

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 1101

H. P. 912

House of Representatives, March 17, 1977

Referred to the Committee on Local and County Government. Sent up for concurrence and 2,000 ordered printed.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Mr. Burns of Anson.

Cosponsors: Mr. Birt of East Millinocket and Mrs. Berube of Lewiston.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-SEVEN

**AN ACT to Provide for the Modernized Government of Counties, Providing
Optional Forms of Government and the Structure, Organization, Powers,
Duties, Functions and Responsibilities of Such Government.**

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine, as follows:

30 MRSA c. 11, is enacted to read:

CHAPTER 11

OPTIONAL FORMS OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT

SUBCHAPTER I

GENERAL PROVISIONS

§ 1501. Referendum; transition

1. Referendum authorized. Each county, after at least 2 public hearings which shall have been advertised in a newspaper of general circulation in the county and at which the legislative delegation of the county explains the alternate forms of government provided for in this chapter, may conduct a referendum to determine the wishes of the qualified electors as to the form of government to be selected. The referendum may be called by an Act of the Legislature, resolution of the governing body or upon petition of not less than 10% of the registered electors of the county. The referendum may be held in a general election or in a special election as determined by the governing body. The question submitted shall be framed by the authority call for the referendum and when called by petition, such petition shall state the question to be proposed. All alternate forms of government pro-

vided for in this chapter shall appear on the ballot and unless one form receives a majority favorable vote in the initial referendum, a 2nd or runoff referendum shall be held 2 weeks after the first referendum, at which time the 2 forms which received the highest number of votes shall again be submitted to the qualified electors for final selection of the form to be adopted. The governing body shall by resolution provide for the adoption of the form of government selected in the referendum, which shall be filed in the office of the Secretary of State, and shall be effective immediately upon such filing. All resolutions which adopt a form of county government shall be printed in the Acts and Resolves of the State of Maine and shall remain a part thereof until amended or repealed. The Legislature shall provide for the number of commissioners and the length of their terms during the next legislative session.

2. Procedure for referendum; effect of referendum. After the initial form, number and composition have been adopted and selected, the adopted form, number and composition shall not change for a period of 2 years from the date the form becomes effective, and then only as a result of a referendum as hereinafter provided for. Referenda may be called by the governing body or upon petition of not less than 10% of the registered electors of the county. Petitions shall be certified as valid or rejected by the board of voter registration within 60 days after they have been delivered to the board and, if certified, shall be filed with the governing body which shall provide for a referendum not more than 90 days thereafter. If more than one petition is filed within the time allowed for filing, the petition bearing the largest number of signatures of registered electors shall be the proposal presented in the manner set forth hereinafter. Referenda may be held in a general or special election as determined by the governing body. No change to an alternate form of government as a result of a referendum shall become effective unless such proposed form receives a favorable vote of a majority of those persons voting in a referendum. After a referendum has been held and whether or not a change in the form results therefrom, no additional referenda shall be held for a period of 4 years.

3. Transition for members of governing bodies. All members of the governing bodies of the respective counties serving terms of office on the date on which a particular form of county government becomes effective shall continue to serve terms for which they were elected or appointed and until their successors are elected or appointed and have qualified.

§ 1502. Alternate forms of government

The alternate forms of government which may be adopted pursuant to section 1501 shall be one of the following:

1. Commission form. Commission form as set forth in this subchapter;
2. Commission — supervisor form. Commission — supervisor form as set forth in this subchapter; or
3. Commission — manager. Commission — manager form as set forth in this subchapter.

§ 1503. Powers

Under each of the alternate forms of government listed in section 1502, each county government within the authority granted by this chapter, and subject to the general law of this State, shall have the following enumerated powers which shall be exercised by the respective governing bodies thereof:

