

Tell it to the State Auditor

The Office of State Auditor (OSA) recently sent all township clerks an announcement of a process to reform or repeal unfair mandates by the state, and we suggest your town board consider submitting a resolution.

The "Mandate Reform Initiative" is new law that provides a process for local units of government to submit resolutions concerning mandates they believe are in particular need of reform or repeal. The resolutions will be posted on OSA's website. OSA hopes their website will help legislators identify those mandates that are of particular concern to local units of government across the state. OSA says, "Nothing is too big, or too small to be considered for mandate reform." Representative Mark Olson, Chairman of the House Local Government Committee has promised to author legislation when there are at least 70 resolutions submitted on any one issue.

Following is a sample resolution to consider concerning the state's decision to make local elections subject to the HAVA law requirements. There are already eight resolutions on the OSA website concerning this issue. (Those with combined clerk/treasurer might also consider objecting to the cost of the random audits by OSA. -see 9/2005 issue of *Tips*, "Township Fights State Audit Bill.") Submit resolutions to mandates@auditor.state.mn.us or mail to State Auditor, 525 Park St.- Suite 500, St. Paul, MN 55103. Resolutions already submitted can be viewed at www.auditor.state.mn.us.



Resolution to Exempt Local Elections from HAVA Requirements

Whereas, the Federal Government passed the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002 in an effort to accommodate handicap voters in federal elections and the Minnesota Legislature extended the requirements of the HAVA law to state and local elections in 2004; and

Whereas, while there are state and federal funds available to assist in the purchase of assisted voter machines, optical scan vote tabulating equipment, and training and election costs for the 2006 election, this funding will not cover on-going costs to operate, store, maintain, and program the machines as well as the additional costs associated with publishing notices of and holding accuracy tests, and purchasing expensive ballots for the electronic machines; and

Whereas programming costs alone are estimated to be several hundred to over a thousand dollars per election, and whereas there may be other additional costs such as additional ballot printing that will significantly increase the expense for conducting elections; and

Whereas, it is cost prohibitive for most townships to use electronic machines for the Annual March Town Elections since the per capita cost of using electronic machines would be very high, and because of this, were given a temporary exemption until December 31, 2007;

Therefore Be It Resolved, that the Town Board of FALUN TOWNSHIP, ROSEAU County requests that the state exempt local elections from the HAVA mandates and provide on-going funding to operate, store, maintain, and pay for programming costs for the machines for all future elections, including the March Town Elections if not exempted.

Dated 01/24/06

Scott A. Johnson

Supervisor

Eugene A. Kyzaska

Supervisor

Wynne D. Moore

Supervisor

Attest:

JENNIFER MOGER
Clerk