

COMMON CAUSE
MASSACHUSETTS



ANNIVERSARY

January 28, 2011

To: Executive Secretary, Board of Selectmen of Chilmark, MA
From: Pamela Wilmot, Executive Director, Common Cause Massachusetts

Re: Massachusetts Campaign for Open Government (MACOG)

Please share this with your appropriate staff.

Many of the Commonwealth's cities and towns have done a wonderful job over the last few years in ensuring that their municipal web sites meet the criteria of the Massachusetts Campaign for Open Government, a project of Common Cause Massachusetts. Last March, at the awards ceremony, 181 (51.5%) of the cities and towns won our E-Government Award and 91 (25.6%) won the E-Government Award with Distinction. Last year, only 23 towns had no website; this year a quick check found that 17 of these now had websites.

Because your progress has been so impressive and because of other constraints, we will not be reviewing web sites this year. Instead we plan to work with Common Cause members across the state and those of you who are interested to consider the most valuable direction in which to go, and how best to do so. We plan to ask a number of questions: Should we include qualitative aspects of the design such as accessibility and user friendliness? Should local users be brought in as "judges" or in some other way to assess usability and attractiveness? Are there additional steps that Common Cause Massachusetts should take to assist those communities that have not already met the E-Government Award criteria?

As we consider our next steps and goals, we strongly encourage all municipal clerks, IT professionals and others involved with municipal web sites to review the MACOG criteria, which are attached, and strive to assure that your web pages meet these criteria. We also encourage you to go to the web site: <http://www.maopengov.org/> for the data from last year and a great deal of coverage.

On behalf of the citizens of your city or town, thank you. Thank you for all that you have done and for all the work that it will continue to take to promote and ensure open government on the web. Finally, as Common Cause Massachusetts reviews the MACOG process, we hope that many of you will join us in this review.

The criteria for the 2010 awards are attached to this e-Mail.

FOR POWER