1. **Seal.** To adopt, use and revise a corporate seal;
2. **Property.** To acquire real property by purchase or gift; to lease, sell or otherwise dispose of real and personal property; and to acquire tangible personal property and supplies;
3. **Contracts.** To make and execute contracts;
4. **Taxation.** To assess property and levy advalorem property taxes and uniform service charges, including the power to tax different areas at different rates related to the nature and level of governmental services provided and make appropriations for functions and operations, included, but not limited to, water treatment and distribution; sewage collection and treatment; courts and criminal justice administration; correctional institutions; social services; transportation; planning; economic development; recreation; public safety, including police and fire protection and emergency preparedness; sanitation, including solid waste collection and disposal, and to provide for the regulation and enforcement of these, provided that prior to the creation of any special tax district for the purposes enumerated herein, one of the following procedures shall be required:
 - A. An election, initiated by a petition of 25% of the majority voting in the election for the proposed tax district, shall be held in which a majority of the voters in that area shall approve the creation of the special tax district, the nature of the services to be rendered and the level of taxes to be levied;
 - B. When 15% of the property owners in a proposed special tax district sign a petition requesting such a district, a referendum and election shall be held. A majority of the voters in the proposed special tax district shall approve the creation of that district, the nature of the services to be rendered and the level of the taxes to be levied; or
 - C. After one of the prodedures in paragraph A or B has been completed and the result is favorable for creation of a special tax district, such district shall be created by commission ordinance; provided that the governing body of a county shall not finance any service not being rendered on January 3, 1977, by a countywide tax where such service is being provided by any municipality within such municipality or where such service has been budgeted or funds have been applied for as certified by municipal governing body, except upon written concurrence of the municipal officers of the governing body;
5. **Internal organization.** To establish such agencies, departments, boards, commissions and positions in the county as may be necessary and proper to provide services of local concern for public purposes, to prescribe the

functions thereof, and to regulate, modify and merge any such agencies, departments, boards, commissions and positions, except as otherwise provided in this chapter;

6. **Personnel.** To develop personnel system policies and procedures for county employees by which all county employees are regulated, except those elected directly by the people, and to be responsible for the employment and discharge of county personnel in those county departments in which the employment authority is vested in the county government, but this authority shall not extend to any personnel employed in those departments or agencies under the direction of an elected official or an appointed official appointed by an authority outside county government. Any employee discharged by the administrator, elected official or designated department head shall be granted a public hearing before the entire county commission if he submits a request in writing to the clerk of the county commission within 5 days of receipt of the request. The employee shall be relieved of his duties pending the hearing and in the event a majority of the county commission sustains the discharge, it shall be final subject to judicial review, but if a majority of the county commission reverses the dismissal, the employee shall be reinstated and paid the salary for such time as he was suspended from his employment. The salary of those officials elected by the people may be increased but shall not be reduced during the term for which they are elected, except that salary for members of the commission and supervisors under the commission — supervisor form of government shall be hereinafter provided;

7. **Accounting and reporting system.** To provide for an accounting and reporting system whereby funds are received, safely kept, allocated and disbursed;

8. **Revenue and general obligations.** To establish and implement policies and procedures for the issuance of revenue and general obligations subject to any bonded debt limitation;

9. **Multicounty projects and programs.** To participate in multicounty projects and programs authorized by general law and appropriate funds thereof;

10. **Ordinances.** To enact ordinances for the implementation and enforcement of the powers granted in this section and provide penalties for violations thereof, not to exceed the penalty jurisdiction of the courts. Alleged violations of such ordinances shall be heard and disposed of in courts created by the general law. County officials are further empowered to seek and obtain compliance with ordinances and regulations issued pursuant thereto through injunctive relief in courts of competent jurisdiction. No ordinance including penalty provisions shall be enacted with regard to matters provided for by the general law, except as specifically authorized by such general law;

11. **Advisory referenda.** To conduct advisory referenda; and

12. **Other powers.** To exercise such other powers as may be authorized for counties by the general law. The governing body of any county shall

not create a special tax district, any portion of which falls within the corporate boundaries of a municipality, except upon the written concurrence of the governing body of the municipality.

§ 1504. Functions and services

1. Functions and services by contract. Any county may perform any of its functions, furnish any of its services within the corporate limits of a municipality situated within the county, by contract with any individual, corporation or municipal governing body, subject to the general law and the Constitution of Maine regarding such matters; provided that where such service is being provided by the municipality or have been budgeted, or funds have been applied for, such service may not be rendered without the written concurrence of the municipality.

2. Funding for implementation of general law and state regulations. Whenever the Legislature shall provide by general law for the use of county personnel, facilities or equipment to implement such general law, or rules or regulations promulgated pursuant thereto, the state agency or department responsible for administering such general law or service shall provide sufficient funds for county implementation from appropriations to that agency or department; provided that this section shall not apply to construction of or improvement to county capital improvements or other permanent facilities required by the provisions of the general law or regulations promulgated pursuant thereto.

