

A RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT FULL FUNDING OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUND AND TO STRESS TO THE GREENVILLE COUNTY LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION TO OPPOSE ANY ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE SOUTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO CUT THE FUND THAT WILL RESULT IN INCREASED TAXES ON THE CITIZENS OF GREENVILLE COUNTY AND TO SUPPORT AN OPTION FOR COUNTIES TO RETURN MANDATED SERVICES BACK TO THE DIRECT AND TOTAL CONTROL OF THE STATE.

WHEREAS, the State, in addition to the powers and obligations enumerated the Home Rule Act, has chosen to utilize counties as an administrative arm of the state of South Carolina and as an additional funding source for state agencies; and

WHEREAS, the State mandates that Greenville County provide, execute, and support certain daily programs and services for State agencies such as Probate Court, Solicitors Office, Magistrate Court and others, and in 1991 agreed that via the Local Government Fund, they would provide adequate funding to underwrite these mandates; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, the State Legislature broke their standing commitment to the counties by cutting the Local Government Fund and they have failed to restore and abide by the adopted legal funding formula since, and by doing so are placing great pressures on local budgets to cover costs of services that should be funded by the State; and

WHEREAS, since 2008, Greenville County tax payers have lost \$30.6 million that should have been returned to the County to pay for State mandated services; and

WHEREAS, in the current budget for FY2014-15, the state is only funding the Local Government Fund at FY1999 levels which not only fails to cover the initial costs, but also doesn't factor in growth, inflation and general increased cost of business; and

WHEREAS, the continued underfunding and now proposed deeper and more dramatic cuts by the General Assembly will trigger an increased tax burden on the citizens of Greenville County to make up for the State shortfall; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly is shunning their duties and responsibilities by pushing the burden of their budget mismanagement on to local governments which is resulting in Greenville County citizens being forced to bear that additional tax burden; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly's inability to handle their own budget issues has become a recurring theme as many State leaders now plan to deal with their inability

to fund State road and bridge projects by forcing their inventory on the local governments; and

WHEREAS, in addition to surreptitiously dismantling statutory property tax relief granted to their property taxpayers, the General Assembly has further restricted county government's ability to generate revenue by Act No. 388 of 2006, thereby preventing the counties from being able to pay for legitimate functions of county government and from mitigating the expected shortfalls resulting from the State's refusal to meet its statutory obligations; and

WHEREAS, the State could also address this serious funding issue by creating an option for counties to return mandated services back to the full power and control of the State; and

WHEREAS, it is time for the State General Assembly to accept the responsibilities they swore to uphold as elected leaders, follow the law as originally written, and prevent a massive tax increase on the citizen of Greenville County by doing their duty of returning the Local Government Fund to its full and statutory level.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Greenville County Council with full intention of protecting the tax payers of Greenville County declares their support for the full funding of the Local Government Fund and opposes any such legislation that would continue to cut funding for State mandated services executed by the County, and acknowledges that continued dereliction of duty by the State through defunding would force unnecessary and burdensome tax increase on our citizens

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Greenville County Council offers its support for legislation that would provide a new option that would allow for counties to return responsibility for State mandated services back under the direct and total control of the State

DONE IN REGULAR MEETING THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2015.

Bob Taylor, Chairman
Greenville County Council

Joseph Kernell
County Administrator

ATTEST:

Theresa B. Kizer
Clerk to Council