided an overview of the June 8 election results on Question 1. He distributed a document prepared by Jeff Austin, which provides a chronological timeline of our efforts since April 2003 (Handout 1) and a copy of the consensus recommendation of the Tax Reform Working Group, a bi-partisan group of legislators, MEA and MMA representatives (Handout 2). Geoff Herman indicated that the questions at hand are when and how Question 1 will be implemented. He noted that pursuant to the Constitution, it will be the responsibility of the newly-elected Legislature to implement Question 1, which will take effect 45 days after the Legislature convenes in January, 2005. He noted that there are three areas of the Initiative that are in question.

1. The Initiative calls for the State to pay 55% of the “total allocation”. He noted that since the Initiative was written in 2002, the Essential Programs and Services school funding model (EPS) has been introduced and developed so that as part of the compromise, the EPS allocation system could be substituted for the term “total allocation” in the initiative.
2. The Initiative calls for the State to pay 100% of special education. He indicated that as part of legislation already enacted (LD 1924), the EPS model will include systems for identifying the costs of special education. In addition, according to directives in that legislation, the state is called upon to more strongly support high-cost in-district and out of district special education services. He noted that with the June 8th vote, MMA and MEA are positioned to obtain a very high state cost-share percentage for the high-cost special education services over which the schools have no control, allowing the more routine special education services to be brought into the model.
3. The Initiative suggests the State’s 55% obligation should be met in the first year of implementation. He stated that the original compromise package would have allowed the implementation to be phased in over a 5-year period (through FY 2010), but that compromise was contingent on a \$40 million boost to GPA in the next fiscal year, which the Legislature did not provide. A subsequent Resolution that in the last hour of the legislative session was presented to but not adopted by the Senate provided a straight-line four-year ramp-up period (through FY 09) as the maximum phase-in period. Both MMA and MEA indicated to the

Resolution's authors a willingness to not obstruct that implementation schedule should it become necessary.

Geoff Herman noted that staff representatives for MEA and MMA have been moving forward with the understanding that if the Legislature is unable to implement Question 1 as soon as possible, we would not object if implementation was no less than the phased in objective.

The MMA Executive Committee held a two-hour discussion on the efforts of the PAC to work with the Administration and Legislature over the past several months on a compromise, and whether it was the intent of the Executive Committee, after both negotiations failed, that the elements of the compromise would still be on the table as the Maine Municipal Association and Maine Education Association worked to secure the votes needed to pass Question 1 on June 8.

Representing one side of that discussion, Dana Lee noted that as Chair of Political Action Committee it was his understanding that, after negotiations with the Administration and Legislature failed, the PAC was moving forward with Initiative as proposed. He stated that there was no vote by the MMA Executive Committee authorizing staff to move forward with the elements of the compromise still on the table after negotiations failed. He noted that the Kiley Poll shows a historic resentment toward taxes in Maine and expressed the view that MMA will suffer internally if the decision is made to go outside of the one-year implementation of the Initiative.

Several Executive Committee members expressed related concerns that the integrity of the Association be upheld and that moving forward with elements of the compromise would not be in the best interest of the Association. Arguments made supporting the other side of the discussion were: (1) the Legislature in all likelihood will not be implementing Question 1 in a single year and it would be better for the municipalities if MMA were constructively involved in framing the implementation rather than on the sidelines; (2) if MMA begins to immediately demand a one-year implementation of Question 1 it could drive the Chamber of Commerce onto the sidelines in the Palesky debate; (3) it is not known what effect on the voters either an immediate or phased-in implementation of Question 1 would have with respect to the Palesky vote, and until that is known (perhaps with some polling) the Executive Committee should not be making a statement that could be detrimental to the November 2 vote.

Discussion was held on state and local government working collaboratively to do what is best for the State of Maine and its citizens. It was noted that the Palesky Initiative is real and that all levels of government, education and business need to work together to defeat its threat.

Discussion was held on the timetable for the Legislature to make a decision on the implementation of Question 1. Geoff Herman indicated that it should not take place until after the November election and that in the meantime staff would be working on drafting legislative bills for their consideration during the next Legislative Session.

Discussion was held on what MMA's position with respect to the implementation of Question 1 should be. Jeff Nevins suggested that a summary of that position at this point in time might be something to the effect of: "Now that Question 1 has been adopted by the voters, the Initiative

will become law in early 2005 and its implementation will be the responsibility of the next Legislature. Before Question 1 becomes law and is implemented by the Legislature, the Palesky tax cap initiative will be coming before the voters of Maine and MMA will be focusing its energy on defeating that initiative.” Seven Executive Committee members took the position to support this position and messaging, two were opposed (Dana Lee, Ruth Marden).

Chris Lockwood provided an update on MMA’s involvement in the organizational efforts and strategy for the umbrella political action committee for the Anti-Palesky campaign.

To: MMA's Executive Committee  
Fr: Geoff Herman  
Re: Timetable for the Tax Reform Initiative  
Date: May 22, 2002

On May 16<sup>th</sup> MMA's Legislative Policy Committee voted unanimously to recommend to the Executive Committee that MMA proceed with the development of a citizen initiative for tax reform.

The specific motions and votes were as follows:

**Motion:** MMA should continue to advocate for comprehensive tax reform.  
*Adopted unanimously.*

**Motion:** The comprehensive tax reform effort should be advanced to the voters directly, through a citizen initiative, rather than submitted only to the Legislature.  
*Adopted unanimously.*

**Motion.** The citizen initiative to achieve comprehensive tax reform developed by MMA should establish as a matter of law the property tax relief the municipalities are seeking but should leave to the Legislature the changes to the tax system that would need to be implemented to provide that relief. *Adopted with two dissenting votes.*

**Plan of Action.** The various steps to proceed with a citizen-based tax reform initiative, and the time frame for each, is as follows:

- May 29, 30: **Executive Committee.** Consideration of motion to proceed with development of a citizen initiative. Authorize President to appoint the EC/LPC Tax Reform Steering Committee (see proposed motion, below).
- May 31: **President.** Appointment of the Steering Committee
- June 1-19: **Steering Committee.** Development the basic concept and components of the tax reform proposal.

- June 15: **MMA staff.** Publication of the June issue of the *Maine Townsman*, including an article explaining and justifying the need for tax reform.
- June 20: **Executive Committee.** Update on the work of the Steering Committee. Decision regarding the formation of the Political Action Committee.
- June 21: **PAC.** Filing of the paperwork forming the Political Action Committee.
- June 20 --  
July 15: **Steering Committee.** Deadline to finalize the tax reform proposal.
- July 15: **MMA staff.** New LPC is elected. Congratulations, notice and agenda for the first LPC meeting is mailed, including Steering Committee recommendation.
- July 23: **LPC.** First meeting of the newly elected LPC to consider the recommendation of the Steering Committee.
- July 15 --  
Aug 15: Executive Committee election period (approx.). **Option.** Opportunity for broad member review and ratification of Steering Committee proposal.
- Aug 7: **Executive Committee.** Consideration and finalization of the tax reform recommendation of the Steering Committee.
- Aug 15: **PAC.** Submission of the proposed initiative to the Secretary of State.
- Aug. 15: **MMA staff.** Deadline for development of Convention elements related to tax reform project.
- Aug 1 --  
Sept 30: **PAC/MMA staff.** Broad regional promotion of the initiative. Organization of petition drive to be primarily implemented on November 5. Recruitment of volunteers, volunteer training, coordination with all municipalities.
- Oct 16 – 18: **MMA’s Annual Convention.** Second opportunity for broad membership ratification. Alternatively, opportunity for promotion, volunteer recruitment and training.
- Nov 5: **Election day.** 100,000 signature goal.

**Proposed Motion:** The Executive Committee endorses the development of a comprehensive tax reform proposal to be advanced as a citizen initiative by authorizing the President to appoint a Tax Reform Steering Committee made up of elected and appointed municipal officials from the Executive Committee, Legislative Policy Committee and general municipal membership. The charge to the Steering Committee is as follows:

1. To develop a comprehensive tax reform proposal to be advanced as a citizen initiative and to provide that recommended proposal to the Association's Executive Committee and Legislative Policy Committee.
  - a. To identify the basic concept and core components of that initiated proposal for the purposes of providing an initial recommendation to the Executive Committee by June 20, 2002.
  - b. To fully develop and finalize the recommended tax reform proposal for the purposes of providing the final recommendation to the Legislative Policy Committee on July 15 for the LPC's July 23, 2002 meeting.
2. To serve as the Steering Committee to provide ongoing advice to the Executive Committee and the Legislative Policy Committee with respect to the implementation of the citizen initiation process throughout 2002 and the promotion of citizen initiated tax reform proposal in 2003 should the petition drive be successful.



## Maine Municipal Association

60 COMMUNITY DRIVE  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04330-9486  
(207) 623-8428  
www.memun.org

To: MMA's Tax Reform Steering Committee

Fr: Geoff Herman

Re: Developing the blue print of a citizen initiative

Date: June 5, 2002

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The Executive Committee's charge to the Steering Committee is to come out of the meeting on June 13<sup>th</sup> with the blue print of a citizen initiative for comprehensive tax reform. That is an enormous task.

Even the task of providing you with all the data that would be useful to you in this endeavor is daunting. As a starting point, we have included in this mailing a number of charts, graphs and tables that will be used in an article in the June issue of the *Maine Townsman* explaining the drive for tax reform. These data merely document what you already know, that the state's over-reliance on the property tax to fund K-12 education began in earnest after the 1991 recession when the Legislature began flat-funding public schools (between 1991 and 1997), and the gap between local spending and state spending for public schools has been growing ever since. The two major reasons for the state's incapacity to fund education is a volatile state tax code and unabated educational mandates. There is no news in these data; merely some numbers to demonstrate the facts.

