

City-County Consolidation: Regional Governance's Refound Tool[†]

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The fragmentation of the governmental and political structure of the urban and metropolitan areas has been a long-time fascination for students of the urban scene. Most accounts in the literature of this area resemble one another. They begin with a description of the legal and political fragmentation in urban and metropolitan America. The author enumerates the problems generated by this diffusion of power and resources among the many local governments in a region. The summation laments the difficulty of solving problems given the many local governments in the metropolitan area.¹

Numerous governmental reform proposals have been advanced to curb fragmentation's ill effects, ranging along a continuum from temporary and voluntary devices to a total reorganization of the metropolitan governance system. Less drastic devices include informal cooperation and service contracts; metropolitan wide government represents the more far reaching approach.

Metropolitan wide government can be achieved in several ways, including large scale annexation by the central city, creation of a regional multi-service district, creation of a local federal system or consolidation of local governments in the metropolitan area into one area wide government.² The focus here is on the latter approach.

The National Association of Counties (NACo) defines city-county consolidation as the unification of the governments of one or more cities with the surrounding county. Boundary lines of the jurisdictions become coterminous.³ Some incorporated jurisdictions may be excluded from the consolidation. Political considerations often dictate exempting smaller suburban governments from the initial consolidation, giving them the option of joining the consolidated government at a later date.

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TABLE 1
LEGISLATURE MANDATED CITY-COUNTY CONSOLIDATIONS

<i>Year</i>	<i>City/County</i>
1805	New Orleans-Orleans Parrish
1821	Boston/Suffolk County
1854	Philadelphia/Philadelphia County
1856	San Francisco/San Francisco County
1874	New York/New York County
1898	New York/Brooklyn, Queens and Richmond Counties
1904	Denver/Denver County
1907	Honolulu/Honolulu County
1969	Indianapolis/Marion County
1975	Las Vegas/Clark County*

*State Supreme Court subsequently voided the consolidation.

TRENDS

City-county consolidation referenda activity has been uneven during the years since the first attempt in 1921. For example, there was a dramatic spurt of referenda in the 1969-1979 decade following a period of steady, but slow activity in the post World War II era. Activities in the past several years indicate the trend of successful consolidation referenda is moving out of the South and into the West. For a variety of reasons, the mature city of the North Central and Northeast regions continues to be the odd man out of consolidation referenda. The sole success in the Northeast or Midwest region has been a legislative consolidation under unique circumstances. Other literature has discussed the trend in the midwest towards functional transfer rather than consolidation of services from the city to county level.

The role of the state as a facilitator of consolidation consideration at the local level is most apparent in states such as Florida, Montana, Utah, Nevada, and Oregon. Consolidation efforts have always had to jump the hurdle of state enabling legislation or constitutional amendment to authorize the proposed consolidation. Some states, as noted, are moving from a simple gatekeeper role to active shepherding of local government reform efforts.

Consolidation has been achieved through state legislative mandate ten times, and by local referendum seventeen times. Voter-approved consolidations have clustered in the South and in smaller population areas, and all have occurred since 1921. Legislatively-mandated consolidations have been almost exclusively non-South and in the largest metropolitan areas, and, for the most part, have occurred during the 19th and turn of the 20th century. (See Table 1) Two recent state legislatively imposed consolidations after a sixty-five year lapse suggest a revival of this approach as a part of a re-emerging state role in metropolitan reorganization. To remove the requirement for popular referen-

dum approval of consolidation is one of the most significant changes a state can make.

A balanced view of the relative success rate of city-county consolidations is shown in Table 2. (A complete list is contained in Appendix I.) Several observations spring from this list of known city-county consolidation attempts.

Successful consolidation efforts have grouped in cities in the population ranges of 100,000 to 250,000. Recently the 10,000 to 50,000 population level has predominated.

While there have been eighty-five known referenda, they have involved only fifty-seven different communities—thirty-six once, fifteen twice, five three times, and one four times (Macon-Bibb).

The often mentioned consolidation referenda as a phenomenon of the South's sixteen states are in fact a phenomenon confined primarily to four southern states: Virginia with twelve cities, Georgia with seven, Florida with six, and Tennessee with six for a total of forty-nine votes in thirty-one cities. That is more than half the total number of the eighty-five referenda held nation-wide. The other twelve southern states account for only ten votes in nine cities.

The median year for consolidation attempts by referenda is 1970—as many consolidation referenda occurred prior to that point as have occurred since. Thus the past eight years contain as much activity as the previous forty-eight.

