



May 8, 2009

Dr. Charles Wise, Director  
John Glenn School of Public Affairs  
The Ohio State University  
300 Page Hall, 1810 College Road  
Columbus OH 43210

Dear Dr. Wise,

At its April 9, 2009, Board meeting, the Ohio City/County Management Association (OCMA) voted to support the John Glenn School of Public Affairs proposal to offer an undergraduate degree program in public affairs.

The need to develop the next generation of local government leadership is great and that need will have to be met through the traditional avenues of the MPA degree, but also through new avenues including the increased professionalism of rank and file city workers through undergraduate coursework and the recruitment of individuals from other disciplines.

As the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) has documented, local government management is in the midst of a quiet crisis. Today's managers are nearing retirement, and fewer young professionals are in line and prepared to fill their shoes. Attracting and retaining qualified young and mid-career professionals is further complicated by a political culture which conveys images of government service as bureaucratic, second-rate work. Many potential candidates overlook the deep satisfaction that comes from leading a local government through times of innovation and change. At the same time, few public managers consider that they are also responsible for the critical job of developing young and mid-career talent.<sup>1</sup>

Both ICMA and OCMA have created Next Generation Initiatives to attract and develop a wide and diverse group of people into the local government management profession, including students, early and mid-career professionals, and professionals from other disciplines. This undergraduate proposal speaks to the needs of the profession and the strategies identified by ICMA to address the problem.

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<sup>1</sup> Preparing the Next Generation, ICMA, <http://icma.org>

The Associations support actions and programs which inspire young and mid-career professionals to consider local government management careers. A January 2009 survey conducted by OCMA's own Next Generation Task Force indicates the need for cultivating the next generation of local government managers with a combination of strategies that include internships, higher education, and mentoring. Members also believe that more managers will need to come from non-traditional ranks including rank and file local government employees who move up to assume city management roles and from those pursuing second careers.

The Ohio City/County Management Association supports the addition of undergraduate coursework in public affairs at The Ohio State University.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brian P. Humphress". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Brian Humphress, President  
Ohio City/County Management Association  
City Manager, City of Willard