

To: State Boundary Commission
Office of Land Survey and Remonumentation
P.O. Box 30254
Lansing, Michigan

From: Judge Richard H. Shaw, retired
[REDACTED]
Douglas, Michigan 49406

Ref: Docket No. 11-C-1, Allegan

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REMONUMENTATION

The purpose of my letter is to encourage the Boundary Commission in its recommendation involving the above petition to include a smaller area, namely the consolidation of the city of Saugatuck and the city of the village of Douglas. It is my view that Saugatuck Township is not a compatible governmental unit with these municipalities.

Of course the Commission is aware of the benefits of consolidation. As a Judge in Barry County, I was a member of the judicial and administrative team that merged the Circuit, District, and Probate Courts into a unified Barry County Trial Court. The benefits of that merger were as follows:

- * 3 administrators were reduced to one.
- * 3 budgets were reduced to one.
- * Judges worked as a team to resolve docket issues, and all docket back logs were eliminated.
- * Jail overcrowding was eliminated.
- * The substantial budget savings reduced the cost of judicial services to the county.

Having been through this process, I can with some authority say that it was anything but easy. The end result was a Barry County Trial Court that is considered one of the most efficient courts in Michigan and is a model for the courts of the future. The winners of course are the taxpayers and those citizens who use the Barry County Courts.

I am confident that similar efficiencies and tax savings would occur if the cities of Saugatuck and Douglas were consolidated. In a time of scarce resources we citizens cannot let any opportunity escape us to deliver better government.

Yours truly,



Judge Richard H. Shaw, retired