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Nearly 250 Attend Local Government Center's September Budget and Finance Workshops

Concord, NH – The New Hampshire Local Government Center's (LGC) annual Budget and Finance Workshops educated 248 local officials and staff at the all-day trainings offered September 20 in Manchester and September 22 in Lincoln. In addition to a review of municipal budget law presented by LGC Legal Services Staff Attorney Christine Fillmore, sessions covered important state budget and legislative changes impacting local budgets.

“Even though I've been preparing budgets for over 20 years, there are always changes at the legislature and new things to learn, which makes this workshop so valuable,” said Barrington Town Administrator John Scruton.

“The 2012-2013 biennial state operating budget, adopted this past June, reduced state aid to cities, towns and school districts by approximately \$114 million over the two-year period,” noted LGC Government Finance Advisor Barbara Reid. In a morning review of the various reductions contained in the state operating budget, Reid also provided an analysis of the changes in the local government retirement rates due to the elimination of the state contribution toward teachers, police and firefighters.

Cordell Johnston, the New Hampshire Municipal Association's Government Affairs Counsel, explained the intricacies of Chapter 234 (SB 2), enacted in the 2011 session, which authorizes cities, towns and school districts to adopt limits on spending or tax increases. Panelists sharing first-hand experience with municipal spending caps included Merrimack Town Manager Eileen Cabanel, Nashua City Treasurer David Fredette and Laconia City Manager Scott Myers.

The final session of the day, organized in collaboration with the New Hampshire Government Finance Officers Association, covered preparing budget presentations with participating panelists Hanover Director of Administrative Services Betsy McClain, Merrimack Finance Director Paul Micali and Carol Coppola of Coppola Rockburn, LLC.

The LGC's annual Budget and Finance Workshops are traditionally offered at two locations in late September to reach local officials across the state. Attendees receive a complimentary copy of the latest edition of LGC's publication, *The Basic Law of Budgeting: A Guide for Towns, Village Districts and School Districts*, updated with recent legislative changes impacting local government budgets.

About the Local Government Center

The New Hampshire Local Government Center (LGC) is a nonprofit organization governed by an active board of directors comprising municipal, school and county representatives, including employees, management and elected officials. Its mission is to strengthen the quality of member governments and the ability of their officials and employees to serve the public. For more information, visit www.nhlgc.org.