Western states have increased their pace of referenda activity, but so have southern states. What distinguishes the two groups is that until 1969 no western state had achieved consolidation, and no southern state has achieved consolidation since 1972. Three out of nine attempts have succeeded in the West since 1972, while the South has failed on eleven attempts. This is a striking reversal.

After a sixty-five year hiatus, states have successfully passed two legislative consolidations, suggesting a reemerging state role in metropolitan consolidations. (See Table 3)

The 1960s and early 1970s literature made distinctions between pre- and post-World War II consolidation efforts. In light of these most recent trends, a new view for the 1980s literature places consolidations into pre-1970 and 1970 to the present.

The long break from 1936 to 1947 was less due to internal changes in the consolidation movement than to the external factors of the Depression and World War. A country preoccupied with such weighty matters had little time for the odd pursuit of consolidations referenda. Post World War II saw a return to an annual rate of efforts similar to the pre-Depression years.

TABLE 2
KNOWN CITY-COUNTY CONSOLIDATION REFERENDA
(Voter approved consolidations in parentheses)

Year	South	North	West	Total
1921			1	1
1922				0
1923				0
1924			1	1
1925				0
1926		1		1
1927			1	1
1928				0
1929				0
1930				0
1931				0
1932		1		1
1933	1		1	2
1934				0
1935	1			1

No referenda 1936 through 1946				

1947	1(1)			1(1)
1948	2			2
1949				0
1950	1			1
1951				0
1952	1(1)			1(1)
1953	1			1
1954	1			1
1955				0
1956	1			1
1957	1(1)			1(1)
1958	1			1
1959	1		1	2
1960	1		1	2
1961	2			2
1962	6(3)	1		7(3)
1963				0
1964	1			1
1965				0
1966				0
1967	2(1)			2(1)
1968				0
1969	4		2(2)	6(2)
1970	5(1)		1	6(1)
1971	7(1)		2(1)	9(2)
1972	5(2)	1		6(2)

TABLE 2 (continued)

Year	South	North	West	Total
1973	4		1	5
1974	3	1	2	6
1975	1		3(1)	4(1)
1976	3		3(2)	6(2)
1977				0
1978	2		1	3

South: Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia. North: Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont, Wisconsin. West: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, New Mexico, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming.

The watershed years are not post-World War II, but the early 1970s. Starting with the beginning of this decade, state efforts to “change the rules” began to be apparent in the stepped up pace of consolidation efforts.

How have states been changing the rules? Why? The answer to the first question comes more easily than the last.

STATE ACTIONS

In recent years, many states have been changing the rules controlling localities’ ability to “reform” their structures and forms of government, and to encourage local government consolidation. The extreme number of cities attempting consolidation in Virginia illustrates how crucial state laws are in advancing change.

TABLE 3
LEGISLATIVE CONSOLIDATIONS

	South	North	West
1805	1		
1821		1	
1854		1	
1856			1
1874		1	
1898		1	
1904			1
1907			1
1969		1	
1975			1*

* State Supreme Court subsequently voided the consolidation.

Virginia is the only state where an incorporated city maintains the functions of the county, and consequently the county's area, population and taxable base are reduced to the extent of the city's enlargement. Two other factors make Virginia's case special—annexation proceedings initiated through a unique three judge annexation court, and city-county separation where any city over 5000 population may separate itself from the county and maintain the powers of both. A Virginia county, unlike those in other states, has little legal means to thwart a city's annexation or consolidation proceedings.

States may provide for city-county consolidation referendum through general law or through passage of specific statutes targeted to a region. In 1978, an extensive survey by the Institute of Government at the University of Georgia located sixteen states which provide for city-county consolidation in general law—four in the North, seven in the West and five in the South.⁴ Eleven of the sixteen states appear in Appendix I as already having experienced referendum efforts. Eight additional states found not to have general consolidation statutes have had referendum activity, however, indicating a state legislative willingness to entertain special legislation motions.

The sixteen states with general laws and the eight additional special legislation states combine to yield a total pool of twenty-four consolidation activity states, six in the North and nine each in the West and South. The lag in Northern consolidation activity cannot be attributed to greater unavailability of this state option to local governments.

In addition to passage of general or special legislation, states may aid consolidation efforts through easing of concurrent majority or other requirements. Nine states require concurrent majorities between the city and the county or the city and the unincorporated area, according to the Institute survey. States which have passed facilitating legislation include Colorado in 1969 and Iowa in 1976. Some examples and case studies follow.

