

ASSOCIATION OF MINNESOTA COUNTIES

Proudly serving counties since 1909.



**FOR OVER
100 YEARS,
THE
ASSOCIATION
OF
MINNESOTA
COUNTIES
HAS ASSISTED
THE
STATE'S 87
COUNTIES IN
PROVIDING
EFFECTIVE
GOVERNANCE
FOR ALL
CITIZENS.**

BASIC PRINCIPLES

EFFECTIVE, EFFICIENT AND RESPONSIVE GOVERNANCE FOR ALL PERSONS MUST BE A PRIORITY.

Minnesota county officials believe that government decisions are best made locally. A flexible county government structure allows counties to best meet the needs of the community. County officials support policies that encourage private and local government collaborations in the delivery of services beneficial to both individuals and to communities.

A STABLE AND EQUITABLE TAX AND REVENUE SYSTEM TO SUPPORT NEEDED SERVICES MUST BE ASSURED.

Minnesota county officials support a tax and revenue structure that provides revenues without placing an unacceptable burden on taxpayers. County officials believe that local governments can best determine acceptable taxing and spending levels for their communities. County officials support policies that:

- Limit the reliance on the property tax for funding services;
- Provide flexibility and autonomy in service delivery decisions to assure efficiency and effectiveness,
- Eliminate state mandated maintenance of effort requirements; and
- Oppose arbitrarily imposed tax and spending limits.

A PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE, WITH AN EMPHASIS ON TRANSPORTATION, THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY MUST BE SUPPORTED.

Minnesota county officials support an investment in public infrastructures that include buildings, roads, bridges, libraries, hospitals, parks and other public facilities. In addition county officials believe that a multi-modal, integrated transportation system is vital to healthy communities. County officials support policies that:

- Support regional approaches to transportation planning that have an emphasis on safety, cost reduction and cost sharing among all units of government;
- Establish a safe transportation system with the necessary funding, flexibility, and accessibility to effectively and efficiently move people and goods;
- Encourage public private partnership;
- Ensure that transit services are available to all citizens; and
- Support the maintenance and development of airports, rail facilities, and waterway infrastructure.

THE PUBLIC'S SAFETY MUST BE MAINTAINED THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY.

Minnesota county officials support prevention, education, community policing and treatment programs to reduce crime and violence. To ensure that the public is protected from violent and dangerous offenders, counties support an effective, efficient, and seamless system of sentencing options for the incarceration and rehabilitation of offenders and adequate state and federal funding of community-based alternative sentencing options. County officials support a comprehensive network of local correctional services administered by counties in partnership with the state that encourage and support effective supervision and treatment of offenders sentenced to local authorities.

THE PUBLIC'S HEALTH MUST BE PROMOTED AND PROTECTED.

Promoting and protecting the public's health is a fundamental responsibility of government and is achieved through a partnership between the state and local governments. Private health care providers and community organizations enhance this partnership. Minnesota county officials support policies that maintain county board authority to administer public health programs in order to:

- Assure access to quality, cost-effective health care delivery systems;
- Track health risk factors and focus on improved health outcomes;
- Offer a continuum of services that meets local needs and avoids duplication of services and functions; and
- Provide financial incentives for cost-saving measures that result in improved outcomes for individuals and families.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL PEOPLE TO BE SAFE, HEALTHY, INDEPENDENT AND ABLE TO SUPPORT THEMSELVES AND THEIR FAMILIES MUST BE ASSURED.

Minnesota county officials support policies that promote and integrate a proactive, adequately funded, cost-effective and community-based human service system that improves the health and well-being of families, children and adults. County human service departments and agencies must work collectively with individual county boards, state agencies, consumer advocates and other interested parties to re-focus resources on five core activities that counties are uniquely positioned to provide. Counties must maintain:

- Responsibility for the crucial government role of assuring the protection of neglected, dependent and vulnerable people in our communities;
- Responsibility to assure that local service needs are met by overseeing the coordination of care and the integration of services for vulnerable populations;
- Responsibility for screening consumers for program eligibility, assuring their health and safety and determining the appropriate level of contracted services, while providing an ongoing fiscal oversight;
- Responsibility for the oversight of contract providers through certification, quality assurance and evaluation activities;
- Responsibility for locally determined partnerships to improve human service delivery systems which include multi-county partnerships or partnerships with private sector entities that are appropriate in scale to meet the needs of local communities; and

County officials must collectively either relinquish service delivery responsibilities or identify alternative delivery models if sufficient flexibility, funding or authority is not provided by the state.

A STRONG, HEALTHY, VIBRANT ECONOMY MUST BE PROMOTED AND ENHANCED.

Minnesota county officials support an active role for counties in the planning and implementation of economic development strategies for their communities. Minnesota county officials support policies that:

- Develop a highly skilled workforce through training, education, health services, and technology access, and provide additional state funding and the flexibility necessary to meet community needs as determined by local elected officials;
- Enable and encourage the development and preservation of an adequate supply of life-cycle housing; and
- Encourage the preservation of agricultural land, the industries supported by agricultural production, and the education and research necessary to develop products and markets.

OUR COMMUNITIES' ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES MUST BE MANAGED WISELY AND ENHANCED.

The sound management of Minnesota's environment and natural resources requires effective local, state, and federal governance. Minnesota county officials support policies that:

- Provide for local authority to establish local priorities and provide for cost-effective, efficient, and environmentally sound environmental stewardship and waste management practices;
- Protect and improve the quality of water in Minnesota;
- Coordinate, identify, manage, and develop local resources that can sustain the economy and the natural environment of the community; and
- Balance the interests of the community and the rights of the individual landowner.



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