Also included in this mailing is an 11" x 17" spreadsheet that attempts to lay out the core elements of a tax reform initiative and identify the range of decisions that the Steering Committee might make with respect to each of these core elements. The spreadsheet assumes that three major components of the tax reform package are: (1) BALANCE among the major taxes, shifting pressure off the property tax; (2) VOLATILITY REDUCTION through expanding the sales tax base; and (3) REVENUE NEUTRALITY or, potentially, burden reduction.

(In providing this decision-making matrix to the Committee, I am not trying to limit the possibilities that the Steering Committee may want to consider. If the Steering Committee finds this format unhelpful, I will certainly understand.)

What follows is a column-by-column explanation of the spreadsheet along with some background information pertinent to the individual elements of a tax reform product; information that would have cluttered up the spreadsheet and which deserves a more complete discussion by the Steering Committee, in any event.

**Introduction.** As far as I know, the Steering Committee has been given plenty of latitude to develop whatever tax reform initiative the Committee sees fit. It should be noted, however, that the Legislative Policy Committee (LPC) was asked for a preliminary recommendation on the scope of a tax reform initiative at its meeting on May 16<sup>th</sup>. The LPC recommended a *simple* proposal that focuses on providing the property tax relief as a matter of law, leaving to the Legislature the details of the changes to the state tax code that would be required to relieve the property tax.

It is a common recommendation that a proposal to be advanced as a citizen initiative should be much simpler in design than a proposal advanced to the Legislature. The existing tax code is very complex, however, and the Steering Committee will likely find itself caught between the advantages of a simple proposal and developing a tax reform package that is truly “comprehensive”.

**Financial Scope of Property Tax Relief.** The first column on the spreadsheet focuses on the overall size of the property tax relief that should be obtained in a tax reform measure. Under each of the property tax relief increments (\$50 - \$100 million, \$100 - \$200 million, etc.) you will find in italics the approximate value or cost of various programs or existing tax relief systems. We have included this information only for the purpose of providing some context. Please do not get the impression that making a decision regarding the scope of the property tax relief will lock the Steering Committee into a particular relief mechanism.

**Mechanics of Property Tax Relief.** If the Steering Committee follows the recommendation of the LPC, the central element of the tax reform initiative will be the actual mechanism of property tax relief. Through what system or systems will \$100 million, \$200 million or \$300 million-plus of newly created state revenue be distributed to most efficiently and effectively relieve the property tax? The spreadsheet organizes some possibilities into four categories.

Municipal subsidy. The existing “municipal subsidy” systems are municipal revenue sharing, the homestead exemption, or possibly the state takeover of county jails. For context purposes, the spreadsheet reveals the moving parts of these existing systems. For example, if the decision was to increase revenue sharing by \$200 million, the percentage of sales and income taxes dedicated to that purpose would increase by roughly 10 percentage points, from 5.1% to 15%. Every \$1,000 of homestead exemption costs the state \$6 million, so if the exemption were increased from \$7,000 to \$20,000, the increased cost to the state would be \$78 million. According to our calculations, the cost of operating county jails is approximately 2/3 of the overall cost of county government, or about \$45 million in property taxes each year.

It is probably fair to say that to the degree the property tax relief system consists of a large infusion of “stringless” new money to municipalities, the revenue neutrality or tax burden reduction element of the plan will need to be emphasized.

Educational subsidy. With respect to the education subsidy systems, two ideas have often been suggested: (1) requiring the state to pay 100% of special education; or (2) forcing the state as a matter of law to truly pay 55% (or some alternative percentage) of the total cost of K-12 education, or both.

According to our calculations, the property tax is currently exposed to approximately \$100 million in unreimbursed costs of special education. An obvious state concern is that 100% state funding will tend to exacerbate the phenomenon of “over identification”, which the school systems are already accused of doing. If the state pays 100% of all special educational costs, the growth of that industry will likely explode. On the other hand, perhaps that is what it will take to get an handle on special education services.

The requirement for the state to pay a certain share of the total educational allocation will trigger a need to define the total educational allocation. Otherwise the initiative will be contributing to an expenditure-driven system that contains no checks against an ever-increasing tax burden on both the local and state level. We ran into trouble in the McGowan legislation in the identification of the “total allocation”. The Department of Education wrote up a good definition, which begins with the actual total expenditures on the state and local level for K-12 education (\$1.6 billion). To begin with, the total allocation would include all the foundation allocation, debt service allocation *and* “local option” appropriations. In that sense, all school districts would be held harmless, regardless of how much they were spending on their local schools. The definition went on, however, to refine the definition of “total allocation” over time as the Essential Programs and Services (EPS) funding model begins to go on-line. If EPS is first implemented, for example, to cover all operational costs (but not the “program costs” like special education or transportation) then the “total allocation” would be the amount identified by EPS for the operational costs, and the total state-local amount for the program costs. As the EPS system was implemented to cover the various program costs, the “total allocation” would gradually become the amount EPS determined was adequate for each school system.

It is clear at this point that there is not enough knowledge of, or faith in, the EPS system, where it is in the early design stage. The lack of faith is particularly acute among the school systems that for various reasons spend more-than-average on education. Therefore, if the initiative is going to require the state to pay, for example, 55% of the total educational allocation, the legitimate question is “55% of what”? Even among some in our own membership, the right answer is not (as least as of yet) “EPS”.

Tax caps. With respect to capping the property tax for education, as was the centerpiece of the McGowan legislation, it should be noted that a split-rate system that would cap non-residential rates and residential rates at different levels requires a change to the state’s constitution, which is something that a citizen initiative cannot include. A flat-rate cap for educational purposes would not require a constitutional change, but there would probably be a reluctance to provide a substantial property tax break to Maine’s wealthy non-residents.

Another issue to wrestle with is the extent to which a local legislative body is authorized, by referendum or any other means, to appropriate money over a capped mill rate to support the schools.

“One-Third”. The mechanism labeled on the spreadsheet as “1/3, 1/3, 1/3” refers to the concept of simply requiring the state to expand the sales tax, and adjust sales tax rates as may be necessary, so that the sales tax will contribute roughly one-third of the total revenue contributed by the three major taxes. To accomplish that, the sales tax would have to generate between \$200 million and \$300 million more than it does currently. That extra revenue, according to this mechanism, would be dedicated to providing property tax relief but the exact method of distributing that relief would be left up to the Legislature, presumably with some guidance. The theory behind this proposal is that the more complicated methods of distributing subsidy and targeting property tax relief to where it is most needed are difficult to achieve with the required simplicity of a citizen initiative.

Cash-in Homestead? A question that is always on the table is whether the proposal, whatever it might be, should cash-in the homestead exemption to help finance the whole package...trading up, as it were, for a more substantial relief package.

**Sales Tax Expansion.** The column regarding volatility focuses on the details of the sales tax base expansion. The municipalities have consistently focused on the sales tax as both the source of revenue to fund the re-balancing of the overall tax code and the most volatile of revenue generators.

The capacity of the sales tax to expand to the tune of \$100 million, \$200 million, or \$300 or more million dollars is a political question. The low-hanging fruit, such as amusement and recreational, personal and membership services are both low and hanging, but do not generate enormous sums of money. \$60 - \$80 million is probably not too hard to generate with a sales tax expansion. Beyond that, the opposition will heat up. The business community will be very concerned about taxes on business-to-business services with a “pyramiding” argument. The professional services lobby (architects, accountants, lawyers, etc.), the advertising lobby, and the financial services lobby (banks, call centers, financial advisors) will all put up a stink. The analysis Maine Revenue Services did for the McGowan proposal suggested that a broad-based expansion to cover a “do-able” range of services, coupled with an increase in the rate of the *meals and lodging tax* only, from 7% to 8%, could generate as much as \$385 million.

The various decisions that will have to be made about this part of the initiative should be self-explanatory. Conventional wisdom suggests that the initiative should not include a detailed expansion of the sales tax base to include a long list of new services subject to the tax for any number of technical and political reasons. At the same time, the McGowan proposal was sharply criticized by some because it left the details of the sales tax expansion to the Legislature.

The Steering Committee should also consider the possibility that even though the initiative might direct the Legislature to expand the sales tax base to generate a certain amount of revenue, the Legislature could fail to accomplish that task. Therefore, consideration might be given to ensuring the generation of the necessary revenue by raising the sales tax rate as a matter of law, as a default, unless the Legislature implements the more preferable plan of expanding the base in a relatively progressive way.

After determining how detailed or merely advisory the initiative should be with respect to the sales tax expansion, another question to the Steering Committee is whether an effort should be made to widen the sales tax base sufficiently to pay for both the property tax relief and either income tax relief or a sales tax rate reduction. Many would question the capacity of the sales tax expansion to relieve both the property tax in a meaningful way *and* relieve one of the other major taxes.

**Neutrality and/or burden reduction.** Perhaps the most challenging element of the initiative will be the component that addresses the issue of overall revenue neutrality or, even more challenging, tax burden reduction.

Given today's tax-conscious climate, where Maine's overall tax burden is characterized on almost a daily basis as the highest or among the highest in the nation, it is very likely that whatever tax burden shifting the initiative calls for will be scrutinized for its impact on the overall tax burden of the state. During the debate on the McGowan proposal, a frequent criticism is that LD 2086 guaranteed a (sales) tax increase, but only hoped-for a proportionate (property) tax decrease. For whatever it may be worth, the House Republican Office has already indicated that its potential support for the initiative rests on the degree that revenue neutrality (appropriately defined) can be guaranteed.

Given a local or state legislature's inherent authority to levy taxes as it feels necessary, the spreadsheet attempts to provide a spectrum of neutrality or burden-reduction mechanisms that run from the rhetorical to the potentially enforceable.

