



June 6, 2013

Clerk of Committees  
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba  
251 - 450 Broadway  
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8

Dear Committee Members:

On behalf of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM), I would like to provide comments about Bill 37: The Emergency Measures Amendment Act.

As the organization representing all Manitoba municipalities, the AMM identifies and addresses the needs and concerns of its members in order to achieve strong and effective municipal government.

The AMM supports several of the changes to emergency procedures affecting municipalities proposed under Bill 37. The AMM supports the proposal to remove the power of local authorities to issue emergency prevention orders. The AMM also supports the proposal indicating a state of local emergency will be in effect for 30 days instead of 14.

The AMM is pleased Bill 37 includes a provision that will enable municipalities to levy for emergency management services as a special service under section 312 of The Municipal Act. This will give municipalities an additional taxation tool to fund ongoing emergency management services. Existing provisions of the special service framework would still apply to special service levies for emergency management services. Nevertheless, municipalities will benefit from increased flexibility in terms of what services they can levy for, as they will continue to have the power to fund emergency management services through general taxation.

Finally, Bill 37 includes provisions to clarify powers of provincial and local authorities to issue mandatory evacuation, and including the powers of peace officers. It is important for municipalities to be part of the process, regardless of whether the order is made by the Province or the local authority. Municipal officials are the most familiar with their residents, and should be involved if any issues with their residents arise.

The AMM hopes the provisions in Bill 37 will provide another option for local authorities to use throughout the process of evacuation in an emergency, and address the issue of a person refusing to comply with an evacuation order issued under a state of local emergency. The AMM also hopes this option can be used in a respectful manner by municipal officials who know their local communities the best. As well, to

avoid confusion, the municipality should be the final authority on municipal mandatory evacuation orders.

It is important to ensure the safety of first responders and rescue professionals as much as possible in risky situations. However, since emergencies and disasters can be very traumatic, the AMM encourages those carrying out the evacuation process to use reason and persuasion wherever possible. Involving the police to force someone to evacuate should only be used as a last resort.

The AMM appreciates the opportunity to provide these comments. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

Doug Dobrowolski  
President