

The Association of Manitoba Municipalities'

Presentation To The Legislative  
Standing Committee on Law Amendments

***Bill 7: The Local Authorities  
Election Amendment Act***

May 8, 2002



The Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) is pleased to appear before the Standing Committee on Law Amendments to the Local Authorities Election Act, the legislation that provides the legislative framework for local government elections.

Bill 7, the Local Authorities Election Amendment Act, proposes key amendments to ensure fairness and consistency in municipal elections. Specifically, this bill would address issues arising out of the 1998 general municipal election where the courts found an individual transferred interests in land for the purpose of qualifying non-residents to vote in a municipal election.

This Bill would amend the non-resident elector provision by setting the maximum number of non-resident owners of a parcel of land who may vote at municipal elections to two. Currently there is no limit on the number of non-resident owners per parcel of land who may vote.

Our Association was fully consulted on the changes proposed in Bill 7 and we believe this amendment addresses the concerns raised by our Association and several of our members. We would like to express our appreciation to the Honourable Jean Friesen, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, and her staff for consulting with our Association and bringing forward this amendment that we believe will ensure that local municipal elections continue to be fair and basic democratic principles are upheld. We are also pleased that the changes will be in effect for the next general municipal election in October 2002.

Although our Association supports passage of Bill 7, we believe the Local Authorities Election Act requires a more thorough review and overhaul to ensure that municipal elections are brought into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The AMM requests the Province undertake a comprehensive review of the Act as soon as possible and that our Association be fully consulted on this review.

Thank you for the opportunity for allowing us to present our Association's support for Bill 7 and we urge the Legislature to immediately pass this amendment so that it will take effect in time for the municipal elections this October.