At the least enforceable end of the spectrum, the initiative could simply direct the Legislature to implement the tax shift outlined in the plan in a "revenue neutral" manner. For the rest of time, however, people would probably argue about what that means.

One step up from that, the initiative could direct the Legislature to clearly define tax burden, analyze the tax burden of all the states in an apples-to-apples way, identify states similar to Maine with respect to population, geographic area, and educational performance, analyze why the other states have a lower burden, and develop a plan to lower Maine' burden over time.

One step up from that might be the Tax Revenue Targeting system that Governor King introduced in 1998. Soundly rejected by the Legislature, Tax Revenue Targeting created a system whereby there was a deliberate legislative decision at the beginning of each biennium to identify the overall tax burden as a percent of Total Personal Income.

Once the tax revenue targets were established, the Legislature and the municipalities (in the aggregate) would have to work within those targets during the two-year period.

One step up from that would be for the initiative to establish limits on the growth of municipal commitment from one year to the next, perhaps in accordance with the growth in Total Personal Income. For a municipality to exceed that growth in commitment, under this model, the voters would have to approve that budget at referendum.

Finally, the initiative could simply direct the Legislature to lower Maine's overall tax burden within a certain number of years. It would be dangerous, however, to peg Maine's appropriate tax burden to a certain number (e.g., 11% of Total Personal Income) given the assortment of methodologies that are available to measure tax burden.

**Other Elements.** There are probably many more elements than the three listed in the last column that should be brought to the attention of the steering committee. What we have listed here is:

Exempt Property. Should the initiative include any language, either changes to current law or merely directive, to address the problem of the narrowing of the property tax base because of the growth of tax exempt charities?

Personal Property. The business community wants the personal property tax repealed. Should the initiative address this issue, or the related issues of BETR and TIF?

Rear Guard Action. It should go without saying that any shift of burden from the property tax to the state will have to include language that will prevent the Legislature from paying for that shift by reducing or flat-funding the growth of other subsidies. For example, GPA appropriations have grown, on average, 5% a year since 1998. 5% of \$700 million is \$35 million, so if this initiative shifts \$200 million in burden over to the state, it would only take 5 years of flat-funding GPA to get us back to where we started.

I hope this background is helpful as you prepare for the meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup>. Many of the elements of an initiative as identified on the spreadsheet have been drafted at some time or another for various tax reform proposals over the years, and I hope to have many samples for your review at our meeting next Thursday evening. I look forward to seeing you then.

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Tax Reform Initiative Internal Team  
(*Geoff Herman, Kate Dufour, Kirsten Hebert, Laura Veilleux,  
Jeff Nevins, Mike Starn, Chuck Jackson, Theresa Chavarie*)

CC: Management Group

FROM: Chris Lockwood

DATE: June 12, 2002

RE: Internal Coordination/Organization for the Tax Reform Initiative Effort

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This is in follow-up to our June 5 meeting. I appreciated everyone's involvement and participation and look forward to working closely with you over the next several months.

**KEY ROLES/RESPONSIBILITIES:** With Theresa's assistance, I have redrafted the Outline of Key Roles and Responsibilities to hopefully reflect the discussion at the meeting. I have also made a few additions, which occurred to me in follow-up to the meeting. Please review the enclosed draft and let me know if you have any questions or additional suggestions.

**TIME LINE:** We noticed that there was a typo on the Time Line that went out the Steering Committee. Please note that the third meeting of the Steering Committee should have been "July 10 or 11". We will be checking on these tentative meeting dates to confirm them with the members at their June 13 meeting.

**MEETINGS OF THE INTERNAL TEAM:** We have tentatively scheduled meetings every two weeks until the November election. Although I realize that not every team member will be available during vacations, etc., I hope that we can put in place a meeting schedule that will allow us to have regular updates on the activities relating to this effort. The meetings are currently scheduled for the **Library Conference Room at 10:00 a.m.** on the following dates. I anticipate that most of them will go for 1 hour. It would be helpful if you could let Theresa know if you are not able to attend any of the scheduled meetings:

Friday, June 14, 2002  
Thursday, June 27, 2002  
Thursday, July 11, 2002  
Wednesday, July 24, 2002  
Thursday, August 8, 2002  
Thursday, August 22, 2002  
Tuesday, September 10, 2002  
Tuesday, September 24, 2002  
Tuesday, October 8, 2002  
Wednesday, October 23, 2002

**STAFF INVOLVEMENT AT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS:** For those staff members who are part of the internal team or may play a supportive role and who have an interest in attending the Steering Committee meetings, please feel welcome to do so. The meetings will be held in Section A&B of the Large Conference Room. Please let Theresa know if you plan to attend these meetings so that we can make the appropriate arrangements.

**LISTSERV FOR STEERING COMMITTEE:** We are in the process of having a Listserv created for the Steering Committee. It should be up and running by Thursday, June 13, so we should be able to inform Steering Committee members at their meeting that evening. This will be a "closed" site, which will be maintained by Theresa. Below are the individuals we have identified to date. If there is anyone else that should be added to this list, please let Theresa know as soon as possible.

**Steering Committee Members:**

Dana Lee - [mcfalls@exploremaine.com](mailto:mcfalls@exploremaine.com)

Nicholas Mavodones - [nmm@ci.portland.me.us](mailto:nmm@ci.portland.me.us)

David Cole - [dcole@gorham.me.us](mailto:dcole@gorham.me.us)

Ed Gagnon - [tmanager@winslowmaine.org](mailto:tmanager@winslowmaine.org)

Elaine Aloes - [chelaloe@yahoo.com](mailto:chelaloe@yahoo.com)

Scott Cole - [scole@bethelmaine.org](mailto:scole@bethelmaine.org)

Bill Bridgeo - [billb@ci.augusta.me.us](mailto:billb@ci.augusta.me.us)

Richard Livingston - [Richard@mainemep.org](mailto:Richard@mainemep.org)

Rodd Hopper - [rodd@gwi.net](mailto:rodd@gwi.net)

John Simko - [john@greenvilleme.com](mailto:john@greenvilleme.com)

Peggy Daigle - [town.manager@houlton-maine.com](mailto:town.manager@houlton-maine.com)

Mark Green - [manager@york.me.org](mailto:manager@york.me.org)

Gary Brown - [glbrown@vassalboro.ne](mailto:glbrown@vassalboro.ne)

Susan Bruno - [lightlady\\_1@yahoo.com](mailto:lightlady_1@yahoo.com)

Jolene Lovejoy - [lovejoy@megalink.net](mailto:lovejoy@megalink.net)

**MMA Staff:**

Chris Lockwood - [clockwood@memun.org](mailto:clockwood@memun.org)

Geoff Herman - [gherman@memun.org](mailto:gherman@memun.org)

Theresa Chavarie - [tchavarie@memun.org](mailto:tchavarie@memun.org)

Michael Stam - [mstam@memun.org](mailto:mstam@memun.org)

Jeff Nevins - [jnevins@memun.org](mailto:jnevins@memun.org)

We will contact the three Steering Committee members for whom we do not have an e-mail address (Eleanor Murphy, Jennifer Wixson, and Dan Tremble) to determine if they have access to e-mail through work, home or the municipal office.

**INTERNAL DISTRIBUTION LIST:** MIS is in the process of setting up a new folder that will be available on your Microsoft Outlook that will be entitled "Tax Reform Team." This is a folder that will be used to easily communicate amongst our internal team on any issues relating to the tax reform initiative. Those who will have access to this folder are: Chris Lockwood, Chuck Jackson, Theresa Chavarie, Geoff Herman, Kate Dufour, Kirsten Hebert, Laura Veilleux, Michael Stam, Jeff Nevins, Denise Kolreg, and Diane Richardson.

**STORAGE OF DOCUMENTS:** We are using the folder under SFR/TAX REFORM INITIATIVE to keep all documents stored electronically. MIS is in the process of setting up the internal team to have direct access to this folder and to provide you with a shortcut to get to that sight. Since I do not expect that Diane will be working on any of the written materials, I have not included her this list.

**INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS:** I have scheduled a **General Staff Meeting for Monday, June 24, at 10:00 a.m.** at which time I will provide an overview of the process to date and the timetable for key activities over the next several months. We will use a variety of communication vehicles ("Staff Business", field staff meetings, Townsman, web postings, staff newsletter, etc.) to keep staff informed as we move forward with this effort.

**FINANCIAL RECORDKEEPING:** Finance has set up a cost center under the Executive Office to allow us to track expenses related to this effort. The following is a list of account numbers to use:

Photocopying	Key Pad # 101 – soon to be 110
Postage Machine	Key Pad # 101 – soon to be 110

**COST CENTER: EXECUTIVE OFFICE – TRI**

Printing	GF-0110-50202
Supplies	GF-0110-50204
Advertising	GF-0110-50271
Staff Travel Expenses	GF-0110-50501
Steering Committee Expenses	GF-0110-50538
Telephone Charges	GF-0110-50804

MMA will absorb internal operating costs within the existing 2002 total budget appropriation. These costs include items such as staff time, staff travel, photocopying, and postage. The cost center identified above will allow us to track all internal costs related to the Initiative in one location. These costs can be absorbed within the existing budget appropriation during 2002 due to accrual of savings arising from vacant staff positions. During the 2003 budget process, continuing costs will be projected and a plan for funding them will be presented.

The Special Project “Legislative Initiatives Fund” will be used for retention of outside resources (e.g., consultant to assist with petition circulation effort, media campaign, etc.). I have prepared a recommendation with regard to the authority to approve expenditures from the Legislative Initiatives Fund for the consideration of the Executive Committee at its June 20 meeting.

Please let me know if you have any questions on the information provided. Thank you.