3. Unexpired terms. Officials serving unexpired terms when a form of government provided for in this chapter is adopted by a particular county shall continue to serve until successors are elected and qualify. The county treasurer shall serve out his unexpired term, but shall thereafter be elected or appointed, as the commission shall by ordinance prescribe.

§ 1505. Special purpose districts

The provisions of this chapter shall not be construed to devolve any additional powers upon county commissions with regard to public service districts, special purpose districts, water and sewer authorities, or other political subdivisions by whatever name designated, which are in existence on the date one of the forms of government provided for in this chapter becomes effective in a particular county, and such political subdivisions shall continue to perform their statutory functions prescribed in laws creating such districts or authorities, except as they may be modified by an Act of the Legislature and any such act which dissolves a district or absorbs its function entirely within county government shall provide that such act shall be effective only upon approval of such abolition or absorption by favorable referendum vote of a majority of the qualified electors of the district voting in such referendum. Upon the dissolution of any district within the county and the assumption of its function by the county government, the county shall take title to the property of the district and assume all of its debts and obligations which shall be retrieved by charges or assessment of taxes in those areas of the county receiving benefits from the facilities of the district.

§ 1506. Districts

In the event that the members of the governing body are required to be elected from defined single member election districts, they shall be elected by qualified voters of the district in which they reside. The districts shall be reapportioned as to population within one year of the adoption by the State of each Federal Decennial Census. The population variance between defined election districts shall not exceed 10%.

Members of the governing body shall be elected for terms of 2 years, 4 years or 6 years as the Legislature may determine for each county, commencing on the 2nd of January next following their election. Vacancies on the governing body shall be filled in the manner of original election for the unexpired terms in the next general election after the vacancy occurs or by special election if the vacancy occurs 180 days or more prior to the next general election.

In those counties where the members are elected for 4 or 6-year terms, the terms shall be staggered. If necessary, in the initial election for members with 4-year terms, $\frac{1}{2}$ plus one of the members elected who receive the highest number of votes shall serve terms of 4 years and the remaining members elected shall initially serve terms of 2 years only, and in the initial election with members of 6-year terms, $\frac{1}{3}$ plus one of the members who receive the highest number of votes shall serve terms of 6 years, $\frac{1}{3}$ of the members receiving the next highest number of votes shall initially serve terms of 4 years only, and the remaining members shall serve terms of 2 years only.

§ 1507. Salaries

After the initial determination of salary by the Legislature, the commission may by ordinance adjust the salary, but no ordinance changing the salary shall be effective until the date of commencement of terms of members of the commission elected at the next general election following the changes. Members may also be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred in the conduct of their official duties.

§ 1508. Commission

The commission shall select one of its members as chairman and one as vice-chairman for terms as the commission shall determine. The commission shall appoint a clerk to record its proceedings and perform any additional duties the commission may prescribe. The commission, after public notice, shall meet at least once each month, but may meet more frequently in accordance with a schedule prescribed by the commission and made public. All meetings shall be held in accordance with the general laws of the State affecting meetings of public bodies. Special meetings may be called by the chairman or a majority of members after 24 hours' notice.

The commission shall determine its own rules and order of business.

It shall keep a journal in which shall be recorded the minutes of its proceedings which shall be open to public inspection.

§ 1509. Ordinances

The commission shall take legislative action by ordinance which may be introduced by any member. With the exception of emergency ordinances, all ordinances shall be read at 2 public meetings of the commission on 2 separate days with an interval of not less than 7 days between the first and 2nd readings. All proceedings of the commission shall be recorded and all ordinances adopted by the commission shall be compiled, indexed, codified, published by title and made available to public inspection at the office of the clerk of the commission. The clerk of the commission shall maintain permanent records of all ordinances adopted and shall furnish a copy of the record to the clerk of courts for filing in that office.

§ 1510. Public hearings before final commission action

Public hearings, upon reasonable public notice, shall be held before final commission action is taken to:

1. Budgets. Adopt annual operational and capital budgets;
2. Appropriations. Make appropriations, including supplemental appropriations;
3. Regulatory codes involving penalties. Adopt regulatory codes involving penalties;
4. Zoning regulations. Adopt zoning regulations in unorganized areas;
5. Taxes. Levy taxes; and
6. Powers over local real property. Sell, lease or contract to sell or lease real property owned by the county.

Not less than 15 days before the time and place of such hearings, notice shall be published in at least one newspaper of general circulation in the county.

To meet public emergencies affecting life, health, safety or the property of the people, the commission may adopt emergency ordinances, but such ordinances shall not levy taxes, grant, renew or impose or change a service rate. Every emergency ordinance shall be designated as such and shall contain a declaration that an emergency exists and describe the emergency. Every emergency ordinance shall be enacted by affirmative vote of at least $\frac{2}{3}$ of the members of the commission. An emergency ordinance is effective immediately upon its enactment without regard to any reading, public hearing, publication requirements or public notice requirements. Emergency ordinances shall expire automatically as of the 61st day following the date of enactment.

§ 1511. County funds; fiscal report

All county officers, departments, boards, commissions, agencies or institutions receiving county funds shall make a full detailed annual fiscal report to the commission at the end of the fiscal year. The county commission shall adopt annually, and prior to the beginning of the fiscal year, operating

and capital budgets for the operation of county government and shall in such budgets identify the sources of anticipated revenue, including taxes necessary to meet the financial requirements of the budgets adopted. The commission shall further provide for the levy and collection of taxes necessary to meet all budget requirements, except as provided by other revenue sources. The commission may make supplemental appropriations which shall specify the source of funds for such appropriations. The procedure for approval of supplemental appropriations shall be the same as that prescribed for enactment of ordinances.

In the preparation of annual budgets or supplemental appropriations, the commission may require such reports, estimates and statistics from any county agency or department as may be necessary to perform its duties as the responsible fiscal body of the county.

§ 1512. Audit

The commission shall provide for an independent annual audit or a state audit of all financial records and transactions of the county or any agency funded in whole by county funds, and may provide for more frequent audits as it deems necessary. Independent audits shall be made by a certified public accountant or firm or such accountants who have no personal interest, direct or indirect, in the fiscal affairs of county government or any of its officers.

The commission may, without requiring competitive bids, designate such accountant firm annually or for a period not exceeding one year, provided that the designation shall be made no later than 30 days after the beginning of such fiscal years. The report of the audit shall be made available for public inspection.

§ 1513. Centralized purchasing system

The commission shall provide for a centralized purchasing system for procurement of goods and services required by the county government.

§ 1514. Appointments to boards, committees and commissions

The commission shall provide by ordinance for appointment to all county boards, committees and commissions whose appointment is not provided by the general law or the Constitution of Maine. This authority shall not extend to school districts, special purpose districts or political subdivisions created by the Legislature.

§ 1515. Contracts of interest

Any county officer or employee who has a substantial financial interest in any business which contracts with the county for sale or lease of land, materials, supplies, equipment or services or who personally engages in such matters shall make known that interest and refrain from voting upon or otherwise participating in this capacity as a county officer or employee in matters related thereto. Any county officer or employee who willfully violates the requirements of this section shall be deemed guilty of malfeasance in office and upon conviction shall forfeit his office or position.

Violation of this section with the knowledge express or implied of the person or corporation contracting with or making a sale to the county shall render the contract or sale voidable by the county governing body.

§ 1516. Commission form

In those counties adopting the commission form of government provided for in this subchapter, the responsibility for policy making and administration of county government shall be vested in the county commission which shall consist of not less than 3 nor more than 12 members who are qualified electors of the county. The structure, organization, powers, duties, functions and responsibilities of county government under the commission form shall be prescribed in this subchapter.

§ 1517. Commission — supervisor

The commission in those counties adopting the commission — supervisor form of government provided for in this subchapter shall consist of not less than 3 members, including the supervisor, nor more than 12 members who are qualified electors of the county. The supervisor shall be a qualified elector of the county, elected at large from the county in the general election for a term of 4 years.

The compensation for the supervisor shall be prescribed by commission ordinance. The commission shall not reduce or increase the compensation of the supervisor during the term of office for which he was elected.

§ 1518. Powers and duties of supervisor

The powers and duties of the supervisor shall include, but not be limited to, the following :

1. Chief administrative officer. To serve as the chief administrative officer of the county government on a full-time or part-time basis as determined by commission ordinance ;
2. Executor of policies. To execute the policies and legislative actions of the commission ;
3. Direction and coordination of agency. To direct and coordinate operational agencies and administrative activities of the county government ;
4. Preparation of budgets. To prepare annual operation and capital improvement budgets for submission to the commission ;
5. Supervision of expenditures. To supervise the expenditure of funds appropriated by the commission ;
6. Report preparation. To prepare annual, monthly and other reports for the commission on finances and administrative activities of the county ;
7. Recommendation of measures. To recommend measures for adoption ;
8. Service as presiding officer. To serve as presiding officer of the commission, voting in case of commission ties ;

9. Serve as official spokesman. To serve as official spokesman for the commission with respect to the commission's policies and programs;

10. Inspection of certain records. To inspect books, accounts, records or documents pertaining to the property, money or assets of the county;

11. Administration of personnel policies. To be responsible for the administration of county personnel policies approved by the commission, including salary and classified plans; and

12. Responsibility for employment and discharge. To be responsible for employment and discharge of personnel subject to section 1503, subsection 6, and subject to the appropriation of funds by the commission for that purpose.

§ 1519. Removal of county administrative officers

The commission shall not remove any county administrative officers or employees whom the county supervisor or any of his subordinates are empowered to appoint, unless by $\frac{2}{3}$ vote of the members. Except for the purpose of inquiries and official investigations, neither the commission nor its members shall give direct orders to any county officer or employee, either publicly or privately.

With the exception of organizational policies established by the governing body, the county supervisor shall exercise no authority over any elected officials of the county whose offices were created either by the Constitution of Maine or by the general laws of the State.

§ 1520. Powers, duties, functions and responsibilities of commission — supervisor form of government

Except as specifically provided for in this subchapter, the structure, organization, powers, duties, functions and responsibilities of county government under the commission — supervisor form shall be as prescribed in this subchapter.

§ 1521. Commission — manager

The commission in those counties adopting the commission — manager form of government provided for in this subchapter shall consist of not less than 3 nor more than 12 members who are qualified electors of the county. The commission members shall be elected in the general election for terms of 2 years, 4 years or 6 years commencing on the first day of January next following their election.

§ 1522. Employment of manager

The commission shall employ a manager who shall be the administrative head of the county government and shall be responsible for the administration of all the departments of the county government which the commission has the authority to control. He shall be appointed with regard to his executive and administrative qualifications only, and need not be a resident of the county until the time of his employment unless granted an exception by the commission. The term of employment of the manager shall be at

the pleasure of the commission and he shall be entitled to such compensation for his services as the commission may determine. The commission may, in its discretion, employ the manager for a definite term. If the commission determines to remove the county manager, he shall be given a written statement of the reasons alleged for the proposed removal and the right to a hearing thereon at a public meeting of the commission. Within 5 days after the voice of removal is delivered to the manager, he may file with the commission a written request for a public hearing. This hearing shall be held at a commission meeting not earlier than 20 days nor later than 30 days after the request is filed. The manager may file with the commission a written reply not later than 5 days before the hearing. The removal shall be upheld pending the decision at the public hearing.

§ 1523. Powers and duties of manager

The powers and duties of the manager shall include, but not be limited to, the following :

1. Service as chief administrative officer. To serve as the chief administrative officer of the county government ;
2. Execution of policies. To execute the policies, directives and legislative actions of the commission ;
3. Director and coordinator of agencies. To direct and coordinate operational agencies and administrative activities of the county government ;
4. Preparation of budgets. To prepare annual operating and capital improvement budgets for submission to the commission and in the exercise of these responsibilities he shall be empowered to require such reports, estimates and statistics on an annual or periodic basis as he deems necessary from all county departments and agencies ;
5. Supervision of expenditures. To supervise the expenditure of appropriated funds ;
6. Preparation of reports. To prepare annual, monthly and other reports for the commission on finances and administrative activities of the county ;
7. Responsibility for personnel policy. To be responsible for the administration of county personnel policies, including salary and classification plans approved by the commission ;
8. Responsibility for employment and discharge. To be responsible for employment and discharge of personnel subject to section 1503, subsection 6, and subject to the appropriation of funds by the commission for that purpose ; and
9. Performance of other duties. To perform such other duties as may be required by the commission.

§ 1524. Preparation of budgets

The county manager shall prepare the proposed operating and capital budgets and submit them to the commission at such time as the commission

determines. At the time of submitting the proposed budget, the county manager shall submit to the commission a statement describing the important features of the proposed budgets, including all sources of anticipated revenue of the county government and the amount of tax revenue required to meet the financial requirements of the county.

