



**MASSACHUSETTS
MUNICIPAL
ASSOCIATION**

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July 2, 2013



Timothy Carroll
Executive Secretary
Town of Chilmark
401 Middle Road
Chilmark, MA 02525

Dear Executive Secretary Carroll,

Enclosed with this letter is the invoice for the Town of Chilmark's membership in the Massachusetts Municipal Association for fiscal year 2014, which begins on July 1, 2013.

Your membership in the MMA ensures that cities and towns in Massachusetts have a clear and effective voice fighting for you when municipal issues are being debated on Beacon Hill and in Washington. With your membership for fiscal 2014, the MMA will keep you up to date on key legislative and regulatory activities at the state and federal levels. As an MMA member, you will stay connected to a diverse array of meetings, workshops and professional development activities, and to the special services offered to our member cities and towns.

The enclosed MMA dues invoice reflects a small, below-inflation adjustment of just 1.5%, and we note with pride that in seven of the past eleven years the MMA has had no dues adjustment at all, and follows a small below-inflation adjustment last year, reflecting our commitment to provide high-quality services at very low cost.

The past several years have been extraordinarily challenging for local government, and the value of your membership in the MMA has never been clearer. Working tirelessly with local officials, we have leveraged the strength of cities and towns to engage with the Governor, legislators and state officials on every key issue. The MMA has been successful in protecting millions for cities and towns, although the road to a full fiscal recovery is still a long one.

Since the beginning of the greatest economic recession in eighty years, the MMA has won a number of important victories. The MMA's advocacy efforts have delivered true reform and results:

- The MMA has **led the fight to restore municipal aid and education funding**, and this month **the MMA won the Legislature's support for a \$21 million increase in Unrestricted General Government Aid** – in addition to this key municipal aid increase, the MMA's budget victories include **\$130 million more for Chapter 70** to guarantee an increase for all communities and school districts through minimum aid and a phase-in of target share aid, **passage of a \$10.5 million increase for the special education circuit breaker**, and **millions in increased funding for major local aid accounts**;
- As you know, **the MMA led the fight and won municipal health insurance reform two years ago this month**, passing the powerful reform law to give town and city leaders plan design authority. **The new law will save cities and towns nearly \$200 million this year alone**;
- The MMA is **leading the fight to secure Chapter 90 funding for local roads, orchestrating the Legislature's unanimous approval of \$300 million a year** – the MMA is relentlessly advocating for the Governor to release the full amount now, and we will not stop until this necessary increase in Chapter 90 funding becomes a reality.

The Association's effectiveness has been clear in recent years, too. The MMA has won passage of the **first-ever local option meals tax**; won the first **increase in the local hotel-motel tax** in over 20 years; **closed the century-old telecom tax loophole** on poles and wires; **defeated a plan to impose binding arbitration** on cities and towns in the area of health insurance; and during the recession years **the MMA protected local aid from deeper-than-expected cuts** in the final versions of the state budget.

(over, please)

The MMA is your voice leading the fight to protect municipal and Chapter 70 education aid, increase Chapter 90 road monies, boost the payment-in-lieu-of-taxes program, fund regional school transportation reimbursements, allocate special education costs, fix the deeply flawed charter school funding system, and much more. It is clear that the MMA has protected an enormous amount of local aid for your community, as the cuts would have been much deeper without our advocacy. Yet we know that this is not enough. The MMA is devoted to protecting localities, and we know that winning permanent local aid commitments and securing real management tools are essential to our state's economic success, and to your ability to move your community forward.

Listed below are a just a few of the MMA's ongoing activities:

- From Chapter 70 and unrestricted general government aid, PILOT funds, Charter School Reimbursements, Regional and Regular School Transportation, and scores and scores of accounts in between, **the MMA is clearly the dominant advocate for \$5 billion in local aid for cities and towns;**
- The MMA serves as the primary advocate for local control and management rights on civil service, collective bargaining, public retirement and other important labor-management issues, and **is championing real mandate relief;**
- In the midst of a national crisis in insurance, the MMA created the **Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA), and MIIA has saved its member cities and towns millions of dollars annually** through its health, dental, long-term disability, workers' compensation, and property and casualty programs. MIIA is the strongest and most stable municipal insurer in the state, and has seen record growth in membership because of its well-deserved reputation for value, stability and service;
- The MMA communicates through **a state-of-the-art electronic advocacy system to instantly inform and mobilize thousands of local officials** on key matters and priorities before the Legislature and the Governor, to make sure that the communities of Massachusetts are heard on Beacon Hill;
- The MMA membership services program sponsors **workshops and training sessions for members throughout the year**, and also organizes regular meetings of the MMA affiliate groups as a way for local officials to meet with their colleagues, and **meets with hundreds of local officials in regional legislative breakfast meetings each spring and fall;**
- The MMA has **expanded its member education programs and training and learning opportunities** for local officials at all levels, with a long-range vision of linking our programs with accredited public management and leadership certificate and graduate degree programs;
- MMA publications include its monthly flagship, *The Beacon*, the quarterly *Municipal Advocate* and regular updates on activities on Beacon Hill affecting local government through *Action Alerts* and bulletins;
- The **MMA's website (www.mma.org)** offers the latest in news and information, as well as a rich array of materials and resources, with a growing state-of-the-art members' section to share important updates and calls for action; and
- Each year in January, the MMA organizes the two-day **MMA Annual Meeting and Trade Show, the largest yearly gathering of local officials in New England**, offering a wide array of workshops and education sessions. The annual achievement awards provide recognition for local leaders who have been innovative in governing or managing their communities.

The MMA is your organization! We consist of you and thousands of your municipal colleagues from hundreds of communities across the state. With your continued membership, active participation and leadership, we will continue to advance the many vital causes of local government in Massachusetts. With the global, national and state economies remaining stagnant, your membership is more important than ever. We look forward to working with you, and as always, remain at your service.

Thank you!

Sincerely,



Geoffrey C. Beckwith
Executive Director