

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

South Central Assembly for Effective Governance Press Release

March 6, 2002

Contact: Craig Zumbrun or Gwenn Miller
(717) 948-6464

Cost of Community Services studies in southern York County dispel the myths that residential development leads to lower taxes.

MIDDLETOWN- The South Central Assembly for Effective Governance (The Assembly), with financial support from the York Foundation, collaborated with the American Farmland Trust (AFT) to conduct a Cost of Community Services (COCS) study in Shrewsbury Township and Hopewell Township. Their summary findings and report are being released today.

The Assembly was incorporated in February of 1997 to help provide a regional forum and voice for the eight counties and 1.7 million residents of the region. The Assembly is dedicated to improving the quality of life in the region through improved planning and enhanced intergovernmental cooperation.

The American Farmland Trust model for fiscal impact analysis is a more comprehensive model in its approach to data gathering. Typical fiscal impact studies rarely consider the fiscal contribution of farm, forest and recreational lands, which are very important to rural economies. And rural towns and counties that are likely to benefit most from the information provided by fiscal impact

analyses rarely have the expertise or resources to conduct a study. The Assembly will conduct this study for any south central Pennsylvania township or county for approximately \$7,500, and will assist communities in seeking funding assistance.

In the course of the studies, the Assembly conducted interviews with township, school district and county officials and department heads to establish departments' revenues and expenditures as they relate to three land use categories—residential; commercial/industrial; and farm, forest and open space. This first-hand account ensures accurate and reliable information.

The study in Shrewsbury Township, York County discovered that in fiscal year 2000 for every \$1 of revenue generated by residential property in the township, \$1.23 was spent providing services to those lands. For every \$1 received from commercial and business land uses, only \$0.15 was spent to provide services. For every \$1 received from farm/forest/open land uses in the township, only \$0.17 was spent providing services. It also found that comparing revenues to expenditures shows that residential land use had a deficit of \$2,322,960, which was covered by a \$2,211,115 surplus from commercial/industrial development and \$351,818 from farm, forest, and open land.

The study in Hopewell Township, York County discovered that in fiscal year 2000 for every \$1 of revenue generated by residential property in the township, \$1.27

was spent providing services to those lands. For every \$1 received from commercial and business land uses, only \$0.32 was spent to provide services. For every \$1 received from farm/forest/open land uses in the township, only \$0.59 was spent providing services. It also found that comparing revenues to expenditures shows that residential land use had a deficit \$1,267,015, which was offset by a \$183,245 surplus from commercial/industrial development and a \$122,928 surplus from farm, forest, and open land.

The Assembly is seeking out the region's leaders who may be interested in conducting a Cost of Community Services study in their community. For more information, please contact Craig Zumbrun at 948-6324.

###