**TAX REFORM  
2002 INITIATIVE  
KEY ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**  
(Revised draft – June 12, 2002)

**Overall Responsibility:****Chris Lockwood**

- Responsible for mobilizing, directing and coordinating MMA's full resources to support this effort as MMA's highest organizational priority.

**Policy & Strategy:****LEAD: Geoff Herman****SUPPORT: Chris Lockwood Kate Dufour, Kirsten Hebert,  
Michael Starn, Jeff Nevins, Legal Services****OUTSIDE RESOURCES: As May Be Determined**

- Responsible for working with Tax Reform Steering Committee to develop the proposal & the campaign strategy and to communicate the proposal to MMA's membership and other organizations/constituencies.

Key activities

- Policy research & development (GH)
- Contact with other organizations to inform of efforts and determine possible coalition participation (GH/CL)
- Identify possible consultant to assist with campaign strategy (CL)
- Contact with Legislators (GH)
- Legal review of proposed language, legislative direction, etc. (Legal Services)
- Press Releases (JN)
- Respond to Press Inquiries, Commentaries (MS)
- Townsmen Articles/Updates (MS, GH)
- Coordinate Other Communications, i.e. website, mailings (JN)
- Participate in Fall Regional Meetings (GH,CL,KD,KH,MS,JN,CJ – other MMA staff as needed)
- Develop Materials and Offer Support at Regional Meetings (JN)

**Petition Circulation:****LEAD: Jeff Nevins****SUPPORT: Chuck Jackson, Chris Lockwood, MIS****OUTSIDE RESOURCES: As May Be Determined**

- Responsible for formulation, coordination & execution of petition circulation plan

Key activities

- Initiate Request For Proposals (JN)
- Set up Interview Team (JN)
- Develop overall plan to identify, train, and coordinate petition circulators (JN)
- Assist in identification/recruitment of municipal officials as circulators (full internal Tax Reform Team and other MMA staff as needed)
- Track coverage & scheduling of circulators throughout the state (JN)
- Oversee distribution/collection of petition materials (JN, CJ)

**Legal/Regulatory:**

**LEAD: Chuck Jackson**  
**SUPPORT: Martin Hanish**

- Responsible for ensuring all appropriate legal & regulatory requirements are met on a timely basis

Key activities

- Establishment of Political Action Committee (CJ)
- Required PAC filings with Secretary of State (CJ)
- Establish system for tracking financial & in-kind contributions (MH)
- Development of Voting Ballot for Membership (CJ)
- Oversee contractual arrangements for outside assistance (CJ)
- Oversee and ensure legal requirements are met for petition circulation & collection (CJ)
- File Signatures with Secretary of State (CJ)

**Administrative Support:**

**LEAD: Theresa Chavarie**  
**SUPPORT: Denise Kolreg, Laura Veilleux, Diane Richardson**

- Responsibility for coordinating and directing MMA administrative services to support the tax reform initiative

Key activities

- Coordinate and Staff Steering Committee Meetings (TC)
- Create and Maintain Listserv for Steering Committee (TC)
- Coordinate Internal Meetings of Staff (TC)
- Create Electronic Area for Staff to Keep Informed (TC)
- Organize Electronic Central Filing of Materials (TC)
- Coordinate Mailings to Membership (DK, DR)
- Schedule/Make Arrangements for Regional Meetings (LV)
- Collect and Track Voting Ballots from Membership (LV)
- Prepare Materials for Regional Meetings (LV, DK, DR)
- Track Staff Time and Expenses for PAC Filings (DK)
- Assist with PAC Filings (TC, DK)
- Create & Maintain Listserv for Circulators (TC, DK)
- Track Information Relating to Circulators (DK)

## TAX REFORM INITIATIVE

### Working Time Line

**Plan of Action.** The various steps to proceed with a citizen-based tax reform initiative, and the time frame for each, is as follows:

- May 29-30: **Executive Committee.** Consideration of motion to proceed with development of a citizen initiative. Authorize President to appoint a Tax Reform Steering Committee (see proposed motion below).
- May 31: **President.** Appointment of the Steering Committee
- June 1-19: **Steering Committee.** Development the basic concept and components of the tax reform proposal.
- June 15: **MMA staff.** Publication of the June issue of the *Maine Townsman*, including an article explaining and justifying the need for tax reform.
- June 20: **Executive Committee.** Update on the work of the Steering Committee. Discussion & guidance regarding the formation of a Political Action Committee.
- June 26: **Steering Committee.** Tentative date for second meeting regarding the development and components of the tax reform proposal.
- July 10 or 11: **Steering Committee.** Tentative date for third meeting regarding the development of the concept and components of the tax reform proposal.
- June 20 --  
July 15: **Steering Committee.** Deadline to finalize the tax reform proposal.
- July 15: **MMA staff.** New LPC is elected. Congratulations, notice and agenda for the first LPC meeting is mailed, including Steering Committee recommendation.
- July 23: **LPC.** First meeting of the newly elected LPC to consider the recommendation of the Steering Committee.
- Aug 7: **Executive Committee.** Consideration and finalization of the tax reform recommendation of the Steering Committee. Decision regarding the formation of a Political Action Committee.
- Aug 8-9 **PAC.** Filing of the paperwork forming the Political Action Committee.
- Aug 15: **PAC.** Submission of the proposed initiative to the Secretary of State.

- Aug. 1 --  
Sept 15: **MMA staff.** Development of Convention elements related to tax reform project.
- Aug 1 --  
Sept 30: **PAC/MMA staff.** Broad regional promotion of the initiative. Organization of petition drive to be primarily implemented on November 5, 2002. Recruitment of volunteers, volunteer training, coordination with all municipalities.
- Aug 15 –  
Sept 30: **Formalize Membership Support.** Mail voting ballots to all member municipalities to encourage a formal vote by the Board/Council and ask that ballots be mailed back to MMA prior to the Annual Convention or hand-delivered at the MMA Annual Business Meeting, which is held in conjunction with the MMA Convention. On the ballot, seek a Voting Delegate who will be authorized to vote at the MMA Annual Business Meeting. During regional meetings encourage municipal officials to take a formal vote to support the Tax Reform Initiative.
- Oct 16 – 18: **MMA's Annual Convention.** Opportunity for broad membership ratification, promotion, volunteer recruitment and training.
- Nov 5: **Election Day.** A target goal of 60,000 signatures.

**Maine Municipal  
Association**

60 COMMUNITY DRIVE  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04330-9486  
(207) 623-8428  
www.memun.org

**TO:** MMA Tax Reform Steering Committee  
**FROM:** Chris Lockwood, Executive Director  
**RE:** Meeting Scheduled  
**DATE:** July 24, 2002

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This is to inform you that the Tax Reform Steering Committee will meet as noted below.

**MMA Tax Reform Steering Committee  
Tuesday, August 13, 2002  
11:30 a.m. – Lunch  
12:00 noon – 2:30 p.m. (estimated) – Meeting  
Maine Municipal Association**

For the information of those Committee members who were unable to participate in the July 23 meeting, the Committee had a very productive meeting. After a presentation from Chris Potholm of Command Research regarding the test polling, Chris Lockwood and Geoff Herman briefed the Committee on their meeting earlier in that day with their counterparts at the Maine State Chamber of Commerce (Dana Connors & Chris Hall). The purpose of that meeting was to update the Chamber on the Tax Reform Steering Committee's work and to identify key issues of interest to the Chamber.

The Tax Reform Steering Committee concurred with staff's recommendation that we engage in more detailed discussions with the Chamber to determine if a jointly sponsored proposal might be developed. The Steering Committee provided guidance to staff regarding the draft proposal to be presented to the Chamber for its review. We will use the e-mail Listserv to keep the Committee informed regarding the revised proposal under development.

We are enclosing an updated working Time Line for your information. As you will note, we hope to be in a position for the Steering Committee to finalize its recommended proposal at the August 13 meeting. Please contact me or Geoff Herman at 1-800-452-8786 if you have any questions or would like any additional information.

## TAX REFORM INITIATIVE

### Working Time Line

(revised 7/24/02)

**Plan of Action.** The various steps to proceed with a citizen-based tax reform initiative, and the time frame for each, is as follows:

- May 29-30: **Executive Committee.** Consideration of a motion to proceed with development of a citizen initiative. Authorize President to appoint a Tax Reform Steering Committee.
- May 31: **President.** Appointment of the Steering Committee
- June 1-  
mid July: **Steering Committee.** Development the basic concept and components of the tax reform proposal.
- June 15: **MMA Staff – Policy/Strategy.** Publication of the June issue of the *Maine Townsman*, including an article explaining and justifying the need for tax reform.
- June 20: **Executive Committee.** Update on the work of the Steering Committee. Discussion & guidance regarding the formation of a Political Action Committee.
- June 26: **Steering Committee.** Date for second meeting regarding the development and components of the tax reform proposal. 12:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.
- July 16: **Signature Gathering.** Interviews for Signature Gathering Campaign Consultant
- July 17 – 24: **Signature Gathering.** Check references of the signature gathering consultants and do follow-up (as needed) with the prospective firms. Also, begin drafting the contract or letter of agreement.
- July 23: **Steering Committee.** Date for third meeting regarding the development of the concept and components of the tax reform proposal. 12:00 P.M – 4:00 P.M.
- July 24 – 26: **Signature Gathering.** Decide which consultant will be recommended to the Executive Committee.
- July 29 –  
Aug 2: **Signature Gathering.** Complete and finalize the contract or letter of agreement for the signature gathering consultants.
- Aug 1: **MMA Staff – Policy/Strategy.** New LPC has been elected. Congratulations, notice for the first LPC meeting (Aug 22) is mailed.

