



New York State Archives

Correspondence and subject files A0003

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Overview of the Records

Repository:	New York State Archives
Summary:	Chapter 958 of the Laws of 1939 created a temporary state commission to "study existing laws, both state and local, relating to finances of municipal subdivisions and organized public districts of the state and to codify, revise and make uniform state statutes relating thereto." This series consists of correspondence, reports, research materials, draft legislation, sponsor memoranda, indexes to bills, meeting minutes, press releases, and internal memoranda compiled by the commission in its work to create a consolidated local finance law.
Creator:	New York (State). Temporary State Commission for the Revision and Codification of the Laws Relating to Municipal Finance
Title:	Correspondence and subject files
Quantity:	2 cubic feet
Inclusive Date:	1937-1947
Series:	A0003

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Administrative History

Chapter 958 of the Laws of 1939 created a temporary state commission to "study existing laws, both state and local, relating to finances of municipal subdivisions and organized public districts of the state and to codify, revise and make uniform state statutes relating thereto." The commission was also tasked with revising relevant statutory law to make it conform to recently adopted amendments to the local finances article of the state constitution. The nine-member commission, chaired by Assemblyman Abbot Low Moffat, was directed to report the results of its study and recommend remedial legislation no later than April 15, 1940.

Prior to the commission's formation, provisions of law regulating municipal borrowing were dispersed among the state's General Municipal Law, County Law, Town Law, Village Law, and Education Law. Likewise, every city charter in the state contained provisions regulating the budget procedure for that city. Regulations were based on the type of municipality and on particular phases of municipal finance, rather than on the general subject of municipal finance itself. The commission sought to provide uniformity in application and bring together, ideally in a single chapter of the consolidated laws, all operative provisions relating to local finance. In line with Article VIII of the newly adopted state constitution, the commission also strived to

improve the overall financial structure of municipalities, limiting their powers to tax and incur indebtedness as well as prescribing sound methods of borrowing and retiring debt.

The commission was extended annually by the legislature, its existence and powers ultimately terminated by Chapter 11 of the Laws of 1947. Its crowning achievement was securing passage of a consolidated local finance law (Laws of 1942, Chapter 424), which ultimately became Chapter 33-a of the state's consolidated laws. The commission subsequently secured passage of numerous amendments to state and local laws, including a Schedule of Laws Repealed, in order to achieve conformity to the new Local Finance Law.

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Scope and Content Note

This series consists of correspondence, reports, research materials, draft legislation and sponsor memoranda, indexes to bills, meeting minutes, press releases, and internal memoranda compiled by the commission in its work to create a consolidated local finance law. Correspondence and background materials pertain to major aspects of the local finance law and to local finance in general including municipal indebtedness, power to contract indebtedness and issue obligations (bonds or notes), taxation, and budget procedures. Much of the correspondence is with officials of municipalities and public districts directly affected by pending changes in local finance regulations. Additional correspondents include state agency officials, private attorneys, academic authorities, and representatives of the American and New York State Bar Associations. Correspondence between committee members and Chairman Abbot Low Moffat and Counsel Stephen M. Lounsbury is also included.

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Related Information

Related Material

Series A0390, Temporary State Commission for the Revision and Codification of the Laws Relating to Municipal Finance Draft and mimeographed reports, minutes, and correspondence and Series A0719, Office for Local Government Research files, contain related records.

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Use of Records

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions regarding access to or use of the material.

Access Terms

- Municipal finance--New York (State)
- Legislating
- New York (State)
- New York (State). Executive Department
- Moffat, Abbot Low, 1901-1996.