

April 15, 2011 **Resolution opposing 2011-13 state budget**

Whereas, the state budget bill proposed by Governor Scott Walker on March 1, 2011 introduced as Assembly Bill (AB 40) and Senate Bill (SB 27) is designed to reduce the projected state structural deficit, now estimated to be \$3.6 billion for the next biennium, to only \$250 million at the end of the next biennium, and

Whereas, the proposed state budget reduces state aids in 2010 disproportionately to municipalities for \$59.5 million and counties for \$36.5 million through five different formulas of questionable merit, and

Whereas, towns are the only form of government in Wisconsin where citizens participate in self-governance through direct democracy on certain issues including voting directly on their own property tax levy each year, and

Whereas, town citizens set the levy to provide vital services that impact the daily lives and long-term quality of life, including law enforcement, fire protection, emergency medical service, garbage collection, recycling, road maintenance, snow plowing, elections, land use planning and conservation, building inspections, property assessment, property tax collection, licenses and permits, and

Whereas, the proposed state budget targets the Town of East Troy with substantial reductions in State aids by a 50% cut in the municipal aid program, a 15% cut in transportation aids, and a 100% cut for recycling that totals \$93,000 in combined state aids to the Town, a sum equivalent to one-tenth of the Town's levy, and

Whereas, the Governor's proposed cuts will penalize the citizens of the Town of East Troy by having to pay the same or more for fewer services which are presently limited to law enforcement, emergency services, public works, and local government administration, and

Whereas, the Governor's proposed state budget further reduces the Town of East Troy's abilities to be fiscally responsible by freezing the revenue cap at 0% over the prior year, and

Whereas, the Governor's proposed state budget eliminates funding as well as business participation for recycling, eliminates the Purchase of Conservation of Easement program funding, restricts the stewardship program from funding conservation easements, eliminates payments in lieu of taxes on future DNR land purchases, reduces standards for clean water, and reduces the Town of East Troy's general aids, and

Whereas, the Governor's proposed budget cuts will divert local taxes that once supported state aids for local services to vaguely worded 'business development' proposals directly controlled by the Governor with no oversight, specifically:

1. The budget allows the sale of state-owned and operated heating and power plants to private interests with no open bidding process, no impartial economic studies to see if the move would make financial sense, and no oversight permitted by the public, legislature, or judicial branches.

2. Similarly, the budget mandates outsourcing of services to 'private sector' providers with no effective impartial study of whether money would be saved or services improve.

3. The budget removes the Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirement for local libraries, which allows access to the state-wide library system. This MOE requirement is the only thing keeping local communities from cutting libraries first, and allows rural areas with otherwise poor library service to access any materials available in the state. In addition, in rural areas the library is frequently the only internet access available to many people, which is an essential means of accessing government resources they have paid for with tax dollars.

4. The budget removes the mandate for local recycling, and removes the funding available to local governments for this program, yet does not eliminate the tipping fee that funds it. Instead those funds are again funneled to a vaguely worded 'business development' program under the control of the governor.

5. The budget creates a large and disproportionate impact on family farms and rural communities by reducing or eliminating Badger Care where it is often the only option for family health care.

6. The budget bill threatens productive farmland and stunts farming as a viable occupation for the health of rural communities like the Town of East Troy by eliminating Wisconsin's farmland protection (PACE) program and the conversion fees imposed when farmland is rezoned for other uses.

7. The budget bill further empowers the Governor by converting 37 civil service jobs to political appointments.

8. This budget in general removes a large amount of local autonomy from local governments and binds the Town of East Troy with decisions made directly by the Governor and legislature.

Now therefore, be it resolved that the Town Board of the Town of East Troy does hereby oppose the state's proposed budget for 2011-2013 and the egregious disruptions to local governments that it creates.

Approved by the Town Board of East Troy, Friday, April 15, 2011 during a special town board meeting.

Attest: _____
Joseph Klarkowski, Town Chairman ## Kim Buchanan, Clerk/Treasurer

C.c.: Governor Scott Walker, State of Wisconsin
Wisconsin Legislative Council
Senator Mary Lazich, 28th Senate District
83rd District Assemblyman (temporarily vacated)

Mr. David Brettl, Walworth County Administrator

Mr. Richard Stadelman, Executive Director, Wisconsin Towns Association