

Mayor Mark Meadows  
City council members Draheim, Beier, Stephens and Altmann  
City Manager George Lahanas

Dear City of East Lansing government leaders:

We are writing as concerned residents of the city regarding the possibility of giving up our city court to county funding and control and consolidating it with the courts from Lansing and the remaining areas of the county. We think it's important to have judges who live in our community and are sensitive to the needs of our neighborhoods and the impact the student population has on our city.

What is the benefit *to our residents of East Lansing* to give up local affiliation with our court? Why hasn't the public been given effective notice by the council that it is considering this consolidation? We would like the opportunity to be heard and to be told all the factors being considered in any such decision.

Our court is conveniently located downtown. While the plan is apparently to keep it there, we understand there is no guarantee at all that the county will continue to house a court here which is convenient to *all* our residents. Our city has laws which help protect all our citizens and our quality of life. How will the needs of our diverse population be prioritized and treated by a county court? Can you guarantee there will always be judges who are East Lansing residents? Can you guarantee the legislation won't be changed in the future to county wide elections which may result in no East Lansing judges?

Our citizens were given a chance to vote on the income tax proposal. Why aren't we being given a chance to vote on the important issue of giving up our court to the county?

We choose to live here and to pay some of the highest property taxes in the county along with a new income tax. Why is *our* council not representing *our* interests in keeping *our* court? Why is *our* council apparently concerned with convenience issues for citizens who have chosen to live outside our city limits? When the new income tax was passed the mayor and council promised it was to preserve city services. The court is an important local city service.

We oppose the transfer of our court to the county. We ask that council members vote no. We also ask that before any vote the people of East Lansing be given an opportunity to have their voices heard at well-advertised meetings like those on the tax issues. At the very least we need our judges and council members to attend to explain to us how this benefits or disadvantages our citizens.

Sincerely,

Signature

Printed name