

MEMORANDUM

To: House Local Government Committee

From: Brian Westrin, J.D.
Michigan REALTORS®

Re: Opposition to HB 4024

Date: March 26, 2014

The Michigan REALTORS® view HB 4024 as a sprint in the wrong direction in relation to smart growth and efficiency within Michigan communities. HB 4024 calls for a blanket exemption for charter townships with over 20,000 in population from annexation, preventing property owners and voters from initiating changes to municipal boundaries, and prevents consolidation of local government and its administration and services. This blanket exemption appears to serve the qualifying local government and not its respective citizenry.

The laws for annexation are prescribed by the state to best provide efficient governmental service and effective government to citizens - not to protect local governments in their own right. The object of HB 4024 is made clear by the added provision that bars detachment from cities – a value to city governments, not city residents – for giving up annexation.

Annexation remains an important planning and development tool. The incorporation and consolidation of local government through annexation is intended by the state to centralize services and administration, to allow concentrated population where services can be provided most efficiently. Townships over 20,000 in population are in metropolitan areas, the areas where consolidation provides the greatest effect and efficiencies. To adopt HB 4024 would serve to effectively eliminate annexation as a development and efficiency tool in the areas where it is most valuable.

The Michigan REALTORS® fully oppose HB 4024.