In its 1968-69 legislative session, Oregon authorized city-county mergers for cities over 300,000 population. Arkansas in 1969 permitted local governments to consolidate. Consolidations were permitted in a greatly increased number of counties as a result of 1970-1971 Kentucky legislation. In 1972, Washington removed the population requirement for consolidations and provided for the retention or creation of municipalities in the consolidated government. In 1975 Alaska reduced the percentage required to approve a merger or consolidation of local government corporations from two-thirds to one-half of those voting. Five states have particularly noteworthy efforts: Florida, Montana, Utah, Nevada and Oregon.

Florida

Proposals of the Constitutional Revision Commission and the recommendations of the Florida legislature in the late 1960's demonstrated an awareness of the need for flexibility in structuring local government on a state-wide

basis. Subsequently Florida's Commission on Local Government recommended additional state support of local government improvement.

Recent governors have supported local management improvement through both state technical and financial assistance. State legislation recently has mandated functional consolidation to the county level of three local government activities and has encouraged numerous others. The state has long supported local government review commissions and in 1978 established a new Advisory Council on Intergovernmental Relations. Its top priority has been to study problems of double taxation, state mandates and local government management.⁵

Montana

A unique mandatory voter review of local government at least once every ten years was required under Montana's 1972 new constitution. Following completion of the first review, voter passage in 1978 of a state-wide referendum made the local review optional. Once every ten years, voters now must first approve the commencement of the review commission process.

A total of 175 of Montana's 182 localities voted on proposals in 1976. Seven localities were unable to achieve a proposal, including one which failed to organize the initial study commission. Of that 182 total, 151 or eighty-three percent elected to remain unchanged (fifty-six counties and 126 municipalities). Three of the 181 study commissions suggested city-county consolidation, and two of those three were approved through referenda.⁶

Lauren McKinsey, head of Montana State University's Department of Political Science, attributes the relative ease with which consolidation was framed and reform undertaken to the mandatory voter review process. McKinsey suggests seven factors which explain the relatively high levels of voter endorsement in the consolidation cases. What may be the most important difference between success and failure was the ability of the successful study commissions to transmit confidence in the charter without necessarily conveying complete information.⁷ Other factors were population leverages which still favored the city, an accelerator event such as dissatisfaction with officials, voter satisfaction with the proposed reform charter, use of task forces, broad segment of community opinion on the study teams and a history of reform attempts—provided the community is small enough to be reduced effectively through direct contact.

While the mandatory process and the conveyance of incomplete information promoted consolidation efforts, these same two factors inhibited the overall state-wide reform efforts, according to McKinsey. As noted, 83 percent of the localities remained unchanged. McKinsey concluded that the review, mandated from above at the state level, was an artificial mechanism, a seemingly meaningless exercise for the community. Local citizens variously displayed ignorance, apathy and ambiguity, toward the reform process. Com-

bined with general citizen satisfaction of government, these attitudes overrode most reform appeals.

Utah

The Salt Lake area effort began in 1973 with the formation of a study commission. Uncovering problems of double taxation, government duplication, annexation problems, special service district proliferation and inequitable county service delivery, the commission opted for both structural and management reform. The state legislature authorized optional forms of county government in 1975, including the city-county consolidated form. This paved the way for the reform effort.⁸

However, the reform charter failed to achieve voter approval in 1975, and again in 1978, gaining acceptance from only one-third of those voting. D. Michael Stewart of Brigham Young University notes the 1975 failure was largely the result of three factors.⁹ First, the majority of elected officials opposed the consolidation. Second, funds were lacking to inform the electorate. Lastly, the reform plan was fairly complex. Failure the second time was attributed to lack of grassroots support, voter failure to perceive abstract issues, unobvious justifications for consolidation, and lack of the political organizations requisite for success, according to Doyle W. Buckwalter of Brigham Young University.¹⁰

Nevada

In 1968 a study group for Las Vegas-Clark County found a pattern of difficulties akin to Salt Lake's—duplication, lack of coordination, unaccountability. Other subsequent groups reiterated their findings. The Nevada legislature chose to overlap city and county governing bodies, similar to the Baton Rouge—East Baton Rouge system, as a means to bring unity to the urban area.

