



WISCONSIN TOWNS ASSOCIATION

Empowering Town Officials

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2019-20 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

1. Transportation

- A. WTA supports a long term, sustainable, and equitable solution to growing Wisconsin's economy and ensuring public safety through road infrastructure investment across the entire state. Towns have 62,000 miles, or over 53%, of Wisconsin's roads that serve as a critical "first" and "last" mile link to the state's economy. The current replacement cycle for town roads is an unacceptable **371 years**. Even simple maintenance schedules are not even in the ballpark. For example, seal coating should take place every 5 – 7 years, but it happens every 32 on average.
- B. WTA supports fixing the **85% - 15% cost cap problem** that prevents state transportation funding from being used by towns through: a) not applying the formula to any GTA above \$2,389 per mile; and, b) redistributing any GTA per mile road funding not used by a town to all towns statewide.

2. Volunteer Fire/EMS

Financial and volunteer shortages threaten the ability to provide quality life-saving services and save taxpayers billions through volunteerism. Wisconsin is at a threshold where we will invest some now in volunteers or pay tremendously both financially and in service provision later. WTA supports:

- A. Allowing for towns to fund **EMS** using the same options available to fund **fire protection** under §60.55(2).
- B. Providing a **\$1,000 income tax credit** for volunteer fire/EMS personnel at the rate of \$20/hr (2017 SB32).
- C. Providing a **\$400 income tax credit** for unreimbursed volunteer fire/EMS personnel expenses (2017 SB33).
- D. Providing a **college tuition reimbursement** for volunteer fire/EMS personnel with a premium reimbursement for Registered Nurse and Certified Nursing Assistant degree recipients.
- E. Providing a **business tax incentive** for those businesses that allow volunteer fire/EMS personnel to leave their job during the workday.

3. Land Use

WTA supports intergovernmental collaboration. Unfortunately, recent actions and unique interpretations of time proven statutes by several cities and villages have disrupted the potential for collaboration, negatively impacted the voice of town citizens, and jeopardized private property rights. WTA supports fixing for these new inventions so that private property rights, town citizen voices, and the potential for intergovernmental collaboration are restored.

- A. Prevent jurisdictions from being able to **condemn property outside of their jurisdiction**.
- B. Prevent the value of the **five year annexation payback** provision from being negatively impacted by extraterritorial authority, use value taxation, or land ownership.
- C. Reform **“island”** annexation.
- D. Eliminate **“balloon on a string”** annexation accept in cases of mutual agreement between municipalities.
- E. Modify **extraterritorial zoning** authority.
- F. Reverse Attorney General opinion and **return zoning authority** to towns in the shoreland zone.

4. Town Law Reforms

- A. Change the **timing requirements** for going to an appointed clerk/treasurer.
- B. Create a **technical fix** for posting notices online and in one physical location (2015 Act 79).
- C. Allow for appointment of a **temporary board member** resulting from health concerns.
- D. Allow for the board to **remove a board member** for cause.
- E. Allow for **Board of Review notice** to be published online and in one physical location.

5. Broadband

- A. **Expand high-speed broadband** throughout rural Wisconsin.
- B. Support **local control** of Rights of Way decisions.

Wisconsin Towns Association 2019-2020 Lobbying Team

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