



**RESOLUTION TITLE: GASTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
LEGISLATIVE AGENDA FOR THE 2019-2020 SESSION OF THE NORTH
CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

WHEREAS, the Gaston County Board of Commissioners mission is to strengthen and diversify Gaston County's economy and to encourage the growth of safe and healthy communities; and,

WHEREAS, job creation, economic development, education, healthy communities, public safety and quality of life are adopted priorities of the Commission and are important guiding principles for future policy decisions; and,

WHEREAS, the Gaston County Board of Commissioners recognizes that State policies, programs and investments have a significant influence on local governance; and,

WHEREAS, the Gaston County Board of Commissioners has identified numerous goals for consideration and support during the 2019-2020 Session of the General Assembly.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Gaston County Board of Commissioners respectfully requests the Gaston County Delegation to the North Carolina General Assembly to:

1. Support the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' legislative priorities; most importantly, oppose unfunded mandates and any shifts of State responsibilities to Counties.
2. Focus on Economic Development:
 - A. Support tax policy to promote advancement of a business climate in Gaston County that fosters competitiveness, encourages new investment and provides for the expansion of current industry to support the local workforce and quality of life:
 - Support the continued efforts toward lowering and eventual elimination of the NC Corporate Tax
 - Oppose targeted taxes, policies, codes and rules that would impede business development

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I, Donna S. Buff, Clerk to the County Commission, do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of action taken by the Board of Commissioners as follows:

- Continue to support reductions of the Franchise Tax, which will be reduced from 3% to 2.5% in 2019
 - Continue to support Local Option Sales Tax and maintaining revenue for economic development
 - In response to recently enacted federal tax reform, support the removal of state and local economic grants as taxable gross income from the North Carolina State Tax Code, which typically mirrors the Federal Tax Code.
- B. Support job creation and retention efforts; fully fund job recruitment efforts and support various economic development performance based incentives:
- Maintain economic development programs of Golden Leaf Foundation
 - Maintain the Governor's One NC Fund's competitiveness and effectiveness by continuation of Commissioners goals that modified the local match
 - Support the creation of a Site and Building Development Fund. The subsidized loan fund would create access to capital for land acquisition, building construction, or building renovation in order to market property ready for lease or sale for industry job expansion
 - Continue support for workforce development through the Community College system and to strengthen the educational offerings in partnerships with industry and K-12 education with programs like Career Promise and Early College.
 - Support environmental regulatory policy that is balanced to protect natural resources and be friendly to the manufacturing base
 - Support State investment in rural infrastructure of water and sewer
 - Reinstate funding for the NC Select site and buildings database.
- C. Support funding for travel and tourism, historic preservation, land conservation, state parks and the arts in North Carolina as it spurs economic development:
- Support Crowder's Mountain State Park
 - Support Mountain Island Educational State Forest
 - Support the P&N Rail Line
3. Support Transportation Funding:
- Continue efforts to fund transportation infrastructure in North Carolina based on statistical need criteria
 - Support the funding of transportation improvements required for new business and industry
 - Support the development of innovative and sustainable methods of funding transportation and infrastructure projects to meet the needs of our growing population, including a mix of funding methods such as bonds, public-private partnerships, local option revenue, and new revenue sources

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- Support highway interchange improvements that increase the visibility and vitality of area businesses while meeting all safety and commuter standards
 - Support LOCAL Funding Priorities which include:
 - Widening of Interstate 85
 - Bridge over Catawba River (South Fork Crossing/Catawba Crossing)
 - Highway 321 Interchange
 - Funding to improve highways and intersections determined to be most dangerous intersections
4. Support appointments of Gaston County residents, who are interested, to statewide boards and commissions. Specific commissions of interest include, but are not limited to: Parks and Recreation Trust Fund, Board of Transportation, Property Tax Commission, Partnership for Children, Local Government Retirement System, Local Government Commission and Housing Finance Agency.
 5. Support the reinvestment of lottery ticket sale proceeds for education spending as originally intended and restore the statutory requirement that 40% of net lottery proceeds be allocated to counties for school capital needs.
 6. Support a comprehensive solution to address disparities in education funding between Counties and no unfunded mandates on education, such as class size reduction.
 7. Support local education policy; allowing school leaders and teachers to adapt state policy to local needs. Flexibility and innovation is needed to address local concerns for K-12 education, balancing accountability with empowerment.
 8. Support safe schools by continued assistance to fund and train Safety Resource Officers for K-12. Support flexibility to allow retired officers working as SROs to be compensated without compromise to their retirement.
 9. Support Partners Behavioral Health as the managed care organization for the delivery of whole health services and continued Medicaid Managed Care for the region.
 10. Support the restoration of State Aid funding to the Public Libraries Fund.
 11. Continue support of Gaston County's Court Services Program (Pre-Trial Service).
 12. Oppose any changes, repeal or reduction, in the fire tax for property in land use value. The result of a repeal would be a \$589,000 loss to 36 fire departments in Gaston County. Legislation to study the repeal of the fire tax for properties in land use value, passed in SB 711 in the summer session, 2018. The committee reviewing the repeal is the Agriculture & Forestry Awareness Study Commission.
 13. To Support Legislation to Study Security Features for the Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Card.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be forwarded to the Gaston County Legislative Delegation to the NC General Assembly and the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners.