



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 21, 2016

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**FITCH UPGRADES WAYNE COUNTY'S ISSUER DEFAULT RATING TO BB+, OUTLOOK TO STABLE**

*Wayne County's four notch upgrade is quite uncommon*

**DETROIT**—Fitch Ratings, Inc upgraded Wayne County's Bond Rating from "B" to "BB+". This is a four notch upgrade which is quite uncommon. This upgrade is a reflection of the progress Wayne County has made toward eliminating its financial distress by implementing the Recovery Plan that realigns expenditures and long-term liabilities to match revenue. The improved rating is expected to make it possible for the County to borrow the money necessary to complete work at the Gratiot Jail Site and at a lower interest rate

"The disciplined implementation of our Recovery Plan has turned the County's finances around and put us on a path to fiscal stability," said Wayne County Executive Warren C. Evans. "Although there is still a lot of work to be done before the County's finances are completely stabilized, the Fitch upgrade of our credit rating is confirmation that we are on the right track."

An excerpt from the Fitch Ratings, Inc report states:

'Recovery plan implementation has largely closed the structural budget deficit and eliminated the accumulated general fund deficit. Key plan achievements include department eliminations/consolidations, significant negotiated health care savings, and the switch to a stipend model for OPEB/retiree health care. Changes to OPEB alone resulted in a \$34 million (63% of prior OPEB payments) cost reduction annually. Modifications to the county's defined benefit pension plan, including changes in retirement age, vesting requirements and the limitation of average final compensation to base wages should reduce the required contribution by \$11.7 million or 17% in the first year. The county is eligible to be released from the consent agreement when the county executive certifies and the state treasurer concurs that financial stability has been restored, the county has repaid amounts owed to the state, and audited financial statements show the county is not required to submit a financial plan under existing state law. The county anticipates release within one year from now.'

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