In 1975, the state legislature mandated consolidation. It was voided in 1976 by the State Supreme Court, on both constitutional and special legislation bases. In the wake of that recension, the 1977 legislature merged the City and County fire departments, reorganized the County police force and substantially enlarged the area and population of Las Vegas, subject to voter approval. In 1978 primary elections, voters resoundingly defeated the legislative proposals.¹¹

Oregon

The Portland Metropolitan Service District authorized by voters in 1978 requires mention here despite its nature as a service consolidation and not a city-county consolidation. As the first metropolitan multicounty system establishing an elected regional government, it illustrates how multicounty

metropolitan areas, unable to establish city-county consolidation because of their complex political and legal situations, can achieve regional unity.¹²

The regional council for the area was merged with the existing Metropolitan Service District (MDS) and its functions assumed by that organization. The executive board of the MDS was replaced by an elected regional body. MDS will continue to perform its current services, and has the potential to assemble additional responsibilities in the future.

WHY THE STATE INITIATIVES?

The response to the question of why states have changed the rules is complex. Part of the increased state involvement in local government consolidation referenda and in legislative consolidations is attributable to the improvement in state government and legislatures themselves. With increasing state professionalism comes a feeling of responsibility for improving local government operation.

The realignment of electoral districts mandated by the reapportionment cases of the 1960s has given urban areas a long-denied constitutional voice in state legislatures. Based on the 1970 Census, the state legislatures of the 1970s have been the first ones to accurately reflect the new state population apportionment patterns. Certainly some of the increased state attention derives from this factor.

However, both city and suburban interests gained political representation at the expense of rural state regions. Their new ability to present demands at the state level has meant increased reform activity, but also has increased the potential for conflict between city and suburban interests. Demand for state reform activity in urban areas has increased, but the possibility of enacting reform among acrimonious city and suburban voices does not appear to have increased as much as might be expected.

As state legislators and executives experiment with functional integration of their services, especially in the human resource and transportation areas, it is only natural that they feel concern about the jurisdictional fragmentation in their local governments. The gains of state functional integrations are often lessened by the existence of the fairly extreme jurisdictional fragmentation found in many localities.

Along this line, the national legislation requiring regional planning and coordination in a variety of functional areas, notably health, law enforcement, justice, water and sewer, transportation and environmental protection, have stimulated many states to impose limited purpose regional organizations on their localities. After a series of state laws over a period of years mandated the creation of a local level regional health systems planning agency and similar planning coordination functional bodies, it is a fairly easy and logical next step for state legislators to begin to think of ways to improve the overall structural organization of their states' urban and metropolitan areas.

The more extreme, but no less logical next step is for legislators to consider mandating local referenda as did Montana, or even passing legislation requiring a consolidation. The Indianapolis and Marion County reorganization occurred through this latter process. A similar effort for Las Vegas passed the state legislature, but it was negated by the courts. The Alabama legislature failed to approve by only one vote a consolidation of part of Jefferson County with the City of Birmingham. Similarly a bill amending the Georgia state constitution to allow Atlanta-Fulton County consolidation did receive a majority vote of the Georgia House of Representatives in 1972, failing however to meet a constitutional two-thirds requirement.

The increased cost of government has been another factor stimulating state action. As local costs are transferred to the states (e.g. school construction and welfare costs) and as state shared taxes and grants-in-aid account for an ever increasing share of local budgets, it is to be anticipated that state governments would take a greater interest in not only the process of local government, but also the structure of governance at the local level.

THE POLITICS OF LOCAL REFERENDA

Until the 1970s, the history of the many local proposals for metropolitan wide governance systems had been one of near universal rejection. Most of the proposals were, and many still are, killed by hostile interest or die from a lack of active support and are never presented to the voters. Those that do survive and make it to the voting booth, while on the increase, still are generally rejected. Rejection continues as the normal outcome of reorganization referenda.

An analysis of the eighty-five cases in Appendix I suggests numerous determinant variables, classified as major variables or influences and lesser variables or influences. The terms major and lesser here are not used to indicate relative importance of any one variable in any particular referendum. They are used to indicate that certain variables appear repeatedly in accounts of consolidation attempts, while others are factors isolated to a few cases. The major variables covered below include political parties, race, socioeconomic differences, special indigenous characteristics or events, and service perceptions.

Political Parties

Edward Banfield predicted in 1957 that it would be difficult to integrate local government where the two-party system was in operation.¹³ Partisan division created as a result of Republican dominated suburbs and Democratic dominated cities has been seen repeatedly as a strong cause of consolidation failures. Healthy local parties are vital to the American party structure and the loss of city hall or the county courthouse could prove disastrous to the local and state parties. This spector has appeared in many consolidation campaigns.

