

Valued MMA Members,

As you know only too well, the state Legislature, current governor and his predecessor have been ignoring Maine's 42-year-old Municipal Revenue Sharing law in recent years, raiding \$73 million from that program this year (FY 2014) in order to "balance" the state's \$6.3 billion budget. Worse, in FY 2015, as things currently stand, the fund would plummet from \$60 million to \$20 million (by law, it should be \$146 million). Because of the Legislature's ongoing actions, we all have seen consecutive years of forced property tax increases and reductions in municipal services. The trend is bad and it may get much worse.

There is legislation – LR 2721 – to hold the line, more or less, at \$60 million in FY 2015. From our viewpoint here at Maine Municipal Association, this is revenue sharing's last stand. If legislators do not preserve what's left of a property tax-relief program that they've already cut by more than half, then there really is no bond, no commitment – no remaining trust – between state and local governments. If LR 2721 is not supported, state legislators appear willing to put state spending demands ahead of homeowners and business owners who pay property taxes and rely on core municipal services. MMA has heard this loud and clear from our 487 members, largest to smallest, north to south and east to west.

Starting this weekend, MMA is launching a statewide public-information campaign aimed at informing citizens about Municipal Revenue Sharing and how it affects them. A very important component of our education and outreach campaign will be using Facebook and other social media platforms to reach a broader audience. We encourage your municipality – and you as individuals – to consider posting the link posted below on your websites and Facebook pages if you have them. The message is to support their communities and local property taxpayers.

Here's the link to the website for the Revenue Sharing campaign, which includes the video of our first spot in this campaign. It will be shown on television, through numerous websites and via social media:

<http://www.mainerevenuesharing.com>

We will keep you posted on developments and will seek to assist you if you have specific questions or need assistance with the social media campaign and/or utilization of the video spot. Thank you for the work you are doing on this issue - Chris