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FULTON COUNTY 2020 STATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA



Adopted by the Fulton County Board of Commissioners: November 20, 2019; Amended January 8, 2020



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SUPPORT LONG-TERM TRANSIT FUNDING & REGIONAL COOPERATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">As the largest county in Georgia and the economic center of the state, Fulton County is the heart of Georgia's transit system, and has provided financial support for transit for more than 40 years.Fulton County supports the designation of a permanent seat on the ATL Board to be filled by a County elected official, to ensure the interests of the citizens and businesses in Fulton County are met.Fulton County continues its support for long-term financing tools to help local governments address their transit capital and operational needs to ensure appropriate integration and equitable connectivity.Fulton County requests that the State of Georgia provide ongoing allocated funding for transit.
ENSURE AUTONOMY FOR FULTON COUNTY AIRPORT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fulton County seeks local legislation to ensure the portion of the Fulton County Airport property currently in unincorporated Fulton County remains so in perpetuity.
CREATE EQUITY IN APPEALS PROCESS FOR COMMERCIAL PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS
<p>Fulton County proposes changes in the appeals process for assessments of commercial properties. Proposed changes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Requiring mandatory reporting of all income and expenses associated with the commercial property at the time an appeal is filed.Amendment of O.C.G.A. § 48-5-299 (c) to clearly define “significant / material” change in existing law to include includes changes in income, vacancy and cap rates.Updating appeals forms for commercial properties to require declaration of recent fee appraisals.Limiting appeal rights on Development Authority parcels during all or part of the 10-year “ramp up” period.
STRENGTHEN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH MODEL & FUNDING FOR SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fulton County seeks \$1.5 million in annual funding to support behavioral health services for formerly homeless individuals in permanent supportive housing. This will allow Fulton County to maintain and establish services that began following the 2019 legislative session.Fulton County supports policies and additional funding to create greater capacity related to opioid and addiction prevention, treatment and recovery programs.Fulton County seeks to serve as the safety net provider for behavioral health services for uninsured and under-insured residents in our county. Fulton County plans to fund a feasibility study for crisis stabilization units and the behavioral health service delivery model, and will bring forward additional recommendations based on the outcomes of that study.
SIMPLIFY HOMESTEAD EXEMPTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fulton County seeks opportunities to simplify the homestead exemption process to improve outcomes for taxpayers.Fulton County supports property owner education programs to assist property owners with understanding their rights and responsibilities in the property tax process, including homestead exemptions, appeals, and more.
PROTECT AIR QUALITY
<p>Fulton County supports stronger protections for air quality including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Stricter zoning provisions and greater reporting requirements for businesses that emit harmful chemicals, including ethylene oxide and others.Stronger requirements and processes for state regulatory agencies to report air quality issues to the public.
IMPROVE BOARD OF EQUALIZATION PROCESS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fulton County supports an efficient, fair and timely appeals process for taxpayers. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. Title 48 regarding county boards of equalization, review of assessments and citizen appeals, Fulton County proposes an opt-in opportunity for e-notification to taxpayers appealing their hearings.If the taxpayer chooses to exercise the one-time change of date/time of their scheduled hearing as allowed under statute, Fulton County requests that the rescheduled hearing be held in a time period that does not exceed 90 days beyond the initial appeals hearing date unless there are other extenuating circumstances including military service.

CREATE A MORE EFFICIENT & EFFECTIVE JUSTICE SYSTEM
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fulton County supports legislation that creates a more efficient and effective justice system and improves outcomes for victims, defendants and taxpayers.Fulton County requests the State consider increasing, rather than decreasing, funding for the Department of Community Supervision offices in Fulton County.Fulton County seeks additional long-term behavioral health treatment beds at Georgia Regional Hospital.Fulton County supports additional state funding to expand the scale of existing diversion programs and allow new diversion programs to be established.Fulton County seeks the establishment of a state-supported transition center to help offenders successfully re-enter the community providing employment preparation, access to healthcare, access to housing, addiction treatment, and case management.Fulton County supports HB 528, introduced in 2019, which expands record restriction to individuals who have been convicted of certain crimes and have demonstrated a track record without further criminal activity.Fulton County seeks state funding for local law enforcement and justice agencies to provide gang prevention training and appropriate intervention, including alternative housing of inmates in other jurisdictions and other services.Fulton County seeks state funding for training, prevention and intervention services to address sex trafficking.
ENSURE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE TRANSPARENCY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fulton County supports improvements in emergency medical services. Fulton County specifically supports HB 264, introduced in 2019, which includes provisions to ensure that EMS vendors cannot serve on committees that select EMS service providers.
ENSURE SECURE & ACCESSIBLE ELECTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fulton County is committed to providing secure elections in compliance with state law and requests additional state funding for the implementation of new voting machines and associated costs borne by County governments in conducting elections.Fulton County supports efforts to maintain early voting opportunities.Fulton County supports legislation that allows electors within the county to vote at any precinct in the county on Election Day in a primary, general, special or runoff election.
SUPPORT CREATIVE INDUSTRIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fulton County supports legislation that continues incentives that support job creation and business opportunity through creative industries, including film and television, post-production, fashion, music and e-sports.
SUPPORT HOMEOWNER PROTECTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fulton County seeks changes to O.C.G.A. Title 44 to provide for Community Associations Protection and Transparency to include specific requirements for governance, financial management, and business best practices for homeowner associations, and protections for individual property owners.Fulton County supports HR 329 introduced in 2019 which would create the House Study Committee on Homeowners’ Associations, Condominium Owners’ Associations, and Property Owners in Community Associations.Fulton County opposes HB 302 and SB 172 introduced in 2019 which would prohibit local governments from adopting or enforcing ordinances or regulations relating to or regulating building design and zoning elements as applied to one or two-family dwellings.
SUPPORT HOUSING SOLUTIONS & AFFORDABILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fulton County supports legislation that provides quality affordable housing for low to moderate income residents.Fulton County requests that the State of Georgia allocate ongoing housing funding to address the growing homeless population.