In areas where partisanship is in decline or lacking, consolidation enjoys greater success. This has been the situation in the South until recently. For example, party registration was over ninety percent Democratic in Jacksonville-Duval County, Florida, when consolidation was accepted. Part of the Miami-Dade County, Florida success has been explained through its "no party" environment.¹⁴

Race

Rarely is this variable made explicit in consolidation efforts, but it almost always played an important role.¹⁵ Depending on the local situation, it takes one of two forms. Whites in the city may align with those in the county, urging consolidation to prevent a trend to a majority black population in the city with resultant black rule. In other areas, county suburbanites, having fled the central city, oppose consolidation to prevent being reunited with the city.

Black opposition to consolidation has centered on the former situation, where the deliberate intent or major side effect has been the dilution of black voting strength. Studies of St. Louis, Nashville and Jacksonville referenda have cited this concern as underlying black opposition to consolidation.

In areas such as Jacksonville, where annexation was likely if consolidation failed, black leaders supported consolidation—with its charter-guaranteed black representation—in preference to the powerless status quo offered by annexation.

A few black leaders have expressed support for consolidation under the rationale that political control of a dying central city might be meaningless. The resources of the suburbs, infused with the central city, offer help for bankrupt urban cores. Generally, however, recent referenda have shown racial implications to be strong enough to generate opposition of many voters, both black and white.

Socioeconomic Differences

Class conflict is a major variable in consolidation referenda movements. Consolidation has been based on middle class values of good government economy and efficiency. It is more likely, studies have indicated, that consolidation will be perceived negatively by lower income and lower middle income groups. Voting patterns have been shown to be linked to various class interests in the city and county.¹⁶

Special Indigenous Characteristics or Events

Theorists here propose the natural inclination is to rejection of reorganization, unless an unusual local condition such as scandal, public service delivery breakdown, special political leadership, or a unique political event, exists. Walter Rosenbaum and Thomas Henderson have coined the term accelerators to cover this variable.¹⁷ Case studies have found this to be true of Indianapolis,

Jacksonville, Lexington, Miami, Nashville, Salt Lake City, and the Montana consolidations.¹⁸

Service Perceptions

Past case studies in Flint, Michigan and St. Louis suggest that general dissatisfaction with service levels is not sufficiently intense to motivate support for consolidation. County residents would tolerate service inadequacies in exchange for political separation from the central city.¹⁹ As service costs rise and certain fringe areas grow to greater service demand levels, reformers may find this variable contributing more positively to reform campaigns.

The lesser variables presented here have had a more limited impact on the reorganization movement than the five preceding variables. In any given referenda attempt, however, these variables may play a major role.

Alienated Voter/Sublimated Conflict

Governmental reform referenda may attract hostile or alienated voters who normally do not participate, but who are out to insure that "we" get "them" by defeating the proposal. Some referenda may be sublimations for broader group or class conflict. The tax revolt of the mid-1970's is a reflection of similar reactions for many voters.

Apathy

A substantial majority of reorganization referenda have low voter turnout in the ten to twenty-five percent range. This may enable a minority to reject a plan to which the majority is indifferent or perhaps even favorable.

Lack of Knowledge of Proposal

Voters surveyed regarding proposed plans show a low level of knowledge about the proposal itself. A more complex plan may work to discourage voter acceptance as reportedly occurred in the Salt Lake City attempt. The successful Montana cases indicate proper presentation and may minimize this complication.²⁰

Leadership Problems

Key community or political leaders helped make the Nashville, Indianapolis and Montana cases successes.²¹ Leadership inadequacies, disagreements or opposition inhibit ratifications.

Legal Restrictions

Past reform efforts have been hampered by "game rules" which favor the status quo. Concurrent popular majorities, minimum turnout requirements, statewide constitutional amendment requirements, or serial approval provide

legal blocks. As reviewed earlier, these restrictions are being lessened in many states.

Centralization-Decentralization Philosophy

This variable expresses numerous normative, psychological and practical reasons advanced against areawide government. These include, for instance, the philosophy of grass roots government and normal American conservatism regarding governmental institutions.

CONCLUSION

With so many of these variables working against approval of city-county consolidation, what, then, of the future? Will the topic of metropolitan reorganization forever be subtitled "the politics of rejection"? Combining the collective knowledge of the literature on the topic with some enlightened soothsaying, the following projections can be made about the future of governmental organization of metropolitan areas in the United States.

