

Local Government Fund distribution should be changed.

In response to the 11-19 17 editorial, "Don't mess with Local Government Fund formula."

First of all, the editorial board is correct, 100% of blame is on the State for cutting this critical funding in half over the last 5 years, causing the budget issues in our political sub-divisions.

But reading this editorial makes it sound as though Kent only gets 1% of the funds for each percent of the population. Sounds fair, right? Wrong. If that were the case, the townships would get 51% of the funds and trust me, this isn't the case.

Portage County has a population of 161,139 per the 2010 census. Kent has a population of 28,904 and is scheduled to receive about \$743,000 in 2018. Ravenna Township for example has a population of 9,209, roughly 1/3 of Kent's. Ravenna Township by that logic should receive about 1/3 the funds Kent gets, right? Kent actually gets 25 times more money than Ravenna Township which is scheduled to only receive \$29,487. Using the current distribution, the townships receive on average only \$8.47 per resident while cities average \$18.30 and villages a whopping \$37.57 per resident.

Here is the question: Can anyone show me one way the current distribution method make sense?

The fact is that 51% of the county population lives in Townships and they only receive 14.4% of the local government funds. Each township receives .79% or \$29,487 regardless of size, (with one exception that receives \$4K more). While the remaining 49% of people that reside in cities and villages get 46.7% of the funds. Remember, the county has already taken their share 39.8%.

A few weeks back, the County Auditor published every budget for the cities, villages and townships. When you break it down by population, the cities have an average of \$2,763 per resident, the villages \$2,273 and the townships just \$418 per resident.

The current distribution model has no formula that anyone can cite as a reference to how we achieved these dis-proportional dollar amounts.

So I would have to agree with the editorial board 100% that **"if there's a wholesale change to be made, it really should directly relate to population figures with no minimum for anyone"**. I am sure that the townships would whole heartedly support any formula based on population.

Other counties use formulas that give each entity a fixed amount, then divide the rest by population. That is what the townships have proposed, a fixed amount of \$15K or so to each entity, including Kent, and the remainder to be distributed based on population. The reason for the fixed amount is to protect the smallest villages and townships.