- Aug 1-31: **Signature Gathering/Regional Meetings.** Preparation and scheduling of 18-20 fall Regional Meetings. Develop schedule for the fall Regional membership meetings. Develop communications strategy and materials needed to inform the members about the proposal. Identify methods and the vehicles for recruiting volunteers to circulate petitions.
- Aug 7: **Executive Committee.** Update on the work of the Tax Reform Steering Committee. Conditional approval to proceed with tax reform proposal based upon work of the Tax Reform Steering Committee and subsequent approval of the Legislative Policy Committee. Decision regarding the formation of a Political Action Committee. Approval of the firm chosen to provide assistance on signature gathering.
- Mid-Aug: **MMA Staff - Policy/Strategy.** Continue contact with other organizations to inform them of the proposal and determine possible interest in participating in the PAC and/or supporting the referendum.
- Aug 8-9: **Signature Gathering.** Execute the contract or letter of agreement with the signature gathering consultant and schedule first formal meeting. Begin working with the consultant to develop the timeline and begin implementing the plan to gather the needed signatures to place the proposal on the ballot.
- Aug 13: **Steering Committee.** (noon to 2:00 p.m.) Update on efforts in follow-up to July 23 meeting. Committee finalizes its recommended proposal.
- Aug 14: **PAC.** Filing of the paperwork forming the Political Action Committee.
- Aug 14: **MMA Staff – Policy/Strategy.** Agenda and background on recommendations of the Tax Reform Steering Committee sent to LPC for its Aug 22 meeting.
- Aug 22: **LPC –** First meeting of the newly elected LPC to consider and act upon the Tax Reform Steering Committee’s recommended proposal.
- Aug 23: **PAC.** Submission of the proposed initiative to the Secretary of State.
- Aug 28-30 **New England Management Institute.** Opportunity to inform managers and recruit circulators.
- Early Sept: **Signature Gathering/Regional Meetings.** Schedule and locations of 18-20 Regional Meetings featured in the August/September issue of the Maine Townsman.
- Aug. 1 --  
Sept 15: **MMA Staff.** Development of Convention elements related to tax reform project.

- Sept 1 -  
mid Oct: **MMS Staff – Communications.** Promote the proposal to the broad MMA membership. Distribute communication package with sample resolution for adoption by municipal officers. Include information on dates and locations of the 18-20 Regional Meetings. Encourage municipal officers to attend regional informational sessions and to adopt formal resolution in support of the proposal. Recruitment of volunteers, volunteer training, coordination with all municipalities.
- Sept 12: **Maine Service Center Coalition.** Opportunity to inform service center communities and recruit circulators.
- Oct 16 – 18: **MMA’s Annual Convention.** Opportunity for broad membership support and promotion, volunteer recruitment and training. The agenda for the Annual Business Meeting (October 17 at 11:00 a.m.) will include an update on the tax reform proposal and a proposal for voting delegates to ratify the referendum. Following the business meeting, the MMA Executive Committee will meet (Oct 17 at 3:30 p.m.) to provide final decision on proceeding with the referendum effort based upon the direction of the membership at the Annual Business Meeting. The convention program will also include a number of informational sessions to inform membership regarding the proposal and to recruit and train volunteers.
- Late October: **Signature Gathering.** Train the circulators.
- Nov 5: **Election Day.** A target goal of 60,000 signatures.

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: MMA Tax Reform Steering Committee

FROM: Christopher Lockwood, Executive Director

DATE: August 8, 2002

RE: Update on August 13 Tax Reform Meeting

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Below is the updated schedule for August 13, 2002.

**Maine Municipal Association Building  
60 Community Drive, Augusta**

**Meeting of the High Personal Property Communities  
10:30 – 11:30 a.m.**  
(Steering Committee members invited to attend)

**Lunch (for all): 11:30 – 12 Noon**

**MMA Tax Reform Steering Committee  
12 Noon – 2:30 p.m.**

**MMA Executive Committee Conference Call  
3:00 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.**

This will be a key meeting of the Tax Reform Steering Committee. Chairman Dana Lee will ask the Steering Committee to finalize its recommended proposal at this meeting to keep within our working timeline.

We are enclosing a copy of the latest draft proposal resulting from our meetings with the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, including a discussion with Dana Connors and the chairman of the Chamber's Taxation Committee at the August 7 MMA Executive Committee meeting. We have indicated to the Chamber that this proposal is for discussion purposes and must undergo review by the MMA Tax Reform Steering Committee, as well as input from the communities with significant personal property. As of this writing, the Chamber has indicated it is in agreement with much of the proposal, but has expressed a need for additional provisions regarding local government spending (i.e., municipal, school, county). We have informed the Chamber of the importance of having a clear indication of its position by the August 13 Tax Reform Steering Committee meeting.

We will report to the Committee on our discussions with the Maine State Chamber, as well as the pre-meeting on August 13 with officials from communities with significant personal property (Note: Steering Committee members are invited to attend the pre-meeting). To

assist the Steering Committee in considering its range of options, staff will review the key components developed as a result of the Committee's work during the past two months. As you will note, we have scheduled a telephone conference call for the MMA Executive Committee at 3:00 p.m., following the adjournment of the Steering Committee meeting. The purpose of the conference call will be to provide an opportunity for all members of the Executive Committee to be apprised of the final recommendation of the Tax Reform Steering Committee and to offer guidance as to whether MMA should proceed with a citizen initiated referendum, taking into consideration the organizational and financial resources associated with a referendum campaign.

Please contact Geoff Herman or me (1 800 452 8786; 623 8428) if you have any questions regarding these arrangements. We look forward to seeing you on August 13.

Cc: MMA Executive Committee

TO: Androscoggin County Key Municipal Officials & Chief Elected Officials  
FROM: Chris Lockwood, MMA Executive Director  
DATE: August 28, 2002  
RE: MMA Tax Reform Initiative – Regional Information Meetings

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For several years the Maine Municipal Association and municipal officials throughout the state have been demanding property tax relief for its citizens. Much attention has been given to this topic by the Legislature, in the state's newspapers and by many of the special interest groups in Maine. There has been a groundswell of support for tax reform, but no avenue to get the job done! The Maine Municipal Association has decided "**IT'S TIME**" – *Time to move forward and provide Maine citizen's with an opportunity to be heard.*

The MMA Legislative Policy Committee voted unanimously on August 22, 2002 to move forward with a proposal to reduce property taxes statewide that would position MMA to begin the process of securing 50,000+ signatures needed by January 23, 2003. If MMA is successful in gathering the required number of signatures, the Legislature can then enact the proposal or send it to the voters of Maine on Election Day in November 2003.

**\*\*\* MMA'S SUCCESS DEPENDS ON SUPPORT FROM ITS MEMBERS \*\*\***

In order to advance the MMA Tax Reform Initiative a tremendous amount of work must be done over the next few months. MMA is undertaking a major effort that will require a significant commitment from our membership to be successful. We have scheduled 17 regional meetings around the state to inform the membership about the proposal and to recruit volunteers to gather signatures. We hope to gather the vast majority, if not all the necessary signatures, in the polling places on November 5, 2002. This will require the commitment of hundreds of volunteers around the state – This is no small task!

We **strongly** encourage municipal officials to take advantage of the opportunity to meet with key MMA staff, Ad Hoc Steering Committee on Tax Reform members, and MMA Executive Committee members to understand the elements of the MMA Tax Reform Initiative, the rationale behind the decision-making process, and the next steps. We would appreciate your efforts to encourage members of your council/board to attend the regional meeting in your area. If they are not able to attend the meeting on that specific date, please encourage them to attend one of the other meetings referenced on the attached listing. No registration or sign-up is necessary. Light refreshments will be served.



## Maine Municipal Association

60 COMMUNITY DRIVE  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04330-9486  
(207) 623-8428  
www.memun.org

To: Key Municipal Officials & Chief Elected Officials

From: Chris Lockwood, MMA Executive Director

Date: August 30, 2002

Re: MMA Tax Reform Initiative

MMA has nearly completed drafting a citizen-initiated tax reform proposal to reduce the property tax burden on Maine residents and businesses. Back in May, the Association's 12-member Executive Committee unanimously endorsed a unanimous recommendation from its 70-member Legislative Policy Committee (LPC) to begin drafting a tax reform proposal that would be advanced as a citizen-initiated referendum rather than through the traditional legislative process. A special steering committee of municipal officials from across the State was formed. Over the past three months the Steering Committee developed a well-designed tax reform plan.

On Thursday, August 22, the Legislative Policy Committee reviewed the proposal and voted unanimously to advance it as a citizens' initiative. Now, MMA will begin the process of securing the 50,000-plus signatures needed by January 23, 2003. After the signatures are obtained and the initiative is submitted to the Legislature in late January, the lawmakers can either enact the proposal or send it to the voters of Maine in November 2003.

The time is ripe for tax reform. There has been much discussion about the need for tax reform in the legislature, in the state's newspapers, and among many of the special interest groups in Maine. Municipal leaders have been trying for many years to reduce the State's over-reliance on the property tax, find a better balance of burden among the State's three major taxes (property, sales and income), and modernize the sales tax code to improve the predictability of state revenues. The MMA proposal will address all these issues, and establish a plan to deal with Maine's overall tax burden, as well!

MMA is undertaking a major effort that will require a significant commitment from our membership to be successful. We hope to gather the vast majority, if not all the necessary signatures, in the polling places on November 5, 2002. This will require hundreds of volunteers around the state who are willing to spend time at their polling places gathering signatures on Election Day. This is no small task!