1. Most of the problems resulting from fragmentation will be solved by procedural, voluntary and ad hoc adaptive devices. This rather unimaginative conclusion is a realistic assessment of the political and legal difficulties involved in major structural change, as well as an appreciation that for all the rhetoric on the failing of the current arrangement, one must conclude—even if somewhat begrudgingly—that *the system does work!*

2. There will continue to be some considerations and major adoptions of area wide governments throughout the decade. As several sources point out, many jurisdictions are giving serious considerations to metropolitan reorganization. However, the largest number of these considerations is concentrated in the South, Southwest and West. Most of the successful adoptions in the near future are likely, for reasons expressed herein and elsewhere, to be in those three regions and particularly in the West.

3. The United States has repeatedly encountered problems which the political system was, for one reason or another, unable to solve. State legislatures and the U.S. House of Representatives, for example, became so malapportioned that they were unable to effectively carry out the apportioning function. It was in this environment that the courts offered relief in the 1962 *Baker v. Carr* case.²² Similar judicial intervention occurred in the civil rights struggle.

Is a similar intervention possible in the area of metropolitan reorganization? Almost assuredly the courts would not intervene in such a basic and complex problem area. However, the judicial branch has already begun, and is likely to continue, to review various situations resulting from fragmentation. The representation scheme for area wide adaptive devices, including special districts, is being continually reviewed for constitutionality and fairness. The courts have also begun reviewing the segregational impact of fragmentation. Concern ranges from a possible cross-jurisdiction busing mandate as an outgrowth of the *Buchanan v. Evans*²³ decision to a review of the racial implica-

tion of the Richmond annexation. Lastly, and, perhaps most importantly, the courts have begun to question the service disparity which results from fragmentation. The sum of a long series of such judicial actions will likely be to end many of the difficulties associated with fragmentation and, therefore, may reduce the pressure for comprehensive reorganization based on this rationale.

4. If the states and localities are unable to deal adequately with the problems resulting from fragmentation, it is highly probable that the national government will take actions designed to encourage a more rational order to the metropolitan scene. A combination of grant-in-aid funding with metropolitan wide comprehensive planning and review requirements, the famous 204, 701 and A-95 procedures, has already played a major part in local government organization, especially as a stimulus for the growth of rather strong councils of government.

5. Lastly, as reviewed in the main thrust of this paper, many states will be changing the "rules of the game" in order to facilitate metropolitan reorganization. Some states have already abolished requirements for extraordinary majorities, minimum voter turnout, and concurrent majorities. A few states, e.g., Florida and Montana, are encouraging comprehensive review by offering state technical and financial assistance for local government study commissions. Many states, especially in the South, Southwest and Far West are trying to minimize future problems by heading off fragmentation with "no-incorporation, easy-annexation" laws. California recently facilitated city annexation of unincorporated pockets of county land within city boundaries.

One of the most significant changes in the "rules of the game" is the proposal for ending the requirement for popular referendum approval of a local government reform. Some of our largest cities of today, e.g., Boston, Philadelphia, New Orleans and New York City, were created in Nineteenth Century city-county consolidation actions by state legislatures. (See Table 1) That approach is likely to be revived in the future. The 1969 Indiana Legislature merged Marion County and Indianapolis. In 1975, the Nevada legislature merged Las Vegas and Clark County, only to see it voided by the State Supreme Court. Other state legislatures are considering similar actions.

One has mixed reactions about reorganization by state legislative action. It does, of course, eliminate many of the causes of past rejections. However, that approach plays havoc with the strongly held tradition of popular approval of forms of local government, as well as opening the door to a new and dangerous gerrymandering of governmental structures.

