



michigan municipal league

Better Communities.
Better Michigan.

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Monday, December 12, 2011

Dear Governor Snyder:

On behalf of communities throughout Michigan I urge you to veto House Bills 4770 and 4771, bills that prohibit local units of government from offering domestic partner benefits. In a time when our communities are attempting to attract a talented workforce, our local leaders need the flexibility to offer benefits that allow them to appeal to potential employees. When Michigan's communities are struggling due to declining property tax revenue and cuts to state shared revenue, it is imperative that we not further impede their ability to attract the best workforce possible—as defined by those locally elected leaders.

Michigan is a home rule state, and this is a key principle that needs to be protected to enable our communities to thrive through their own identities. The individual makeup of Michigan's communities plays into their ability to attract talent in both the public and private sector.

Some local units of government have made the decision to offer domestic partner benefits, and this decision is one based in local control. While this particular decision may not work for all of our communities, the option to offer specific benefits, whether they are to allow domestic partners benefits or any other benefits offerings, is a decision that is unique to the local unit and should be protected.

Michigan's communities are focused on creating places where their residents want to live, work and play. Having a talented group of employees to focus on creating place is critical for the growth of our communities. These bills, and any bills that limit the type of employees we are able to attract, are contrary to the goal of attracting talent and placemaking.

Again I urge you to support our communities by vetoing House Bills 4770 and 4771. Failing to protect the unique nature of Michigan's communities will only make Michigan's economic condition worse as we will continue struggling to attract and retain residents and businesses.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Daniel P. Gilmartin in black ink.

Daniel P. Gilmartin
Executive Director & CEO
Michigan Municipal League

Handwritten signature of Karen Majewski in black ink.

Karen Majewski
President, MML Board of Trustees
Mayor, City of Hamtramck