



MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT WEEK

TOOL KIT FOR MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS

Talking Points for Mayors Civic Club, Chamber, or Citizen Presentations

- Mississippi Municipal Government Week is a special week set aside to emphasize to citizens and business leaders the important services that are provided by cities, towns, and villages across the State.
- There are 298 municipalities in Mississippi. Over 50% of the citizens in our state live in a municipality.
- 95% of cities and towns in Mississippi operate under the Code Charter form of government or the Mayor/Board of Aldermen form.
- Mississippi is a state of small towns; 85% of cities and towns in Mississippi have less than 10,000 citizens; 54% of cities and towns in Mississippi have less than 1,500 citizens. Here in the (town of/city of), we have ____ citizens and operate in the (form of government).
- Municipal government is the “government closest to the people.” Your local elected officials and municipal employees work 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year to provide important services to citizens such as water and sewage systems, fire and rescue services, police protection, beautification of parks, access to public libraries, and more.
- The services provided by cities, towns and villages are essential services that citizens can’t do without. These are typically not the kinds of services included in the popular call by some for “less government”.
- We live where we lead; we see you at city hall, but we also interact with you at church, the grocery store, sporting events, and many other activities that are part of everyday life in our town. We know what services are important to you and how we can improve how we operate in order to increase your quality of life.



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Talking Points Continued

- City officials are elected by their citizens, and therefore, are best positioned to identify the needs and desires of their own citizens.
- We support home rule! In 1985, the legislature granted municipalities in the state a limited home rule. Mississippi's home rule statute is a form of authority which allows a municipality to regulate its own affairs and to adopt orders, resolutions and ordinances necessary to do so. Home rule has increased municipal power by providing that municipalities can adopt any ordinances that they desire regarding municipal affairs for their city, as long as they do not conflict with state or federal law.
- It is important to keep this authority at the local level, which is why our town will join municipalities across the state in asking the Mississippi Legislature to refrain from passing any laws that preempt local authority.
- An unfunded mandate occurs when legislation is passed which requires another entity to perform certain actions without providing any funding to ensure the fulfillment of those requirements.
- With the constant challenges that municipalities face in providing services to citizens within the scope of their budgets, unfunded mandates are effectively tax increases handed down by the legislature on local citizens and property owners. They may be unintentional when a bill is originally passed, but often they end up forcing counties or cities to raise taxes to finance the policy.
- A key legislative priority identified by the Mississippi Municipal League will be to strongly oppose any legislation that creates an unfunded mandate on cities and towns.
- By joining the MML in opposition of local preemptions and unfunded mandates, your city officials are working hard to protect current municipal revenue streams and keep local property taxes level.