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US Census Data Shows Michigan Local Government Operations Among the Most Efficient in the Nation

(Washington D.C.) – The U.S. Census Bureau’s latest report on local government public employment reveals that Michigan is providing local government services through one of the most efficient systems in the nation.

According to the Census Bureau’s Annual Survey of Public Employment and Payroll, Michigan has 120,500 Full Time Equated (FTE) employees providing services at the county and local level. The Census report includes K-12 data for local government employees, but school employees were subtracted from this analysis.

Michigan is providing local government services by employing 12.2 FTEs per 1,000 residents. The national average is 16.4 local government employees per 1,000 residents. Michigan ranks a startling 43rd in the nation in the number of local government employees on a per capita basis. Michigan has a lower ratio of local government employees than any other state in the Great Lakes region. Out of the few States that fared better than Michigan, they are typically the smallest states in geographic size in the nation, with five of the states located in New England as well as Hawaii. West Virginia and Kentucky round out the list of states that had fewer employees on a per capita basis.

“These numbers are certainly a reflection of the significant revenue reductions for local government operations that have taken place in our state over the last number of years through both falling property tax revenues as well as severe reductions in state support for local governments,” said Larry Merrill, Executive Director of the Michigan Townships Association. “But the Michigan Townships Association also believes much of this competitive advantage over the rest of the nation is achieved through the township form of government, which emphasizes the concept of neighbor serving neighbor.”

Fewer employees also translated into lower cost for local government employee salaries for the citizens of the state. On average, the citizens of this country pay \$887 per person for the wages of local government employees. However, in Michigan the average is \$617 per person, which ranks Michigan 37th in the nation. Indiana local government employee wages amount to \$701 per person, Texas is \$714, Virginia is \$726, Minnesota is \$839, North Carolina \$851, Florida is \$985 and Washington State is \$1,210.

Data from the annual surveys can be found on the U.S. Census Bureau’s website, www.census.gov/govs and click on the link “Government Employment & Payroll

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The Michigan Townships Association promotes the interests of township government by fostering strong, vibrant communities; advocating legislation to meet 21st century challenges; developing knowledgeable township officials and enthusiastic supporters of township government; and encouraging ethical practices of elected officials who uphold the traditions and unique characteristics of township government and the values of the people of Michigan.