APPENDIX I

KNOWN REFERENDA ON CITY-COUNTY CONSOLIDATIONS

Year	City/County	Result
1921	Oakland/Alameda County, California	fail
1924	Butte/Silver Bow County, Montana	fail
1926	St. Louis/St. Louis County, Missouri	fail
1927	Portland/Multnomah County, Oregon	fail
1932	Pittsburgh/Allegheny County, Pennsylvania	fail
1933	Several Municipalities/Ravalli County, Montana	fail
1933	Macon/Bibb County, Georgia	fail
1935	Jacksonville/Duval County, Florida	fail
1947	Baton Rouge/East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	pass
1948	Birmingham/Jefferson County, Alabama	fail
1948	Miami/Dade County, Florida	fail
1950	Hampton, Newport News and Phoebus/Warwick and Elizabeth City Counties, Virginia	fail
1952	Hampton and Phoebus/Elizabeth City County, Virginia	pass
1953	Miami/Dade County, Florida	fail
1954	Albany/Dougherty County, Georgia	fail
1956	Albany/Dougherty County, Georgia	fail
1957	Newport News/Warwick County, Virginia*	pass
1958	Nashville/Davidson County, Tennessee	fail
1959	Albuquerque/Bernalillo County, New Mexico	fail
1959	Knoxville/Knox County, Tennessee	fail
1960	Macon/Bibb County, Georgia	fail
1960	Several Municipalities/Ravalli County, Montana	fail
1961	Durham/Durham County, North Carolina	fail
1961	Richmond/Henrico County, Virginia	fail
1962	Chattanooga/Hamilton County, Tennessee	fail
1962	Columbus/Muscogee County, Georgia	fail
1962	Memphis/Shelby County, Tennessee	fail
1962	Nashville/Davidson County, Tennessee	pass
1962	South Norfolk/Norfolk County, Virginia	pass
1962	St. Louis/St. Louis County, Missouri	fail
1962	Virginia Beach/Princess Anne County, Virginia	pass
1964	Chattanooga/Hamilton County, Tennessee	fail
1967	Jacksonville/Duval County, Florida	pass
1967	Tampa/Hillsborough County, Florida	fail
1969	Athens/Clarke County, Georgia	fail
1969	Brunswick/Glynn County, Georgia	fail
1969	Carson City/Ormsby County, Nevada	pass
1969	Juneau and Douglas/Greater Juneau Borough, Alaska	pass
1969	Roanoke/Roanoke County, Virginia	fail
1969	Winchester/Frederick County, Virginia	fail
1970	Anchorage/Greater Anchorage Area Borough, Alaska	fail
1970	Charlottesville/Albermarle County, Virginia	fail
1970	Chattanooga/Hamilton County, Tennessee	fail
1970	Columbus/Muscogee County, Georgia	pass
1970	Pensacola/Escambia County, Florida	fail
1970	Tampa/Hillsborough County, Florida	fail

APPENDIX I (continued)

Year	City/County	Result
1971	Anchorage/Greater Anchorage Area Borough, Alaska	fail
1971	Augusta/Richmond County, Georgia	fail
1971	Bristol/Washington County, Tennessee	fail
1971	Charlotte/Mecklenburg County, North Carolina	fail
1971	Ft. Pierce/St. Lucie County, Florida**	fail
1971	Holland and Whaleyville/Nansemond County, Virginia	pass
1971	Memphis/Shelby County, Tennessee	fail
1971	Sitka/Greater Sitka Borough, Alaska	pass
1971	Tallahassee/Leon County, Florida	fail
1972	Athens/Clarke County, Georgia	fail
1972	Lexington/Fayette County, Kentucky	pass
1972	Macon/Bibb County, Georgia	fail
1972	St. Louis/St. Louis County, Missouri	fail
1972	Suffolk/Nansemond County, Virginia	pass
1972	Tampa/Hillsborough County, Florida	fail
1973	Albuquerque/Bernalillo County, New Mexico	fail
1973	Columbia/Richland County, South Carolina	fail
1973	Savannah/Chatham County, Georgia	fail
1973	Tallahassee/Leon County, Florida	fail
1973	Wilmington/New Hanover County, North Carolina	fail
1974	Augusta/Richmond County, Georgia	fail
1974	Charleston/Charleston County, South Carolina	fail
1974	Durham/Durham County, North Carolina	fail
1974	Evansville/Vanderburgh County, Indiana	fail
1974	Portland/Multnomah County, Oregon	fail
1974	Sacramento/Sacramento County, California	fail
1975	Anchorage, Glen Alps, and Girdwood/Greater Anchorage Area Borough, Alaska	pass
1975	Ashland and Catlettsburgh/Boyd County, Kentucky	fail
1975	Missoula/Missoula County, Montana	fail
1975	Salt Lake/Salt Lake County, Utah	fail
1976	Anaconda/Deer Lodge County, Montana	pass
1976	Augusta/Richmond County, Georgia	fail
1976	Butte/Silver Bow County, Montana	pass
1976	Front Royal/Warren County, Virginia**	fail
1976	Macon/Bibb County, Georgia	fail
1976	Moab/Grand County, Utah	fail
1978	Knoxville/Knox County, Tennessee	fail
1978	Morristown/Hamblen County, Tennessee	fail
1978	Salt Lake/Salt Lake County, Utah	fail

* The locality was a county, but actually became a city prior to the referendum.

