

Response to "How can we help our city run better" Editorial Board Project
By: Dusty Rhodes, Hamilton County Auditor (513-946-4047)
Published: July 20, 2011, Cincinnati Enquirer editorial page, A15

It looks like the handmaidens of big government are alive and well and holed up at "The Cincinnati Enquirer".

A group of mainly current and former City of Cincinnati residents seems to believe what is needed is for the City to take over all the adjoining communities. One of these enemies of limited government even goes so far as to seek the forced statewide elimination of all townships. Has anyone bothered to ask the people who don't live in the city what they want? Or don't their opinions matter?

Collectively the group has spent too much time dreaming up experimental, utopian forms of government that wouldn't work and, trust me, will never come to pass. Their visioning exercise only camouflages their failures as past and present city officials who now join the chorus for a Greece-like bailout at someone else's expense.

What we need is to preserve what we have, limited government, directly accountable to voters. Former Cincinnati Mayor Kenneth Blackwell writes, "political leadership has not come from the structure, it has come from the caliber of leader that is in the office". He has said a mouthful.

As everyone pontificates about the alleged shortcomings (really intentional road blocks to the unfettered growth of government and the public sector at our expense) they would do well to remember it is the quality of the elected or appointed official, not the form or structure that matters most.

The first thing we can do to "help our city" is to explain to it that it no longer rules the roost in our metropolitan area. It has about a fifth of the region's total population and it can no longer dictate its demands or wishes to everyone else. That would be a good starting point.

And then when "The Enquirer" forms its next discussion group it would be wise not to stack the deck with big city, big government devotees. Too include those who choose to live in the real world under limited forms of local government does not seem too much to ask.