



**DAVE TRAVIS**  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE



STATE CAPITOL  
P.O. BOX 8953  
MADISON, WISCONSIN 53708  
266-5340

**MEMORANDUM**

March 11, 1998

TO: Members, Assembly Committee on Government Operations

FROM: Rep. Dave Travis

RE: Executive Session on Assembly Bill 347

I am writing to ask for your support of Assembly Bill 347, relating to public access to records of the identities of final candidates for certain local government positions.

The current open records law generally requires public disclosure of the names of finalists for top local government positions. However, it only applies this requirement to positions covered by the local government code of ethics. Police chiefs and fire chiefs are not covered by the ethics code. The City of Madison relied on this loophole to keep the names of its police and fire chief finalists secret.

Assembly Bill 347 would extend the finalist disclosure law to include police chiefs, fire chiefs and the heads of any other local agency, department or division. It received a public hearing on October 22, 1997.

A similar proposal passed the Assembly 97 to 1 during the 1995 session, but was not considered by the Senate. The previous proposal would have also brought police and fire chiefs under the local government code of ethics. Assembly Bill 347, however, is more narrowly drafted to focus on the finalist disclosure statute only.

I urge you to support AB 347 to strengthen our open records law and give the public greater confidence in the process of selecting top public safety officials.