** The localities were towns at the time of the merger attempt with the county.

FOOTNOTES

1. See for example: Vincent L. Marando, "An Overview of the Political Feasibility of Local Governmental Reorganization," in *Organizing Public Services in Metropolitan America*, ed. by Thomas P. Murphy and Charles R. Warren (Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath and Company, 1974), pp. 17-51; Parris N. Glendening and Patricia S. Atkins, "The Politics of City-County Consolidation," in *The County Yearbook 1977* (Washington, D.C.: National Association of Counties and International City Management Association, 1977), pp. 62-69; and Timothy Schlitz and William Moffitt, "Inter-City/Outer-City Relationships in Metropolitan Areas: A Bibliographic Essay," *Urban Affairs Quarterly*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (September 1971).
2. Roscoe C. Martin, *Metropolis in Transition: Local Government Adaptation to Changing Urban Needs* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963) contains one of the many useful typologies.
3. National Association of Counties, *County News*, November 10, 1975, p. 15.
4. General statute states: North: Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, South Dakota. West: California, Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington. South: Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia. From *State Laws Governing Local Government Structure and Function*, by Melvin B. Hill, Jr. (Athens, Georgia: Institute of Government, University of Georgia, 1978), pp. 15, 22, 29, 36.
5. John S. Lamb, "Significant State Actions Affecting Municipal Governments," *The Municipal Yearbook 1979* (Washington, D.C.: International City Management Association, 1979), p. 41.
6. Lauren S. McKinsey and James J. Lopach, "Local Government Reform by Referendum: Lessons from Montana's Voter Review Experience," *State and Local Government Review*, Vol. II, No. 1 (January 1979), pp. 35-39.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Doyle W. Buckwalter, "NO on Merger for Salt Lake," *National Civic Review*, Vol. 68, No. 3 (March 1979), pp. 150-151.
9. D. Michael Stewart, "Local Government Modernization, Reflections on Salt Lake City-County," *National Civic Review*, Vol. 67, No. 6 (June 1977) pp. 291-299.
10. *Op cit.*, Buckwalter.
11. Andrew P. Grose, "Merger Overturned in Las Vegas-Clark," *National Civic Review*, Vol. 65, No. 11 (December 1976), pp. 569-570.
12. National Association of Regional Councils, "Interview with Rick Gustafson, MDS Executive Officer," *Regional Focus*, September 1979, p. 6.
13. Edward C. Banfield, "The Politics of Metropolitan Area Organization," *Midwest Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (May 1957), p. 86.
14. Edward Sofen, *The Miami Metropolitan Experiment* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1966), *passim*.
15. Lee Sloan and Robert French, "Black Rule in the Urban South?" *Transaction*, Vol. 9, Nos. 1, 2 (November/December 1971), p. 34.
16. Robert H. Salisbury, "The Dynamics of Reform: Charter Politics in St. Louis," *Midwest Journal of Political Science* Vol. 5, No. 3 (August 1961), p. 273.
17. Walter Rosenbaum and Thomas Henderson, "Explaining Comprehensive Governmental Consolidation: Toward a Preliminary Theory," *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (May 1972), pp. 428-57.
18. Richard Martin, *Consolidation: Jacksonville Duval County* (Jacksonville: Crawford Publishing Company, 1978); York Willbern, "Unigov: Local Reorganization in Indianapolis," in *Regional Governance: Promise and Performance* (Washington, D.C.: Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, 1973) pp. 59-64; David A. Booth, *Metropolitics: The Nashville Consolidation* (East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 1963); *Op cit.*, Buckwalter; *Op cit.*, McKinsey; and *Op cit.*, Sofen.
19. Scott Greer, "Dilemmas of Action Research on the 'Metropolitan Problem,'" in *Community Political Systems*, ed. by Morris Janowitz (New York: The Free Press, 1961), pp. 185-206; and Amos H. Hawley and Basil G. Zimmer, "Resistance to Unification in a Metropolitan Community," in *Community Political Systems*, ed. Janowitz, pp. 181-82.
20. *Op cit.*, Buckwalter; and *Op cit.*, McKinsey.
21. U.S. Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, *Factors Affecting Voter Reactions to Governmental Reorganization in Metropolitan Areas*, Report M-15 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1962); David A. Booth, *Op cit.*; Richard H. Leach, "A Leadership Crisis," *National Civic Review*, Vol. 54, No. 5 (May 1965), pp. 244-52.
22. 369 U.S. 186 (1962).
23. 423 U.S. 963 (1975), rehearing denied, 423 U.S. 1080 (1975).