



Local Officials Key to Defeat of Local Design Standards Preemption

A big win this year for Georgia's local governments was the defeat of the House and Senate bills that would have prohibited local governments from adopting design standards for residential homes. These bills would have taken away the right of citizens to decide the look and feel of their communities.

HB 302, Preemption of Local Building Design Standards, by Rep. Vance Smith (R-Pine Mountain), and SB 172, Preemption of Local Building Design Standards, by Sen. John Wilkinson (R-Toccoa), both failed to pass out of their respective chamber by Day 28, Crossover Day, the last day a bill could pass one chamber and be eligible for consideration by the other.

The participation of city officials was key to the defeat of these bills. GMA would like to thank all the cities that passed resolutions in opposition to HB 302 and SB 172 and to all the city officials who contacted their House and Senates members, expressing concern about the preemption of local decision making.

Your participation in the legislative process is important and the collective voice of city officials makes a difference.



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Phil Best
Mayor, Dublin

July 26, 2019

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Mayor, Union City

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Mayor

City of Hogansville

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400 East Main Street

Hogansville, GA 30230

Immediate Past President

Linda Blechinger
Mayor, Auburn

Dear Mayor Stankiewicz,

Executive Director

Larry H. Hanson

Thank You! GMA appreciates your city actively participating in advocacy efforts important to Georgia's municipal governments. During the 2019 Legislative Session, you joined over 50 other cities approving resolutions in opposition to House Bill 302. This preemption legislation, which was held during the legislative session, would prohibit cities and counties from regulating residential "building design elements" for single and double-family dwellings. If this legislation were to become law, local governments could no longer enact design standards on:

- type or style of exterior cladding material,
- style or materials of roof structures or porches,
- exterior nonstructural architectural ornamentation,
- location or architectural styling of windows and doors, including garage doors,
- the number and types of rooms,
- the interior layout of rooms, and
- types of foundation structures approved under state minimum standard codes.

Attacks on Local Control Continue: House Resolution 591 created a study committee that is expected to work from the false premise that design standards are a barrier to more affordable housing. We anticipate this committee to begin meeting as early as August 2019

Next Steps Are Needed: Citizens - not special interests - should set local design standards. GMA is now requesting you to reach out to your local chamber of commerce and local board of realtors by asking them to approve the enclosed resolution in support of the ability to establish residential design standards locally. Design standards are reflective of community desires and are established from citizen input, helping to create a sense of place unique for each city. Businesses and citizens will locate in well-planned communities with clear standards for current and future development and growth.

Please let GMA's Governmental Relations Associate Charlotte Davis (cdavis@gacities.com) know when your city has done so. We appreciate your commitment to local control.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Vince Williams", is written over a blue horizontal line.

Vince Williams, Mayor, Union City
Chair, Legislative Policy Council

CC: City Manager, City Clerk

A RESOLUTION

Supporting Locally-Established Building Design Standards for Residential Dwellings.

WHEREAS, locally elected officials work in partnership with citizens to establish “building design standards” in single and double-family dwellings, which reflect the character of the community and have a positive impact on economic development efforts and competitiveness; and

WHEREAS, appropriate local design standards and land use policies, established by local citizens in each community, create a diverse, stable, profitable, and sustainable residential development landscape; and

WHEREAS, state legislation eliminating locally-tailored approaches to design standards would harm self-determination of citizens to establish community standards; and

WHEREAS, local community partners support the use of building design standards to protect property values, attract high quality builders, and block incompatible development; and

WHEREAS, building design standards assure residents and business owners that their investments will be protected, and that others who come behind them will be equally committed to quality; and

WHEREAS, local business leaders value the studying, surveying, crafting, and defining of a community vision and development strategies, and recognize design standards as an integral part of those endeavors to attract residents, businesses, and the much-coveted trained workforce; and

WHEREAS, development and redevelopment efforts should reflect the community and its vision while simultaneously creating a sense of place imperative for attracting new economic prospects; and

WHEREAS, local officials are elected to make decisions about the look and feel of their communities, and local business owners recognize the need for their elected officials to be empowered to enforce building design standards to make today’s thriving community areas tomorrow’s historic districts; and

WHEREAS, citizens’ ability to continue to set community values and local elected officials to enforce building design standards in single or double family dwellings, for the purposes of economic growth and the safety and welfare of the citizens of Georgia and in particular of _____.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE _____ that this governing body voices its support of Locally-Established Building Design Standards for Residential Dwellings.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be delivered to each member of the Georgia House of Representatives and Senate representing _____, and made available for distribution to the public and the press.