

League of Wisconsin Municipalities: New Wisconsin Policy Forum report discusses opportunity to address challenges

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Yesterday's [report](#) published by the Wisconsin Policy Forum details the significant projected surplus that the state of Wisconsin will receive over the next two years as a result of recent fiscal reforms and how this surplus could create a watershed moment that benefits our local communities. Following the Wisconsin Policy Forum's report, the League of Wisconsin Municipalities' Executive Director, Jerry Deschane, issued the following statement highlighting how this surplus can help address Wisconsin's system for funding local government:

“As this report shows, now is the best time to address Wisconsin's broken system for funding local government and implement a comprehensive revamp. Our municipalities are doing more with less and making difficult budgeting decisions, but without fixing a broken system, they are struggling to provide needed services such as public safety. Our cities and villages need reliable and diverse sources of revenue in order for local governments to keep performing essential functions and services for their communities including state required services.

“We are determined to work with legislators on the best ways to modernize and diversify municipal revenue options and revitalize state aid programs during the next legislative session and we look forward to these discussions. Now is the time to partner with Wisconsin's communities to address a broken system and to propose a better, more sustainable way to fund local government services including police, fire, and EMS services. Failing to provide local municipalities with the help that they need to keep their residents safe and provide essential services would be a

significant missed opportunity.”

Key Highlights from the [Report](#) include:

“...The state’s improved fiscal condition might offer an opportunity to at least partially address issues related to critical local government services...”

“...municipalities and counties have [been] placed... in a fiscal vise that has grown tighter with each passing year...”

“...The state’s unprecedented fund balances and surging tax collections may now offer the best opportunity in decades to reconsider the local government revenue structure and ensure appropriate capacity for the delivery of vital services by county and municipal governments across Wisconsin.”