



February 16, 2011

VIA FACSIMILE

The Honorable Gary Ackerman
2111 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-3205

Dear Representative Ackerman:

On behalf of the national organizations listed above—representing State and local governments, officials and public retirement systems—we are writing to express our strong opposition to H.R. 567. This legislation creates a dangerous precedent with regard to federal taxation and regulation of state and local governments and represents a fundamental lack of understanding regarding the operations and funding of public pensions and the strong accounting rules and strict legal constraints already in place requiring open and transparent governmental financial reporting and processes.

Further, this legislation ignores the extensive efforts made at the state and local levels to close short-term budget deficits as well as address longer-term obligations such as pensions. Inaccurate and misleading descriptions of the state of public finance and pensions are unhelpful, and Federal intrusion into areas that are the fiscal responsibility of state and local governments are unwarranted.

At a time when Congress and the Administration are both discussing the need to remove regulatory barriers, it makes little sense to impose disruptive and costly federal requirements that only serve to interfere with state and local government recovery and reform efforts. We strongly urge you to learn the facts about the retirement systems sponsored by your state and local governments, and oppose H.R.567. We have attached a fact sheet on public pensions for your review.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please do not hesitate to contact our organizations' legislative representatives:

Deseree Gardner, National Association of Counties, (202) 942-4204
Neil Bomberg, National League of Cities, (202) 626-3042
Larry Jones, United States Conference of Mayors, (202) 293-7330
Elizabeth Kellar, International City/County Management Association, (202) 962-3611
Cornelia Chebinou, National Association of State Auditors Comptrollers and Treasurers, (202) 624-5451
Barrie Tabin Berger, Government Finance Officers Association, (202) 393-8467
Tina Chiapetta, International Public Management Association for Human Resources, (703) 549-7100
Leigh Snell, National Council on Teacher Retirement, (540) 333-1015
Jeannine Markoe Raymond, National Association of State Retirement Administrators, (202) 624-1417