

# **Resolution to Restore and Reassert Home Rule Authority for Counties and Townships in Michigan**

*As Declared by the People of Bay County in Lawful Assembly*

The foundation of just government lies in the recognition that all political power originates from the people, not from the bureaucratic apparatus of the state or the corporate structures of centralized authority. This resolution is rooted in the plain language of the Michigan Constitution (1963), Article I, Section 1, which affirms that government is established for the equal benefit, security, and protection of the people. Similarly, the Tenth Amendment to the United States Constitution explicitly reserves all powers not delegated to the federal government to the states or the people. Yet, over time, this principle has been eroded through judicial doctrines such as Dillon's Rule, which asserts that local governments are mere subdivisions of the state with no authority beyond what is explicitly granted. While cities and villages have been afforded home rule under Michigan's Home Rule Acts of 1909, counties and townships remain largely shackled by legislative dependency. This imbalance has allowed unelected state agencies and legislative bodies to impose mandates, control funding, and dictate operations without the consent of local constituents, thereby violating the foundational doctrine of self-governance.

In response to this systemic erosion of local authority, the people of Bay County, Michigan, acting in lawful assembly, are taking deliberate and constitutionally grounded steps to restore Home Rule for counties and townships. This initiative is not based on partisan interest, but on the unassailable right of the people to govern their own affairs. The people declare their intent to draft, adopt, and enforce a local Home Rule Charter consistent with the Declaration of Rights of the Michigan Constitution, the United States Constitution, Natural Law, and the inherent sovereignty of the governed. This Charter will serve to protect unalienable rights—including liberty, property, due process, and local culture—while ensuring transparency, accountability, and the restoration of lawful checks and balances. The people of Bay County assert that such a Charter is a lawful and necessary expression of their inherent political power and not subject to prior permission from the state legislature or any administrative body.

This resolution further calls upon the Michigan Legislature to either explicitly authorize township and county Home Rule Charters by amending relevant statutes—such as the General Law Township Act—or to cease interfering with lawful efforts to establish such authority independently. The people point to compelling legal precedent in support of their right to do so, including *People v. Hurlbut*, in which Michigan Supreme Court Justice Thomas M. Cooley affirmed that local self-government is a right, not a privilege granted by the state. Additionally, the Michigan Constitution, Article VII, Section 34, directs that all laws and constitutional provisions concerning local governments "shall be liberally construed in their favor." Therefore, any refusal by the state to acknowledge this resolution or to obstruct its implementation would constitute a violation of the spirit and letter of constitutional governance. Furthermore, the federal trend away from strict adherence to *Hunter v. Pittsburgh* opens the door for a renewed assertion of municipal and county-level autonomy.

Finally, this resolution is not limited to Bay County. It is a call to action for all counties and townships across Michigan to stand in solidarity and reclaim their rightful autonomy under constitutional law. Local assemblies, charter commissions, and grassroots committees must rise to assert the authority of the people over the machinery of centralized government. Through peaceful, lawful means, these communities can restore the decentralized model of governance envisioned by the framers, replacing top-down control with localized solutions, responsive leadership, and restored liberty. The people of Bay County, having enacted this resolution on May 26, 2025, declare their firm commitment to lawful self-governance, to upholding their natural rights, and to resisting any further encroachment by entities that derive their supposed authority from anything other than the consent of the governed. This is not only a resolution—it is a restoration of rightful power, and a reawakening of the enduring spirit of liberty in Michigan.