



202 State Street  
Suite 300  
Madison, Wisconsin 53703-2216

608/267-2380  
800/991-5502  
Fax: 608/267-0645

E-mail: [league@lwm-info.org](mailto:league@lwm-info.org)  
[www.lwm-info.org](http://www.lwm-info.org)

To: Special Committee on Municipal Annexation  
From: Curt Witynski, Assistant Director, League of Wisconsin Municipalities  
Date: May 24, 2005  
Re: Comments on Legislative Proposals Recommended by the Drafting Subcommittee

The Drafting Subcommittee of the Legislative Council's *Special Committee on Municipal Annexation* has recommended the following two legislative proposals to the full Committee:

1. **WLC: 0067/1**, expanding Department of Administration advisory review of annexations statewide.
2. **WLC: 0132/1**, relating to the determination of common municipal boundaries by agreement and the use of alternative dispute resolution in municipal boundary disputes.

The League supports the second proposal listed above, WLC: 0132/1. It is a comprehensive piece of legislation that includes a number of items from our legislative agenda relating to making it easier for municipalities and towns to enter into boundary agreements. We appreciate Rep. Gottlieb's efforts at forging a compromise proposal that creates a process by which towns can petition a municipality to participate in mediation about boundary issues. We urge the Special Committee to recommend that WLC: 0132/1 be introduced by the Joint Legislative Council.

The League opposes the first proposal listed above, WLC: 0067/1. Under current law, DOA conducts public interest reviews of annexations in the 27 counties with populations over 50,000. The League has consistently opposed extending DOA's role in the annexation process. We believe that annexation decisions, like other land use decisions, are best made at the local level without state interference. In our view, municipal governing bodies and their staff are best able to determine whether a particular annexation is in the public interest.

Requiring DOA review of all annexations statewide would create another potential hurdle in the annexation process. It would add cost and delay to the annexation process in nonpopulous counties. Also, to be frank, we fear that the next change sought by the towns will be to prohibit annexations from proceeding if DOA finds them to be against the public interest.

We urge the Committee to reject WLC: 0067/1. Thank you for considering our comments on these important proposals.