We have scheduled 17 regional meetings around the state to inform the membership about the proposal and recruit volunteers to gather signatures. Additionally, we are planning to devote time during the MMA Convention to give our members a chance to find out about the details of the proposal. The full membership will have the opportunity to vote on the proposal at MMA's annual business meeting at Convention. This year's Convention will be held in Bangor, October 16-18. The theme is *"It's Time...for Tax Reform,"* and we anticipate that much of the discussion at Convention will be on this important topic.

Now that we are nearing the “finish line” of the drafting process, we want to answer all the questions you may have about the proposal. This mailing provides background information for your review. Please review the materials and feel free to call MMA if you have questions. The following is a quick review of the steps MMA will be taking over the next few weeks and some suggestions for what the selectmen, councilors and other municipal leaders can be doing during this period:

- ✓ **Plan to attend one of the regional information meetings.** We have enclosed a schedule of the 17 meetings that will be held in September and October. Also, please encourage others who may have an interest to attend one of these meetings.
- ✓ **MMA is preparing a draft resolution supporting the proposal for councils and boards of selectmen to consider adopting at their next monthly meeting.** You will be receiving the draft resolution as soon as the proposal is finalized.
- ✓ **We have included a copy of an article from this month’s *Maine Townsman*** that provides a history of MMA’s tax reform efforts, an overview of the proposal and an outline of the next steps.
- ✓ **Volunteer to get involved in the signature gathering effort.** We need 1-2 coordinators in each town and city to help us recruit and schedule volunteers to collect signatures in the polling places on November 5, 2002. Please contact Jeff Nevins at MMA at 1-800-452-8786 x220 if you are interested in helping out.

We will be sending you much more about the details during the next month. This information will also be posted on the MMA website at [www.memun.org](http://www.memun.org), so watch the website for the most current information as we move forward.

### REMEMBER

1. **It is absolutely imperative that we get the active support and involvement of the MMA membership.**
2. **We need to mobilize the membership to volunteer to be at the polls on November 5, 2002.**
3. **Ultimately, the success of this effort will depend on the active participation of the MMA membership.**

**Let’s all pitch in and do our part to move tax reform ahead.**

**It’s Time...  
for Tax Reform!**



## Maine Municipal Association

60 COMMUNITY DRIVE  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04330-9486  
(207) 623-8428  
www.memun.org

To: Key Municipal Officials & Chief Elected Officials

From: Chris Lockwood, MMA Executive Director

Date: September 10, 2002

Re: MMA's Proposed Tax Reform Initiative

MMA has completed drafting a citizen-initiated petition proposal to provide significant property tax relief, compel comprehensive tax reform, create investments in structural changes to achieve efficiencies in the delivery of governmental services, and accomplish the development of an action plan to address Maine's overall tax burden. The proposal was filed with the Secretary of State's office on Friday, September 6.

We are in the process of forming a coalition of other groups and citizens that will have the responsibility of carrying the proposal to the citizens of Maine upon certification by the Secretary of State. At that point, the process of securing the 50,000-plus signatures needed by January 23, 2003 will begin. This will require hundreds of volunteers around the state who are willing to spend time at their polling places gathering signatures on Election Day (November 5).

For your information we have included the following:

- 1) A draft resolution supporting the proposal for adoption by councils and board of selectmen.
- 2) A copy of the proposal.
- 3) A summary sheet explaining the proposal.

Here's a quick review of some suggestions for what you can do during this period:

- ✓ **Plan to attend one of the regional information meetings.** We have scheduled 17 informational meetings that will be held in September and October. Also, please encourage others (e.g., school board members, interested citizens, etc.) to attend one of these meetings.
- ✓ **Volunteer to get involved in the signature gathering effort.** We need 1-2 coordinators in each town and city to help us recruit and schedule volunteers to collect signatures in the polling places on November 5, 2002. Please contact Jeff Nevins at MMA at 1-800-452-8786 x220 if you are interested in helping out.
- ✓ **Have your Board or Council adopt a resolution in support of the proposal.** If you want to use the PowerPoint presentation from the regional meetings for your council or board, please call Laura Veilleux at MMA at 1-800-452-8786 x207.
- ✓ **Remember, the full membership will have the opportunity to vote** on the proposal at MMA's Annual Business Meeting during Convention in Bangor, Thursday, October 17.

The time is ripe for tax reform. There has been much discussion about the need for tax reform in the legislature, in the state's newspapers, and among many of the special interest groups in Maine. **MMA is calling upon our membership, particularly elected municipal leaders, to become actively involved during this critical stage.** We recognize the many pressing demands on your time and energy, but it is absolutely imperative that we get the active support and involvement of our full membership to ensure the success of this effort. Thank you in advance for your willingness to personally get involved!



## Maine Municipal Association

60 COMMUNITY DRIVE  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04330-9486  
(207) 623-8428  
[www.memun.org](http://www.memun.org)

To: School Board Members  
School Superintendents

From: Christopher G. Lockwood  
Executive Director

Subj: Tax reform proposal

Date: September 24, 2002

As you may be aware, the Maine Municipal Association has worked during the past several months to develop a citizen-initiated tax reform referendum proposal. We are in the process of forming a Political Action Committee to secure the necessary signatures this fall to present the proposal to the Legislature in January of 2003.

Since key provisions of this proposal relate to education funding, we want to ensure school leaders are familiar with the major elements of the draft initiative. We are in the process of conducting regional information meetings for our membership throughout the state (schedule enclosed). We encourage you to attend an informational meeting, to discuss the proposal with your local municipal officials, visit [www.mainetaxreform.com](http://www.mainetaxreform.com), or use the enclosed informational contact sheet if you have questions or would like additional information.

This is an extraordinarily important and major undertaking. The Political Action Committee hopes to gather the vast majority, if not all the necessary signatures, in the polling places on November 5, 2002. This will require hundreds of volunteers around the state who are willing to spend time at their polling places gathering signatures on Election Day. It is hoped that local school leaders will join in this effort.

Thank you for your review of the enclosed materials and your careful consideration of this proposal.

Kirsten Hebert

**From:** Geoff Herman  
**Sent:** Monday, November 11, 2002 4:58 PM  
**To:** Chris Lockwood; Mike Starn; Chuck Jackson; Jeff Nevins; Kate Dufour; Kirsten Hebert; Laura Veilleux; Theresa Chavarie; 'mcfalls@exploremaine.com'  
**Cc:** 'g-wbrown@msn.com'  
**Subject:** proposed agenda for TRITT meeting

Here's a proposed agenda, taken off Dana's vodka-enriched notes. I think the goal is not so much figuring everything out from agenda item II onward, but figuring out how it's going to be figured out and sketching out what the 365-day plan will look like.

I. Managing information release re: signature gathering effort to: (1) the press; (2) members; (3) PAC members, and others

- A. Any compelling reason not be forthright?
- B. Any reason to meet with certain parties (PAC members, governor-elect, etc.) before signature-count is made public?
- C. Other....

II. Sketch of 365-day strategy/budget.

A. Preliminary issue: Who should be on the strategy development team?

- 1. Staff members?
- 2. E.C. members?
- 3. LPC members?
- 4. Steering committee members?
- 5. PAC members?
- 6. Potholm?
- 7. Others?

B. Short term strategy (Between now and Jan. 23, 2003)

- 1. Collection/organization of signatures; preparation for Secretary of State
- 2. PAC expansion, securing financial commitments
- 3. Perkins Thompson.....
- 4. Review of Potholm poll
  - a. Purpose of poll
    - 1. i.d. strengths, weaknesses of MMA plan?
    - 2. i.d. strengths, weaknesses of competing plan?
    - 3. i.d. areas of plan needing research and development?
    - 4. Develop winning message, consolidated essence of the program
  - b. timing of poll
    - 1. Whjat does the year-long polling schedule look like?
  - c. other polling issues
- 5. Research and development
  - a. efficiency fund system
  - b. actual municipal impacts
  - c. more detail to tax burden management plan?
  - d. development of educational/marketing materials (e.g., printed, VCR, DVD, etc.)
  - e. other
- 6. Integration of initiative with incoming administration/Legislature.
  - a. w/Saxl group (MMA-plus(minus))
  - b. w/Baldacci
  - c. w/personal property proposals
  - d. w/Gagnon
  - e. w/Eco-Eco, Chebeague proposal, etc.
  - f. other

- # polling places per muni
- calls to clerks
- tables/chairs
- People to each muni - shifting staff
- hired help per muni -
- Certif of Registration
- Database for tally - (LV)

Gross Receipt Tax 2.5%  
 Tree Growth 2% yr if in when out - 30% diff mkt vs assessed value @ time. Penalty

- 7. Budget for short-term
- 8. Other short-term priorities

C. Mid-term (Jan. 23 -- June 30 (end of session))

- 1. Establish dialogue with editorial boards before they lock-in opposed
- 2. Monitor Legislature's tax reform efforts
  - a. Competing measure issue -- legislative paralysis or offensive strategy
  - b. Conceivable legislative enactment of the initiative (including personal property changes)
- 3. Produce marketing/educational materials (VCR;DVD, etc.), and develop media/t.v. promotions
  - a. When should we book the t.v. time?
  - b. Pro-MMA and Anti-Prop 13 and Anti-Westbrook (if necessary) and Anti-competing measures
  - c. Super-utilize public access
- 4. Budget for mid-term
- 5. Other mid-term priorities

D. Final push (July 1 -- Nov. 4)

- 1. Crescendo media campaign
- 2. Fully engage with press, televised debates, etc.
- 3. Any mileage in regional forums?
- 4. Off-year election: get out the vote campaign
- 5. Budget for final push
- 6. Other elements of the final push

03 - us  
 04 - attach its concepts  
 ie prsnl prperty

III. Other issues for TRITT?

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Campaign Strategy Team

FROM: Chris Lockwood, MMA Executive Director

DATE: May 16, 2003

RE: Database for Collection of Signatures Gathered on Petitions

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The Maine Municipal Association has created a database that will allow us to input the names and addresses from the various petitions. This database will then be utilized for direct mailings as determined by the Campaign Strategy Team.

