



February 16, 2026

The Honorable Russet Perry
Senate of Virginia
District 31

VIA EMAIL

RE: HB804/SB488, HB816, SB454, & SB531 – Mandated Zoning Requirements

Senator Perry:

The Coalition of Loudoun Towns (COLT) strongly opposes HB804/SB488 , HB816/SB454, SB531, and any similar bill that would interfere with a local government’s authority to develop, pass, and enforce local zoning ordinances. All of these bills propose to **mandate** certain Zoning Ordinance regulations, which goes against decades of precedent that zoning and land use is a local matter to be handled by local governing bodies.

For this reason alone, we ask that you oppose these and any similar bill that would threaten local land use authority. Each locality has its own particular community preferences and desires related to uses, locations, and developmental patterns. Furthermore, we engage directly and regularly with the community on their desires for how our community will develop. Imposing requirements from the state takes away the voice of the citizens in their various localities and flies in the face of our federal system of government where authority should reside at the lowest possible level.

Specifically, HB804/SB488 mandate certain growth targets for localities without respect for each individual locality’s size, needs, or infrastructure. Such a mandate does not account for the community’s direct input into the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and the Zoning Ordinance that are approved through a public process. We recognize that the companion bill, SB488, was stricken in the Senate Local Government Committee. We ask that HB804 also be stricken from consideration.

HB816/SB454 completely override local zoning and dictates – by legislators from across the Commonwealth – how a locality is allowed to carefully curate the proper mix of uses within a commercial district. This leads to lack of proper planning and balancing of uses within a community. While we recognize that SB454 was amended to likely exempt the certain towns due to population size, we continue to adamantly oppose an override of local zoning authority. Ever town regardless of size face the same issues as smaller towns.

SB531 requires localities to consider accessory dwelling units as a by-right use on all single-family residential properties. This *de facto* doubling of density does not account for the proper planning that a locality undertakes related to water and sewer capacity, parking capacity, traffic capacity, and community quality of life issues such as noise and trash. Specifically, Virginia is facing a third year of significant drought, with 87% of counties being in either a drought warning or watch. All of your constituents are in a drought warning declaration by the Virginia DEQ. Unabated growth of residential units – and demands on water systems, may lead us to a breaking point.

At some point, we ask ourselves: why have local Zoning Ordinances in the first place, if the General Assembly believes that is its job? Why should the public have a say in the matters that affect them directly?

In this year of America's 250th anniversary, where we celebrate the beautiful Republic and the federal system of government – where decisions are best left to those closest to an issue – we fear that the General Assembly is preferring to take a state-centric approach and encroach on the rights of our local governments.

We strongly and wholeheartedly oppose HB804/SB488, HB816/SB454, SB531, and any other bill that takes away our local land use authority. We respectfully request you oppose them as well.

Sincerely,



Kelly Burk
Mayor, Town of Leesburg



Chris Hornbaker
Mayor, Town of Lovettsville



Bridge Littleton
Mayor, Town of Middleburg



Scott Ramsey
Mayor, Town of Round Hill



Ken Wine
Mayor, Town of Hamilton



Roger Vance
Mayor, Town of Hillsboro