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March 13, 2018

The Honorable Marlene Anielski
Chair, State & Local Government Committee
Ohio House of Representatives
77 S. High Street
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chair Anielski:

I am writing in support of House Bill 500, the omnibus township bill presently before your committee. In particular, I am somewhat responsible for the section dealing with R.C. §505.04 which requires an annual inventory of township items.

When I first became a trustee in 2016, my first official “act” was to flout R.C. §505.04 simply because my board does not meet until the third Tuesday of each month. Consequently, the statute’s requirement for an inventory to be conducted specifically “on the second Monday of January, each year” had come and gone by the time I was even able to inquire about it.

I felt bad about this in that I had just taken my oath of office to uphold the laws of the State of Ohio and yet, here I was in non-compliance with that very same law. Then, I got curious. I wondered how many other townships go through this annual ritual.

Rather than contact each of the 1,308 townships in the state, I decided to focus on the county engineers who are to receive copies of these inventories. I contacted all 88 county engineers’ offices and asked for those records.

My findings were that the compliance for 2015 inventories was only about 48%, based upon results from 83 county engineers and varied from county to county from 0 to 100% compliance mainly based upon whether the engineer reminded the townships of their obligation. With a reminder or solicitation, compliance was good; but not always at 100%. In many counties, not a single township sent an inventory list to the engineer.

This led me to believe that R.C. §505.04 is an outdated piece of legislation that might have been useful in the days before rapid communication but is totally unneeded in the modern era. I therefore suggested to several legislators that the statute be rescinded. However, I’m given to understand that the legislature doesn’t necessarily move that way that fast - by the way, thank you for finally relieving townships of the responsibility for maintaining horse watering troughs - and the current form of HB 500 is the best I can expect at this time.

I, however, am still not satisfied with it. If R.C. §505.04 is to survive, my main objections are the timing element (January is a lousy time to be conducting inventories) and the ill-defined parameters of what needs to be inventoried. Do we need to list every paper clip and staple?

I propose that the timing, if it is to be mentioned at all, be changed to read "by June 30" so that the inventories can be conducted in better weather conditions. I also believe that what needs to be inventoried should only be those items that the township insures on an individual basis: buildings, vehicles, individual equipment, etc. Office supplies, tools and other small items are covered by comprehensive insurance and are not listed with insurers. These items should not be included in R.C. §505.04.

However, if there is no consensus on these two points, I am grudgingly willing to accept what is currently in HB 500 and I promise that I shall work to get it revised to my liking in future bills.

Thank you for your consideration of my position. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert D. Kroshefsky". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robert D. Kroshefsky
Trustee

cc: Sen. David Burke
Rep. Dorothy Pelanda