The attached screen printout shows the fields that will be input from the petitions. The database has been configured so it is accessible from the Internet, providing us with the flexibility to input data from any location. Additionally, only one copy of the database will exist on MMA's network.

Access to the database for input is simple. The individual performing the data input will access the database by using the following link –

<http://www.mainetaxreform.com/asp/TaxReformDBInput.asp>

A shortcut can be created to eliminate the need to type in the web address after the initial time.

The input screen requires minimal entry and the user will tab to move between fields. The enter key will submit the data to the database. Once submitted, the name and address fields are blanked out, ready for input of the next record. The City field remains pre-filled until the user chooses to change it. As we collected signatures by municipality this will facilitate the data entry process. The State field is permanently pre-filled so no entry is required.

You will notice that the data input screen does not have a zip code field. The petitions themselves do not have a zip code field therefore we have no information to input. Once the database is populated with the information from the petitions we will export the records and run it against our software and fill in the zip code information for future mailing purposes.

**Chuck Jackson**

---

**From:** Geoff Herman  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 09, 2003 8:36 AM  
**To:** Chuck Jackson; Jeff Austin  
**Cc:** Jeff Nevins; 'epotholm@srcpmedia.com'; Chris Lockwood; Mike Starn;  
'cpotholm@bowdoin.edu'  
**Subject:** letter to the stations

Chuck and Jeff. I don't know what your schedules are...I know Chuck is working on the PAC filing and Jeff probably has some convention stuff, but I really think a letter to the t.v. stations that are running the 1B ads needs to be completed and faxed out today, with that letter also being advanced to the press. Jeff Nevins is ready to issue it to the press. A previous e-mail from me contains a rough draft of how the internal parts of the letter might be constructed. And a previous e-mail from Erik suggests a forceful introductory line. I have convention obligations from now until noon, so I'm hoping that if you and Jeff Austin receive this, the following can be accomplished. Thanks in advance if you can work on this project this morning.

1. We get a determination from Erik or on our own intelligence as to what 1B ads are being run on which stations. I've left the two scripts that I have, and my personal knowledge is that the "Behind" had was run on a Fox station last night, and Starnman says the "DCJG" ad was run on channel 13 this a.m..
2. We get a determination from Erik or on our own intelligence as to whether WCSH and WLBZ actually have refused to run one or both ads, and why.
3. We complete the letter to channel 13 and Fox (what about channel 8? I don't know the call letters) outlining the reasons for why the ad should be pulled. My draft language is written only for the "Behind" ad, but the arguments pertain to the "DCJG" ad. The "DCJG" ad has the additional unsupported claim that 1B "helps businesses grow", which should also be addressed in the arguments against that ad. (Jeff Austin is particularly good on this).
4. The letter gets a quick review around the house (me, Starnman, Erik, Doctor P., CGL, Jeff N., etc.) and is faxed out.
5. Jeff N. slaps a cover and the letter and distributes to the press.

Note: If I can dig it up, I've also put the letter Delahanty wrote against our first ad for some possible "standards of review" language. If I can't dig it up, its on the Wolfenews.com website.

To: MMA Executive Committee  
MMA Legislative Policy Committee

From: Chris Lockwood, Executive Director

Date: May 10, 2004

Subj: Request for assistance

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We are seeking your assistance in the effort to promote passage of Question 1 (formerly known as Question 1A – The School Finance and Tax Reform Act of 2003) on the June 8 primary election ballot. Particularly in light of the inability of the Legislature and Governor to enact a tax reform package, Question 1 provides an important opportunity to take positive, responsible action to address concerns related to the overburdened local property tax and to direct the Legislature to undertake other steps to deal with Maine's tax structure and overall tax burden. Passage of Question 1 becomes even more important in light of the potentially devastating Palesky property tax cap proposal.

Our specific request is for each member of the MMA Executive Committee and Legislative Policy Committee to commit to contact at least 5 individuals (friends, family, colleagues, etc.) to encourage them to vote for Question 1, and if possible, to request them to continue this "phone tree" by contacting 3-5 more individuals. Members of the MMA staff will also be participating in this effort. If we can get strong participation from members of the Executive Committee and LPC as well, this network can be extremely effective, especially in light of the typically lower voter turnout for a June primary election.

We are enclosing background materials and an outline of a draft script for your convenience. Please note the suggestions on assisting interested voters in obtaining an absentee ballot. We would also ask that you send an e-mail to Laura Veilleux at MMA [lveilleux@memun.org](mailto:lveilleux@memun.org) or telephone her at (1-800-452-8786) to confirm that you are willing to assist us with the "grassroots chain" and let us know the five municipal officials and/or employees you plan to contact so that we can avoid duplications as much as possible. Our plan is to reach as many municipal officials/employees as possible and ask that they continue the chain to gain support for Question 1 at the June 8 election."

As you are well aware, both the Executive Committee and LPC voted unanimously in 2002 to move forward with the "School Finance and Tax Reform Act of 2003" citizens' initiative effort. To use a football metaphor, we have taken the ball down the field and are now inside the twenty-yard line (the red zone). June 8 provides us the opportunity to cross the goal line. If we all work together, we can do it. Thank you for your support and active participation. We have enclosed a list of MMA staff contacts if you have any questions or would like any additional information.

Action alert

To: Members of the MMA Executive Committee and Legislative Policy Committee

From: Chris Lockwood, Executive Director

Date: May 19, 2004

Early last week we sent a memorandum to you to seek your assistance in connecting with at least five other municipal officials who will agree to both vote for Question 1 on the June 8 ballot and to extend this "chain" by connecting with an additional three individuals and getting them to continue the chain. **The rationale behind this request was that we could greatly multiply our effectiveness by asking MMA's leadership to join in this important effort. Unfortunately, we have only heard back from 4 of the 80 individuals to whom we sent this request.**

Hopefully you have just gone ahead and made your contacts, but have not yet informed MMA. **In any case, we ask that you notify us whether you are willing to make these contacts, or if you choose not to assist in this effort. We need to know where our get-out-the-vote efforts are being put into effect and where they are not.** Please send this information to Laura Veilleux of the MMA staff by phone (1 800 452 8786; 623 8428) or e-mail ([lveilleux@memun.org](mailto:lveilleux@memun.org) ).

If you have not yet made any contacts, we urge you to take a few minutes and join in this effort. This citizens' initiative effort is the most major undertaking the Maine Municipal Association has embarked upon in its history. The decision to proceed with this initiative was based upon unanimous votes of the MMA Legislative Policy Committee and the MMA Executive Committee. We are at a critical stage in the closing weeks prior to the June 8 election. **Approval of Question 1 will provide an important foundation for relieving pressure on the local property tax as we prepare for the campaign against the Palesky tax cap initiative.**

We genuinely hope you are willing to join in this effort. Thank you. - Chris Lockwood

To: MMA Executive Committee

From: Chris Lockwood, Executive Director

Subj: Tax reform and tax cap initiative campaigns

Date: May 20, 2004

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As we approach the closing weeks prior to the June 8 election, we are in a critical period both with regard to the Question 1 contest and as we move forward in preparing for the Palesky tax cap initiative on the November 2 ballot. The May 26 meeting will afford an opportunity to update members of the Executive Committee on the efforts to date and to obtain authorization to transfer additional funds to support the next steps of the campaigns. We have made arrangements for Erik Potholm, our media advisor, to tie-in to the Executive Committee's discussion by speakerphone. The following is an outline of items to be discussed:

- Overview - waging an effective Question 1 campaign and preparing for the Palesky initiative
- Review of polling results
- Update on Question 1 campaign
  - Grassroots – MEA/MMA
  - Opposition
  - Possible media
- Palesky initiative – efforts to form an umbrella anti-Palesky PAC
- Financial update
- Authorization of Executive Committee for additional transfers from Legislative Initiatives Fund

We look forward to seeing you on May 26.

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Chuck Jackson, Geoff Herman, Jeff Nevins  
Marty Hanish & Brian Wolcott

FROM: Chris Lockwood

DATE: May 21, 2004

RE: Citizens to Reduce Local Property Taxes Statewide

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As most of you know, I have been working with Erik Potholm on purchasing TV airtime that we hope to have in place on Tuesday, May 25. Since I will be out of the office on Monday, May 24, I wanted to give you an update on where things stand and actions that need to take place as soon as possible.

Erik Potholm will be working with Geoff Herman on the proposed TV ad production. Geoff will share and seek input from the TRIT members and MEA and provide feedback to Erik. I have granted authority to Geoff to give the final sign-off on the TV ad.

I have spoken with Dana and will be speaking with Jolene over the weekend to get their approval, as the MMA Subcommittee on Tax Reform, to grant me the authority to transfer \$56,500 from the MMA Legislative Initiatives Fund to the Citizens to Reduce Local Property Taxes Statewide, as shown in the attached meeting minutes. **Please make this transfer on Monday, May 24, 2004 so that we can move forward with the media buy.**

I have also indicated to Erik Potholm that the PAC would wire transfer \$50,000 to his firm as a deposit for the TV media time being purchased. The total media buy will be \$110,000. **Please make the \$50,000 wire transfer to Stevens Reed Curcio & Potholm on Monday, May 24, 2004.**

Theresa will also be out on Monday. She has asked Denise to check her e-mails and telephone calls throughout the day so that any pertinent information on the campaign can be transferred to the appropriate staff members.

Any documents that need my signature related to the above actions will be signed on Tuesday, May 25, 2004. Thank you.

