



NEWS RELEASE: Alberta Municipalities responds to Bill 20

April 25, 2024

EDMONTON – *The following official statement is issued on behalf of the Alberta Municipalities Board of Directors:*

Today the provincial government announced its changes to the *Local Authorities Election Act* (LAEA) and the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA). It will take some time to properly analyze Bill 20, but it appears to fundamentally redraw the blueprint for local democracy in Alberta.

For the last eight months, Alberta Municipalities has repeatedly said that the introduction of political parties in local elections is a bad idea that most Albertans do not want. In the absence of any consultation, we have publicly offered sound ideas to strengthen local elections, boost turnout rates, and limit the influence of affluent donors – all the issues that Premier Smith identified as concerns.

Albertans have been clear: they do not want political parties in their local elections. The provincial government has ignored them, too, deaf to the voices of Albertans and blinded by their incessant fighting with the federal government.

Alberta's local governments have no interest in fighting with the province. Nor do they want to be caught in the middle of an Alberta-Ottawa "forever war." Our members want to be respected by the provincial government as a democratically elected order of government and allowed to focus their attention and energy on providing the services their residents expect and deserve.

Alberta Municipalities will have more to say on Bill 20 early next week, once we have had time to digest and consider its long-term effects on local democracy.

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From the smallest village to the largest city, across every region of the province, Alberta Municipalities (ABmunis) represents the communities where over 85% of Albertans live. ABmunis was founded in 1905 to provide urban and rural-

region communities with a united voice. Alberta Municipalities now serves more than 260 of Alberta's 334 municipalities making it the province's largest municipal group.

We work with elected and administrative leaders of Alberta's summer villages, villages, town, cities, and specialized municipalities to advocate for solutions to their common issues.

And we help them build resilient and thriving communities by providing valuable services. We use our members' combined purchasing power to negotiate the best possible value and competitive pricing on employee benefits, insurance, energy, and other services needed to run an effective and efficient municipality.

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