Fiscal Health for Local Governments

Description: This examination of the fiscal health of local governments offers a "how-to" approach to identifying and solving financial problems. It will serve as a primer for readers interested in understanding financial processes and alternatives, and as a practical guide for those who need access to fiscal measurement tools. Its principal selling point lies in its assumptions: instead of using the vocabulary and research agendas of economists (such as Musgrave, Fisher), finance scholars (Ladd/Yinger) and political scientists (Peterson/Strachota), it will appeal to readers who lack sophisticated knowledge in these areas and nevertheless need practical advice.

The book stems from the "Fiscal Health Education Program," an applied economics program at the University of Minnesota. It uses three measures of fiscal health-financial condition, trend analysis, and financial trend monitoring system-as the basis for advocating particular fiscal strategies. The book examines the tools that can be used to assess the condition of a local government's fiscal health and some of the policy causes or remedies for certain situations, as well as some of the strategies governments can pursue to maintain and improve health.

How-to approach will appeal to readers who lack sophisticated knowledge
Contains discussion questions and anonymous case studies of actual cities and municipalities
Presents practical methods for identifying and solving common fiscal problems

Contents:

Why Fiscal Health Matters
Fiscal Health Literature
Macro Trends Affecting Local Governments
Financing Trends and Options
Alternative Service Delivery Options
Tools for Analyzing Local Fiscal Health
Case Studies
Fiscal Effects of Local Government Boundary Adjustments
Practical Strategies for Local Fiscal Health
Conclusion.

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