

November 11, 2008

The Honorable Vernon Malone  
Senator, North Carolina Senate  
300 North Salisbury Street, Room 314  
Raleigh, NC 27603

Dear Senator Malone:

Thank you for your willingness to serve on the Joint Study Commission on Municipal Annexation. The leaders of our North Carolina cities and towns, represented by the N.C. League of Municipalities, look forward to the opportunity to work with the Commission, and other interested parties, in a sincere and dedicated effort to review, discuss, and, as necessary, update the existing annexation law.

Our current annexation laws have served this state very well. All North Carolina citizens, whether residing in town limits or beyond, benefit from our cities and towns. Vibrant main streets and downtowns offer jobs, health care, higher education, cultural and recreational activities, and retail, all providing North Carolina citizens and their families an excellent quality of life. It is for this reason that we seek to preserve the basic principles of the annexation statutes.

However, we recognize that reasonable concerns have been expressed by interested citizens. The League Board of Directors has authorized us to discuss and agree to some changes. Accordingly, we pledge to work in good faith with members of the study Commission and other interested parties. We look forward to a productive process for serious discussions about potential changes.

Specifically, we stand ready to work under the Commission's leadership to address some significant concerns, including:

- improving communications and information to citizens concerning proposed annexations and the annexation process
- easing the financial impact of annexation, including extension of water and sewer services;
- changing standards to restrict use of narrow corridors of land to connect to areas proposed for city-initiated annexation; and

- providing authority and incentives for cities and towns to annex adjacent low-income areas where citizens need water and sewer and other services but cannot afford the full capital costs of extension of service.

North Carolinians enjoy a high quality of life across the state. Projections show that North Carolina's population will increase rapidly in the next two decades. We need to be prepared to handle this growth and the accompanying demands for services and benefits. Wise use of municipal annexation authority is one tool that, used correctly, can, and has, helped us to manage our growth.

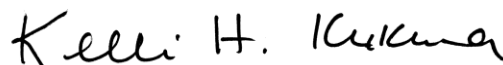
As you review the statutes and make recommendations for change, we respectfully ask that changes be carefully considered so they are fair and equitable for all citizens of the state. We will provide the Commission with any necessary information and perspective to assist with the important job you have before you. Please contact Kelli Kukura, legislative director, (919) 715-3942 with any specific comments or questions.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



S. Ellis Hankins  
Executive Director



Kelli H. Kukura  
Legislative Director