

Oconee County Board of Commissioners
RESOLUTION
Opposing House Bill 302 and Senate Bill 172,
Preemption of Local Building Design Standards

WHEREAS, HB302 and SB 172 would prohibit local governments from regulating “building design elements” in single or double family dwellings, which could negatively impact economic development efforts and harm competitiveness; and

WHEREAS, appropriate local design standards and land use policies create a diverse, stable, profitable, and sustainable residential development landscape; and

WHEREAS, HB302 and SB 172 is a bill that would undermine self-determination of citizens to establish community standards as illustrated by the following:

- County and municipal officials are elected in part to make decisions about the look and feel of their communities, which fosters economic development, preserves the character of communities; and
- Counties and municipalities use design standards to ensure that the property values of surrounding property owners remain protected from incompatible development; and
- HB302 and SB 172 would severely erode the ability of all 538 Georgia cities and 159 counties to address unique and community-specific quality of life issues.

WHEREAS, county and municipal governments use 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 governments spend a large amount of resources studying, surveying, crafting, and defining their vision and development strategies, and design standards are an integral part of those endeavors to attract residents, businesses, and the much-coveted trained workforce; and

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WHEREAS, development and redevelopment efforts should reflect the community and its vision while simultaneously creating a sense of place; and

WHEREAS, county and municipal government officials are elected to make decisions about the look and feel of their communities, and HB302 and SB 172 would transfer that power from duly-elected local leaders to outside groups with little to no stake in the future or success of Georgia's counties and municipalities, including real estate developers and homebuilders; and

WHEREAS, building design standards neither discourage nor favor affordable housing, nor prevent the availability of certain housing types, as supporters of HB302 and SB 172 purport; and

WHEREAS, local governments should have the ability to provide more affordable housing options without sacrificing their unique character or threatening economic growth; and

WHEREAS, although historic districts are protected in HB302 and SB 172, which indicates an understanding that standards do in fact make sense, downtown overlays or other similar special zoning districts are not; and

WHEREAS, local governments should be empowered to enforce building design standards to make today's thriving county areas tomorrow's historic districts; and

WHEREAS, by limiting the ability of local governments to enforce building design standards in single or double family dwellings, HB302 and SB 172 would negatively impact quality-of-life issues, including economic growth and the safety and welfare of the citizens of Georgia and in particular of Oconee County; and

WHEREAS, Oconee County has regulated local design standards consistently over a period of over 35 years without harming the building and development community as evidenced by the desirability of homes in Oconee County; and

WHEREAS, the effort to regulate design standards was driven by local citizens of Oconee County and has drawn the support of those citizens consistently:

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE Oconee County Board of Commissioners that this governing body voices its opposition to HB302 and SB 172, Preemption of Local Building Design Standards.

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

Adopted this 26th day of February, 2019.

OCONEE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



(SEAL)

Kathy Hayes

Kathy Hayes
County Clerk

John Daniell

John Daniell, Chairman

Mark Thomas

Mark Thomas, Commissioner Post

Chuck Horton

Chuck Horton, Commissioner Post 2

W. E. "Bubber" Wilkes

W. E. "Bubber" Wilkes, Commissioner Post 3

Mark Saxon

Mark Saxon, Commissioner Post 4



House of Representatives

February 26, 2019

To: Oconee County Board of Commissioners
John Daniell, Chairman
Mark Thomas, Post 1
Chuck Horton, Post 2
Bubber Wilkes, Post 3
Mark Saxon, Post 4

From: Rep. Marcus A. Wiedower
Rep. Houston Gaines

Gentlemen,

We would like to offer our appreciation for your time spent in Atlanta with us as we discussed the proposed HB-302 legislation with its sponsors. With any bill, it is very valuable to have affected parties at the table for all sides to fully grasp the effects of the proposed law. With the concerns we have all voiced, we hope that you will take official action and adopt a resolution opposing the proposed HB-302 as well as SB-172.

Warm regards,

Rep. Marcus A. Wiedower, SR119

Rep. Houston Gaines, SR117