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JUDY KRAWCZYK

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 88TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

MEMO TO: ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CORRECTIONS AND
THE COURTS
REP. GAREY BIES – CHAIR

FROM: REP. JUDY KRAWCZYK

DATE: JANUARY 28, 2004

RE: ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION 60

Chairman Bies, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today in support of Assembly Joint Resolution 60.

This legislation came about as the result of months of work completed by members of the Brown County Metro Services Subcommittee, several of whose members are in attendance here today. The subcommittee examined ways in which law enforcement efforts could be consolidated in metropolitan areas such as Brown County in an effort to reduce costs, avoid duplication of services and increase efficiency.

The Wisconsin Constitution currently spells out the duties of the sheriff, which include the role of the keeper of the jail, the various functions relating to attending to the courts, law enforcement and preserving the peace. As a result, staff at the Legislative Council have concluded that the Wisconsin Constitution needs to be amended in the manner suggested in AJR 60 in order for a county to consolidate the office of sheriff if that is the wish of local residents.

It's important to note that under this proposal, each county would still make the final decision regarding their law enforcement needs and voters would have to approve this change in a county-wide referendum. This is not a mandate from the state and in fact preserves local control over this issue. It is a good first step in efforts to consolidate local law enforcement services.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today in support of Assembly Joint Resolution 60.

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Members of the Assembly Committee on Corrections and the Courts

FROM: Sarah Diedrick-Kasdorf, Senior Legislative Associate 

DATE: January 28, 2004

SUBJECT: Opposition to Assembly Joint Resolution 60

The Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) opposes Assembly Joint Resolution 60, which would permit the powers of the sheriff to be determined in each county.

WCA has serious concerns with municipalities being given the authority to draft resolutions that govern the county sheriff's departments. It is the county board of supervisors that funds the operation of the sheriff's departments, not the town or village boards, nor the city councils.

WCA also has concerns that in certain counties, one or two municipalities would have the authority to force a referendum on the powers of the sheriff. These municipalities may not represent the wishes of the majority of the municipalities within the county.

The Wisconsin Constitution clearly intended to have the people of this state choose the top law enforcement official in each county. WCA believes in the electoral process set forth in the constitution and has faith in the electors of each county to choose a well-qualified, competent sheriff to carry out the powers of the sheriff as set forth in the constitution and statutes of this state.

While we support measures to facilitate consolidation, an appointed "chief" is not necessary for that to occur. Law enforcement consolidation can occur without the adoption of a constitutional amendment. State statutes can be modified to ease the process. As a sheriff is elected by the citizens of each county, the citizens can choose at the next election to choose another chief law enforcement official if they disagree with the management of a consolidated law enforcement agency at the county level.

Amending the state constitution is a matter that should not be entered into lightly. WCA respectfully requests that the joint resolution be put on hold until alternative methods for consolidation of services at the county level are fully explored.

Thank you for considering our comments.

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January 27, 2004

GREEN BAY AREA
CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE

Representative Garey Bies
Chair, Courts & Corrections Committee
PO Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708-8952

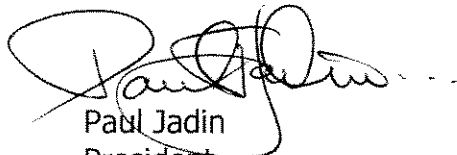
Dear Chairman Bies and Committee Members,

I am writing to express my support for the legislation before you which would give counties the option of determining the powers of their sheriffs. This is the kind of tool that the State needs to afford local units of government as we continue to struggle with spending concerns and possible caps at all levels of government.

Allowing each county to determine the structure of its Sheriff's Office and hence, to better control the expenditures of that office, is a local control issue which belongs on a ballot as soon as possible.

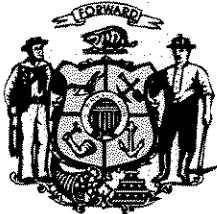
I can assure you that as Mayor of Green Bay from 1995 to 2003 our overall expense for police services could have been reduced if we had the flexibility to combine departments, opt out of sheriff services or better define the limits of departmental authority. This bill is a great first step in achieving that flexibility.

Sincerely,



Paul Jadin
President





SCOTT McCALLUM

Governor
State of Wisconsin

May 1, 2002

Ben J. VandenBergh
2690 Don Gerard Way
Green Bay, WI 54311

Dear Mr. VandenBergh:

Thank you for taking the time to share information about the Brown County Metro Services Study. Knowing such efforts are underway encourages me that government can be more efficient through cooperative efforts.

I have forwarded the material to Tim Sheehy, who has been named Chair of the newly created Task Force on State and Local Government. The Task Force will provide a forum to discuss and address fundamental changes to the state and local government relationship. One of the specific areas the Task Force will be examining is consolidation of government services. Their examination will include identifying financial incentives for local governments to consolidate services, where possible. As they move forward with this endeavor, knowing of such efforts underway will be an asset.

I am hopeful local governments will participate in a constructive and creative discussion on local finance and taxation authority, government organization, land use, boundaries, annexation and services. I expect that the new examination will include a look at mandates on local government, mediation-arbitration, and some of the other challenges faced by local government. The bottom line is that Wisconsin has too much government, and I want to work with all parties to develop a better system that provides the best return of the taxpayers' dollar. It is time for a constructive discussion of fundamental reforms.

Thank you again for providing information about the Brown County Metro Services Study and I wish the Committee future success.

Sincerely,

Scott McCallum
Governor

SM/jjw

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Save some dollars by eliminating some duplicate duties.

* Could get rid of elected sheriff

← This seems to be why they are after.

? Can merge duties of county & municipal offices.

→ Sheriff can contract with municipalities to provide all law enforcement services.

→ Joint grants in Dane Co. between sher & city of mad to purchase joint equipment.

ASR 60

Brown Cty Metro Serv SubCom

Law enforcement consolidation in muni area.

Efficiencies & coordination

Cnty would still have to approve & electors ratify.

Not a mandate.

→ Should we amend the constit to do this? Co-op agreements?

↳ Sheriffs are const. officers so in order to Δ their duties a const. amend will be necessary.

Problem in one city reason
to change the const??

If consolidation is the
goal, isn't utilizing the
city-wide sheriff's dept
the more efficient route?

15 Registrations
Against