

## In The Best Interests of The Fulton County Taxpayers, Fulton Should Remain United!

In the coming session of the State Legislature, Representative Mark Burkhalter will once again sponsor a Resolution to split-up Fulton County by forming Milton County in North Fulton. The Fulton County Taxpayers Foundation opposes such a Resolution for the following reasons:

**1.** The division of Fulton County would devastate the remaining Fulton County by reducing its revenues by \$193 million, the sum now paid in taxes to Fulton County by property owners in North Fulton.

**2.** 64.9% of the Fulton County General Fund is either fixed in cost or mandated by the State of Georgia, i.e., the Courts and Courts –Related services, \$199.2 million; the contribution to Grady Hospital, \$92 million; the Health & Human Services, \$71.1 million; Fulton County Sheriff, \$93.4 million; etc. In the event of a division, taxes in the remaining Fulton County could escalate as much as 30%-40% to make-up for the shortfall.

**3.** The Resolution calls for a vote by only the residents of North Fulton, violating the Federal Voting Act of 1965. Furthermore,

Article 9, Section 1, Paragraph 11C of the Georgia Constitution requires that all citizens in a county must vote on the decision to divide a county. The Resolution attempts to remove this constitutional protection and thus disenfranchises all citizens living south of the proposed Milton County border.

**4.** During the last five years, Fulton County has vastly improved its services, i.e., under Chief Judge Doris Downs, the Superior Courts are far more economical and efficient; under John Szabo, the Fulton County Libraries are ranked “one of the best”; under Burt Manning, the Board of Assessors is highly respected; under Dr. Stephen Kitkowsky, the Fulton County Health Department is ranked “among the best in United States.”

**5.** Violation of Constitutional Amendment Language: The proposed language of HR 21 is vague in two aspects. First, the language allowing the re-creation of a county to cover an area which is *continued on page 2*

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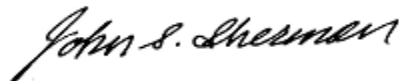
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“the same as those in effect immediately prior to the previous merger or may be generally similar but not identical as determined in the discretion of the General Assembly” is far too vague to allow a citizen of Georgia to determine what they are voting for. Second, the language “if the voters therein approve it by referendum” does not clearly identify the proposal to allow only those people in the new county to vote on the measure.

The Taxpayers Foundation strongly supports the recommendations of the Fulton County Blue Ribbon Commission “to provide appropriate benchmarks, best practices and national comparables in service delivery, governance structure, and financing operations.” The Taxpayers Foundation also strongly supports more District Representation from North Fulton on the Fulton County Board of Commissioners.

**In the best interests of the Fulton County taxpayers, Fulton County Should Remain United.**

**John S. Sherman**



**President**

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