§ 1525. Certain officials not under authority of county manager

With the exception of organizational policies established by the governing body, the county manager shall exercise no authority over any elected officials of the county whose offices were created either by the Constitution of Maine or by the general laws of the State.

§ 1526. Responsibilities of manager

Except for the purposes of inquiries and investigations, the commission shall deal with county officers and employees who are subject to the direction and supervision of the county manager solely through the manager, and members of the commission shall not give orders or instructions to any such officers or employees.

§ 1527. Structure, organization, powers, duties, functions and responsibilities under commission - manager form of government

Except as specifically provided for in this subchapter, the structure, organization, powers, duties, functions and responsibilities of county government under the commission - manager form shall be prescribed in this subchapter.

SUBCHAPTER II

INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM

§ 1551. Proposals of ordinance

The qualified electors of any county may propose any ordinance, except an ordinance appropriating money or authorizing the levy of taxes, and adopt or reject such ordinance at the polls. Any initiated ordinance may be submitted to the commission by a petition signed by the qualified electors of the county equal in number to at least 15% of the registered voters at the last regular county commission election.

§ 1552. Filing of petition

Within 60 days after the enactment of the commission of any ordinance authorizing the issuance of bonds, notes or other evidence of debt, the repayment of which requires the approval of the issuance of bonds by a public service district within the county, a petition signed by the qualified electors of the county equal in number to at least 15% of the qualified electors voting in the last preceding county commission election, or if such ordinance relates to a bond issue for a public service district, 15% of the qualified electors of the district voting in such election, may be filed with the clerk of the commission requesting that any such ordinance be repealed.

§ 1553. Failure or repeal of ordinance; special election

If the commission shall fail to pass an ordinance proposed by initiative petition or shall pass it in a form substantially different from that set forth in the petition therefore or if the commission shall fail to repeal an ordinance for which a petition for repeal has been presented, the adoption or repeal of the ordinance concerned shall be submitted to the electors not less than 30 days nor more than one year from the date the commission takes its final vote thereon. The commission may, in its discretion, and if no regular election is to be held within such period, provide for a special election.

SUBCHAPTER III**TRANSITION****§ 1601. Procedures**

After one of the forms of county government has been adopted and becomes effective, to insure an orderly transition from existing forms of government, the following procedures shall be initiated and carried out by each county commission:

1. **Composition and election of county commission.** Provide by ordinance for the composition and election of a new county commission pursuant to sections 1501 and 1506;

2. **Election or appointment of county treasurers.** Provide by ordinance for the election or appointment of county treasurers as their elected terms expire; and

3. **Other necessary implementing actions.** Take all other necessary actions to implement the form of government adopted and the transition to that form, including, but not limited to:

A. A schedule for the election of commission members and supervisors when appropriate based on the expiration of terms of persons serving unexpired terms when a new form of government becomes effective. Composition of the commission need not conform to the numerical requirements prescribed for the form adopted until such unexpired terms are completed. Persons serving terms may serve out their unexpired term or may seek election to the commission and assume office if elected prior to the expiration of their terms; and

B. A schedule for the election of new officers for the commission which shall not extend more than one year following the date the adopted form becomes effective. All operations, agencies and offices of county government, appropriations and laws related thereto in effect on the date the change in form becomes effective shall remain in full force and effect until otherwise implemented by ordinance of the commission pursuant to this chapter; provided that county commissions shall not enact ordinances in conflict with existing law relating to their respective counties and all such laws shall remain in full force until repealed by the Legislature, except that when an optional form of government shall have been selected and

an initial election of commission held, this proviso shall not apply to appropriation matters.

STATEMENT OF FACT

At present the structure of county government does not meet the needs of every county in the State, rural or urban. However, county government can be made more responsive to the wishes of the people by allowing structural changes and greater accountability, efficiency and effectiveness can be achieved by permitting the modernization of county government.

It is the purpose of this bill to provide various means by which counties as units of general local government can effectively provide and finance various governmental services for their residents. This bill is designed to provide citizens and county officials full opportunity to select the form of government and services therefrom which best serves their needs and desires.

It is the further purpose of this bill to authorize county performances of necessary urban services in unincorporated areas, and to establish conditions and procedures for county performance of urban services within municipal boundaries.