



ALEX A. DALLMAN

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 39TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Testimony in Favor of Assembly Bill 214

Assembly Committee on Local Government

May 28, 2025

Thank you, Chairman Novak and committee members for allowing me to testify in favor of AB 214, which will provide four important updates to state statutes making it more efficient for town governments to operate. I also want to thank Senator Quinn for his leadership on this legislation.

If you ask any town government, finding people to be town clerks and town treasurers can be difficult. AB 214 aims to clean up statutes and help town governments operate more efficiently for the benefit of many rural residents.

The first update allows towns, regardless of population, to appoint a clerk and/or treasurer by vote of the electors at a town meeting and moves to an appointed clerk and/or treasurer if the position becomes vacant in the middle of an elected term. This change will allow towns the flexibility to find interested and qualified individuals quickly rather than waiting until the next election.

The second update allows for a combined position of clerk and treasurer to take effect immediately when one position becomes vacant, if the occupying officer of the other position is appointed to the combined position. It also allows for each town treasurer to appoint one or more deputies and clarifies that a deputy clerk or deputy treasurer may perform duties designated by the treasurer.

The third update creates consistency across all municipality types, in particular when it comes to noticing a public hearing. Current law requires towns to post the summary and notice in three locations, whereas cities and villages are permitted to publish in a newspaper, post in three locations, or post in one location and on its official website. This bill will give towns the same notice options as cities and villages by requiring that towns also provide notice of a public hearing as a class 1 notice under Chapter 985.

Finally, this bill would keep highway planning authority with the town by examining only whether the highway was opened or worked on when determining if the highway ceases to be a highway. Current law provides that if anyone drives on a planned highway that is not yet open or worked on, remains a highway. This bill creates clarity and gives town governments more authority over highways within their boundaries.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify before this committee today and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.



Romaine Robert Quinn

STATE SENATOR • 25TH SENATE DISTRICT

From: **Senator Romaine Robert Quinn**
To: **Assembly Committee on Local Government**
Re: **Testimony on Assembly Bill 214**
Relating to: town clerk and treasurer appointments, publication requirements for proposed budget summary and notice of public hearing, and discontinuance of highways
Date: Wednesday, May 28th, 2025

Thank you, Chairman Novak and committee members, for your time and attention concerning Assembly Bill 214, which makes common sense changes pertaining to town governments. I would also like to thank my counterpart, Representative Dallman, for his leadership on this legislation in the Assembly.

Current law allows towns with a population of 2,500 or more to move from an elected to an appointed clerk and/or treasurer by vote of the electors at a town meeting. Towns with a population under 2,500 may only move from an elected to an appointed clerk and/or treasurer by referendum. This bill would create consistency and allow all towns, regardless of population, to move to an appointed clerk and/or treasurer by vote of the electors at a town meeting.

Current law also prohibits a town's change from an elected to an appointed clerk, treasurer, or combined clerk and treasurer from taking effect until the end of the current elected term. Under the bill, a town may move to an appointed clerk, treasurer, or combined clerk and treasurer position during an elected term when there is a vacancy in the position. By empowering towns with the ability to fill vacancies with more expediency, the bill guarantees continued effective governance.

AB 214 also changes notice requirements for budget hearings, the bill eliminates limitations on how towns must provide the budget summary and notice, instead allowing towns the same options as cities and villages.

Finally, under current law, every highway ceases to be a public highway four years from the date on which it was laid out, except the parts of the highway that have been opened, traveled, or worked within that time. The bill eliminates the travel exception from consideration by a town board in determining whether a highway has ceased to be a public highway.

These changes aim to enhance efficiency, responsiveness, and adaptability in local government. Thank you again, Chairman Novak, for the opportunity to testify in support of this legislation.