Cc: Denise Kolreg

# Portland Press Herald

A BLETHEN MAINE NEWSPAPER

JEANNINE A. GUTTMAN  
EDITOR AND VICE PRESIDENT

JEAN H. EICHENBAUM  
VICE PRESIDENT AND  
GENERAL MANAGER

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## BLETHEN MAINE NEWSPAPERS

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

A MEMBER OF THE SEATTLE TIMES FAMILY OF NEWSPAPERS *The Seattle Times*

### WHAT TO DO NOW?

# Crackdown is evidence of failed Cuba policy

● This is no time to reward Castro, but engagement is best in the long term.

For more than 40 years the U.S. policy toward Cuba has remained unchanged, and so, too, has the rule of Cuban President Fidel Castro.

Cuba's brutal dictator has given the world more of the same in recent weeks. He slaughtered three men like cattle after they attempted to hijack a ferry to the United States. He rounded up political opponents like sheep, sentencing 75 dissidents to long prison terms.

In response, the White House is considering giving Castro more of the same in return. Even groups dedicated to ending the U.S. embargo of Cuba have criticized the crackdown. Last week, the members of the Cuba Policy Foundation — a group of prominent business leaders and diplomats — all quit the group. They said Castro's actions could only "embarrass and humiliate" those advocating a more moderate approach to U.S.-Cuba relations.

This is not the time to be lifting the embargo or reaching out to Cuba culturally.

Doing so now would reward Castro for appalling behavior.

That does not mean, however, that the embargo has been a success. Indeed, that the Cuban government is still executing and imprisoning its opponents suggests that the embargo has failed, despite the hopes of many — including at one time this newspaper — to the contrary.

The hard question, though, is what should the United States do now? Like Pope John-Paul II, the U.S. government can condemn the crackdown. It can try to muster international support for pressuring Cuba with more punitive measures.

Those are appropriate short-term responses, but in the long view more engagement, not less, will produce positive change in Cuba.

Now 76, Castro is an artifact from the previous century. Though he has lived longer than many opponents had hoped, it would be appropriate for the United States to begin to prepare for the post-Castro era.

The U.S. response to Castro's crackdown, therefore, should be meaningful and severe, but it shouldn't preclude future dialogue.

Castro is a brutal and evil man, but the Cuban people deserve our support and attention.

### BACK IN BUSINESS

# Reinstate drug savings plan to help Mainers with costs

● Healthy Maine Prescriptions helped thousands of residents and could be a model for the nation.

Thankfully, the Healthy Maine Prescriptions program could once again provide much-needed relief to Mainers who relied on it for help with the cost of their medication.

The drug savings program provided Medicaid discounts to residents who made too much money for federal assistance but didn't have prescription drug coverage. It was deemed in a federal appeals court an illegal expansion of Medicaid. A new agreement, however, could reinstate the program.

One of the main concerns of the federal appeals court was it feared the program would demand federal funding in violation of the law. If the state, however, had contributed 2 percent to the cost of each prescription since the program was started in June 2001, that wasn't part of the state's initial



Art by Geoffrey Moss

Medicaid waiver application, though.

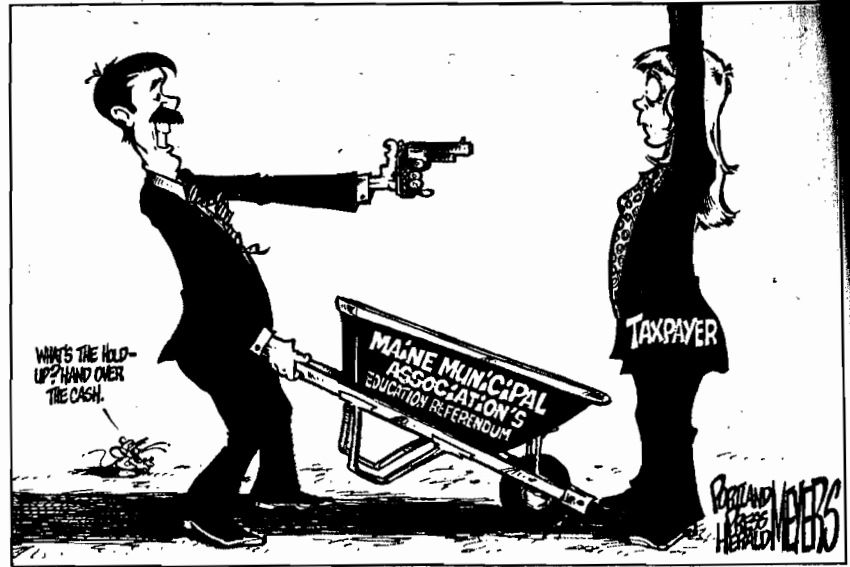
Now that the state's contribution has been clarified, the program should be reinstated. It's a valuable program — invaluable to thousands of Mainers who depended on it for help — and could set an example for other states seeking to provide reasonable drug costs to their residents.

Maine Sen. Olympia Snowe is rightly pushing the U.S. Office of Management and Budget to approve the program, which deserves quick attention.

### FIGHTING PREJUDICE

# Georgia voters should eliminate racist cross from their state flag

## STEVE MEYERS' VIEW



## VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

### DURING THIS CONFLICT

# Mainers address issues from war in Iraq

In Kathleen Parker's recent column (April 11), she triumphantly hoots that Pfc. Jessica Lynch needed no "feminist dogma" in surviving her ordeal and that Jessica's father and brother, who taught her to fish, hunt and find her way through the woods, are the kind of men that feminists wish "to eradicate from the American home."

As a feminist myself (yes, men can be feminists), I take offense at Parker's shallow, stereotypical presentation of feminism. A father who supports his daughter's decision to enter the military is a man who has himself been beneficially influenced by many generations of feminists.

Were it not for the courageous and determined work, beginning over 150 years ago, of Cady Stanton, Susan Anthony, Alice Paul, Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem and many others, the Jessica Lynches of the land could be ever so strong, brave and skilled in the outdoors, and yet today they still would not have the military option as a path to education and a better life.

Those early feminists were ridiculed by the 19th-century Parkers who sneered and brayed at every opportunity, but feminists did their work and, thanks to them, women can now vote, obtain their own credit cards and home mortgages, testify in court on their own behalf and pursue the life paths they themselves choose.

Parker thinks Ms. Lynch shouldn't be in the Army; however (and here is the essence of feminism), that decision belongs to Pfc. Lynch.

Bob Schablow  
Buxton

DURING this time of conflict, I am writing this to let people know what our organization does for our country.

We try to ensure that sacrifices made by American veterans will not be forgotten. We volunteer to help in Veterans Affairs medical centers, nursing homes and other hospitals.

We also try to promote patriotism and teach young people about respect for the U.S. flag and the role veterans have played in our nation's freedom.

We also donate for Operation Uplink, a program conducted with the VFW that provides long distance telephone cards to active duty military personnel and hospitalized veterans.

So, please, let us all show our support for all our men and women who are serving overseas and at home to keep America's freedom, and don't forget all our veterans who served in other wars to save our country.

Helen (Honey) Perry  
Patriotic Instructor, Post 833  
VFW Auxiliary

### FROM A SWITCHBOARD OPERATOR

# 'Can the city of Portland afford to lose its "human" touch?'

The switchboard is the first point of contact for the city of Portland.

Many people call for city services and police assistance. Who will be there to assist the elderly gentleman to get his property taxes paid or help the frightened wife who needs help in an abusive situation?

Consider the teenager who is going through some tough times in life — perhaps your niece or son — and is contemplating suicide. They call for help and get a machine.

How much will an automated phone system cost the city? The setup and maintenance costs will far outweigh the salaries of the two switchboard operators, who answer calls for nearly 1,400 people.

Eliminating the switchboard will affect 64,000-plus people. It will also overtax the police department and 911 lines when people cannot get a "live" person to talk to.

Can the city of Portland afford to lose its "human" touch with the citizens of the community and beyond?

Eliminating the switchboard operator positions was not on the

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Darlene Stevens,  
Switchboard operator,  
Portland City Hall

questionnaire that the city of Portland distributed to its citizens.

I am confident that, if the people were asked today if the switchboard is a necessity, the answer would be "yes."

The first words when connecting to the city of Portland Web site are, "Welcome to the city of Portland."

If the switchboard is replaced with an automated system, anyone who calls will immediately see that the city of Portland is not as friendly as it pretends to be.

Darlene Stevens  
Switchboard operator  
Portland City Hall  
Portland

## Island Institute official applauds Chebeaguers

Tom Bell's article ("Coastal residents appeal for tax relief," April 16) on a recent tax reform public hearing left the impression that the Island Institute has taken a position against the Maine Land Bank proposal (otherwise known as the Chebeague Plan). This is simply not the case.

In my comments to Mr. Bell, I was not speaking for myself or the Island Institute but rather relaying concerns about the Chebeague Plan, which I've heard from other residents of other islands we work with.

I also said many good things about the Land Bank effort which did not appear in the article. I applaud the leaders of this grassroots movement for their tireless efforts and for articulating the nature of the problem which they are trying to address.

It is the Island Institute's mission to provide a voice for year-round island communities. In this case, as in many others, this proves difficult because their is no unified island voice. I appreciate the opportunity to clear this matter up.

Nathan Michaud  
Program Officer for Community Planning  
Island Institute  
Rockland

## Oppose bill to protect health of women, girls

I want to draw attention to bill L.D. 1102, which has been proposed by Rep. Brian Duprey of Hampden. The bill is titled, "An act to Protect the Mental Health of Women and Girls," and, in all actuality, that is the opposite of what this bill's passing would accomplish.

The bill states that physicians who perform abortions for minors without parental consent should be held liable for mental health costs in the future. It is a back-door attempt to restrict Maine's Adult Involvement Act and

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