



County Road Association
OF MICHIGAN

417 SEYMOUR AVE., STE. 1, LANSING, MI 48933-1143

**House Bills 4212 and 4215
(PA 14 & 15 of 2012 - HB 5125 -5126)**

Public Acts 14 and 15 of 2012, was enacted in February 2012 and sunset January 1, 2015, it allowed a county board of commissioner to take over the duties and responsibilities of their appointed road commissioners by a simple majority resolution or by a positive vote of the people of an elected road commission county.

I continue to struggle with what is broke that this legislation is trying to fix. Because over the 3-year period allowing county government to take over their road commissions, 25-30 counties held formal and informal meetings and many more counties kicked the idea around, including the sponsor's county, to take over their road commissions. And at the end of the 3-year window, 3 counties did so (Ingham, Calhoun and Jackson) and the remainder said no for various reasons.

For the record, county boards have options if they feel a road commissioner(s) are not fulfilling their obligations. They can remove that appointed road commissioner(s); if the road commission is elected, at any time, they can revert from a elected road commissioners back to an appointed road commission as their terms expire, then take any appropriate action; or support another candidate running for elected road commissioner; or they can approve a county ballot proposal to place the road jurisdiction under the county board of commissioners. The county has options and CRA does not oppose any of these options.

By re-instating this option, by a simple resolution vote of the county to take over their road commission, simply nullifies the vote of the county residence that created the road commission to maintain and improve the local road system- while still under the jurisdiction of the county. That is how 78 counties are doing it right now.

Are we perfect – no. But we are working with hand (revenues) we've been dealt. We have the same dollars to work with that we had 10 years ago, less manpower, not to mention our aging trucks and equipment.

We have annual independent financial audits, which include performance aspects, that we submit to MDOT and/or Treasury; we share our audit information with the county as part of their state reporting requirements; MDOT and Treasury have audit review oversight of us and do so regularly; and when federal funds are involved, they too can audit us.

This legislation is an over simplification of taking over the duties and responsibilities of a well thought out segment of local government. As I just read, county road commissions and county governments with road jurisdiction do not live a vacuum. We are not only held accountable via state and federal government oversight. We are also held accountable through our county open public forums, for example, CRC meetings; regional planning; county board meetings; township meetings; road millages and special assessment meetings.

We do our very best and if a county commissioner or the board wants their road commission to address them via the chair or the manager for detailed operational concerns, we will attend.