

Greetings Honorable North Carolina Legislator;

I (We) are part of a state citizens group that has been organized and facilitated by www.StopNCAnnexation.com. I (We) are AGAINST North Carolina's Involuntary Annexation Laws as they currently exist.

Today, I (we) join forces with other citizens from across the state, to show our desire that you act to CHANGE the current North Carolina Involuntary Annexation law.

I (We) respectfully ask you, as the Honorable Representative and Legislator of this state, to review the contents of this packet.

In reviewing this packet of information, I/we urge you to hear and understand that it is the citizens you represent, who desire to have a voice and vote in the involuntary annexation process.

A Voice and Vote does not exist in this law. Our voice and say has been ignored. It has in fact, been worked against. Our Voice has been over-run by lobbying groups such as the North Carolina League of Municipalities. These groups do not represent us as your constituents.

I am (We are) a part of the clear majority of citizens, property owners, taxpayers, and voters who seek change in the Involuntary Annexation Law.

I (We) respectfully request that you to work to support our citizen's request to change the involuntary annexation laws.

We thank you for your time, consideration and effort towards our request.

Sincerely,

Citizens for Change in the Involuntary Annexation Laws
(more signatures on back of this page)

Involuntary Annexation Statements

Studies and meetings have occurred over the years about involuntary annexation. Below are some statements, comments, and views from citizens about the Involuntary Annexation Process.

General Statements about Involuntary Annexation

Municipalities often have regular access to legal assistance that is paid for by the taxpayers, but the taxpayer as a threatened property owner is on his or her own to cover legal challenges and expenses.

There are few legal challenges because it is so difficult to win.

Burden of persuasion is on opponents. Put the burden on the municipality.

There is a presumption in favor of municipalities

No checks and balances; municipalities do not have any impetus to do the right thing.

Property owners should initiate annexation.

Avoid one-size-fits-all solutions.

Owners adjacent to the annexed property are affected.

There is a distrust of city officials among people being annexed.

There are inconsistencies in the law.

Municipalities are allowed to make decisions for residents that are not represented.

Current system is taxation without representation.

Fundamentally, this is a property rights issue.

Involuntary Annexation is unconstitutional.

No forced annexation.

Involuntary Annexation Procedural Issues Communication and Notice Problems

Need adjustments in notice to the public and property owners.

Need better and more timely notification.

Give 30 days notice prior to hearing.

Provide itemized agenda for public meetings.

There is not enough opportunity for real input.

Need better communication between owners and municipalities.

Need for early notification of homeowners, township officials, and homeowners associations.

Establish a process for negotiation that brings all stakeholders to the table.

Communicate what citizens will get.

We need easier access to materials.

Impose fines and penalties for violating open meeting laws.

Process could be improved by providing notice by mail and two notices in the paper.

Involuntary Annexation Economic and Fiscal Issues

Against Involuntary Annexation:

Cities and towns annex for financial reasons.

Most people acknowledged that municipalities annex to increase tax base, but people suggested that municipalities annex land selectively and avoid annexation of poor areas.

Some critics of annexation allege that municipalities need to annex because they are inefficient and have squandered resources.

Why should new residents want to pay previous debt?

Property owners should not be forced to subsidize poorly managed government.

Many critics of annexation argue that they do not want or need municipal services or that the services they would receive following annexation are overpriced.

Communities don't necessarily need to grow to prosper.

Some municipalities are annexing to increase population for the upcoming census and election gerrymandering

The current property tax system prompts communities to annex.

Cities annex for additional assessed value.

Municipalities practice "cherry picking." Cities and towns choose the most desirable areas for annexation. They often skip poor areas.

Communities often annex territory that they don't necessarily want in order to later annex property that is further away.

Lessen the reliance on property taxes as revenue source for local government.

Annexation increases property taxes for newly annexed property owners.

Additional taxation comes without enough gain.

Annexation can have a devastating effect on retired rural residents on fixed incomes.

Annexation is used by cities and towns that want revenue but can't afford to provide services to the newly annexed area.

We have a complex system of layered government. Often there are higher water and sewer rates inside municipalities.

Annexation has a significant impact on townships and counties that have invested in capital assets (fire equipment, etc.). These investments must be paid off.

Municipalities need to give some credit for improvements previously made to properties. Property owners that installed a new well or septic system should not have to connect to municipal infrastructure if they do not need it.

Municipalities don't have to compete. Annexation allows them to continue to be fiscally irresponsible.

Annexation duplicates existing functioning services.

Cities have responsibility to provide services within newly annexed areas.

Often there is not a good reason for annexation or plan for providing services.

The delivery of infrastructure and consistency of services are a concern.

Municipal fire service is more expensive.

Bigger is not always better.

Involuntary Annexation versus Self-Determination

The current process is un-democratic; it lacks choice for property owners.

A referendum system is preferred; property owners should be allowed to vote.

All annexations should be approved by a ballot.

Involuntary Annexation Procedural Issues General

The current legal challenge period is too short. Property owners must scramble to be able to file within 60 days.

There is no recourse short of legal action.

Need a better appeal process.

What is the process for de-annexing?

There should be independent review of fiscal plans and impacts.

The county commissioners should vote.

Return annexation law to the way it was prior to 1959, when the existing law was passed.