



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX
MIDDLESEX COUNTY ADVISORY BOARD

494-4113

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August 31, 1988

To: City Clerks of Middlesex County Communities

From: Julia A. Werbinski, Coordinator, Middlesex County Advisory Board

Julia A. Werbinski

Enclosed you will a copy of a letter that was sent to your city's representative to the Middlesex County Advisory Board. The letter asks that each Community help work to defeat House Bill #5833, which is the result of the Middlesex County Charter Commission's proposal for the reorganization of the Middlesex County government. To this end, it was requested that each Community take a vote among its appropriate officials and to send a record of that vote to Theodore D. Mann, Mayor of Newton and the Chairman of the Middlesex County Advisory Board. To date three Communities - Weston, Holliston and Lincoln - have sent records of their votes to Mayor Mann; the rest have not. Will you please take a few moments to make sure that this important issue is on the agenda of the next City Councillor's/Aldermen's meeting in your city? It is extremely important that we all work together to help defeat this bill or else the Advisory Board - the representative of each of the 54 cities and towns that comprise the County - will lose its authority to approve the budget of, and control the spending of, Middlesex County.

Thank you for your help in this matter and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at the above number.

We eagerly await your city's vote.



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18 July 1988

Fellow Members, Middlesex County Advisory Board

The Middlesex County Charter Commission's proposal for the reorganization of County government has received a favorable report from the legislative Committee on Counties. The bill (House Bill #5833) will be acted upon in the fall session, and if approved by the legislators it will become a ballot question for the voters in a future election.

The Middlesex County Advisory Board is on record as being opposed to this bill.

As you know, with the budget appropriating authority in the hands of the cities and towns that comprise the MCAB, working with the Commonwealth and the Middlesex County Commissioners, we have been able to reduce the cost of running the County, and thus the assessment to the cities and towns, by approximately \$8 million over the course of the past six years.

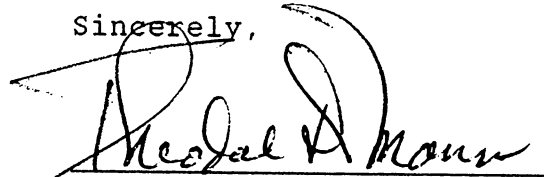
It is imperative that the sole responsibility for the budget remain under the control of the MCAB. A proposed compromise, under which the MCAB would retain control over the assessments while the newly created nine member County Council would have control over the remainder of the budget, is totally inconsistent with sound financial practices.

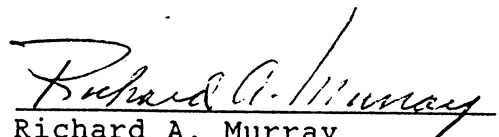
While there are a number of worthwhile recommendations contained in the Charter Commission's report, the proposed change in budgetary authority is not one of them.

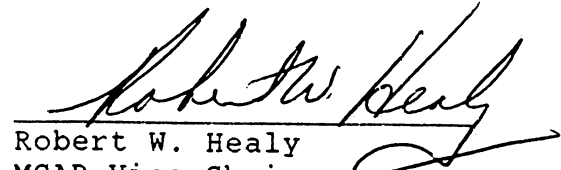
Since it is extremely important that we work together in order to defeat this bill, we are asking you to do the following -- as quickly as possible, since speed is of the utmost importance. As was done in the Town of Weston (see enclosure), we would like you to take a vote among the appropriate officials in your community concerning the Charter Commission's report and House Bill #5833; to send a written record of the vote to Mayor Mann, at Newton City Hall; and to cross-reference that record to your State Senator and Representatives. We also encourage you to write to your respective legislators (see enclosed from the City of Newton for an example) and encourage them to work to defeat this bill.

Thank you all for your help. We hope to hear from each of you in the very near future.

Sincerely,


Theodore D. Mann
MCAB Chairman


Richard A. Murray
Budget Committee Chairman


Robert W. Healy
MCAB Vice Chairman

Enclosures

July 13, 1988

The Honorable Theodore D. Mann
Chairman
Middlesex County Advisory Board
City Hall
Commonwealth Avenue and Walnut Street
Newton Center, MA 02159

Dear Mayor Mann:

At a meeting of the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Weston held on Tuesday, July 12, 1988, the following vote was adopted unanimously.

Voted to oppose the Middlesex County Charter Commission's plan to reorganize the county government, particularly its recommendation to abolish the Middlesex County Advisory Board's role in formulating and approving the annual budget of the County.

Sincerely yours,

Board of Selectmen

By

Richard A. Murray
Richard A. Murray
Chairman

JWC:mdg

xc: Senator Carol C. Amick
Rep. Robert H. Marsh
Ms. Florence Rubin, Chairman,
Middlesex County Charter Commission



City of Newton, Massachusetts

Incorporated 1873

CITY HALL

COMMONWEALTH AVENUE AND WALNUT STREET
NEWTON CENTRE 02159THEODORE D. MANN
MAYOR

Same to:

Reps. Susan Schuur
Anthony Mandile
Sen. David Pines

13 July 1988

The Honorable David B. Cohen
Massachusetts House of Representatives
State House, Room 446
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Representative Cohen:

On behalf of the City of Newton, I am writing to urge you to help defeat H 5833. This bill, if passed, would put the question of Middlesex County charter reform on the ballot in the November election. We firmly believe that if this bill is passed, many of the reforms won in the 1982 charter revision process will be lost, and that local communities like the City of Newton would be asked to give up their authority to control the Middlesex County budget.

Some of the major areas we find unacceptable include:

1. The Middlesex County Advisory Board would lose much of its budgetary authority. Since 1982, when the Advisory Board was given the authority to make appropriations, County charges and, thus, the amount that cities and towns are assessed, have decreased. In a time when all communities are having a tough time living under the constraints of Proposition 2 1/2, it does not make good sense to take authority away from a legislative body which has a proven track record for reducing costs; and
2. The size of the Board of County Commissioners would increase from three to nine. Taking authority away from a board made up of 54 members -- one from each community in Middlesex County -- and placing that authority in a board of nine people would make County government less representative of the communities it is intended to serve. The smaller communities in the County would all but lose their voice when it comes to running the County, and this is hardly a desirable outcome of charter reform. The County government should be directly responsible to the communities who comprise the County, and this can only be accomplished by leaving the fiscal power in the hands of the Advisory Board.

Once again, I cannot stress how strongly we are opposed to H 5833 and how much we urge you to work to help defeat it. I know you understand the importance of this issue, and look forward to your assistance and support.

Sincerely,

Theodore D. Mann
Mayor

S-546A

Comm. from Julia A. Werbinski, Coordinator,
Middlesex County Advisory Board Re: enclosed
letter asking that each community help to
defeat House Bill #5833; which is the result
of the Middlesex County Charter Commission's
proposal for the reorganization of Middlesex
County government.

Septmeber 12, 1988

9-12-88

Placed on file.