

**RESOLUTION BY THE DURHAM CITY COUNCIL
AND DURHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGARDING LEGISLATION TO REMOVE LOCAL AUTHORITY
OVER TREE PRESERVATION**

Whereas the City and County of Durham are committed to developing environmentally sound, yet reasonable, development regulations that promote not only an attractive community, but one that is thriving and sustainable; and

Whereas the City and County recognize numerous benefits in maintaining local authority over trees on private property; and

Whereas the City and County recognize the value of trees as an essential part of the urban form and development, thus local authority is essential in how Durham determines how to grow and develop;

Whereas the City and County of Durham recognize the importance of local authority to maintain an effective stewardship of the communities' natural resources; and

Whereas the City and County of Durham recognize the environmental benefits of maintaining local regulation of trees, such as the preservation and enhancement of water quality and watercourses, providing a natural method of improving water quality and reducing stormwater quantity; reduction of heat island effects, maintains natural habitats, reduction of carbon dioxide and production of oxygen; protection of publicly-maintained trees from disease and infestation, prevention of invasive species; and

Whereas the City and County of Durham recognize that trees are a contributing factor to the aesthetic value to the community, enhancement of property values, and social and educational opportunities for its residents and visitors.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE DURHAM CITY COUNCIL AND
DURHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:**

Oppose any legislation which removes the City's and County's authority to "adopt or enforce any ordinance, rule, regulation or resolution that regulates the removal, replacement, and preservation of trees on private property."

WHEREAS, The Durham Environmental Affairs Board (EAB) is a citizen board charged with advising the City of Durham and Durham County elected officials on environmental policies and practices that affect the natural environment of Durham; and

WHEREAS, The Strategic Plans adopted by the City of Durham and Durham County support environmental stewardship; and

WHEREAS, Bill Draft 2013-TQz-22 would prevent counties and municipalities from regulating the removal, replacement, and preservation of trees on private property within their jurisdiction, and:

- Flooding problems and stormwater issues would be exacerbated if tree preservation were threatened; and
- Reduction of the number of trees would reduce carbon dioxide absorption and decrease oxygen production as well as compromise general air quality; and
- Just 100 mature trees catch approximately 539,000 gallons of rainwater a year, reducing money required for stormwater control, runoff, and soil erosion; and
- Trees improve drinking water quality and reduce water treatment costs; and
- Diverse plants and animals are dependent on trees for a source of shelter and food; and
- Trees protect watersheds and the lack thereof would adversely affect water quality; and
- A tree-filled environment forms a barrier, partially deadening noise pollution; and
- “Heat Island” effect is reduced by tree coverage, especially relevant in urban areas; and
- Trees in buffer zones improve local air and water quality; and
- Tree loss may have adverse unintended environmental consequences; and

WHEREAS, Ecosystems are geographically specific and varied, requiring local governing and management; and

WHEREAS, It is critical for counties and municipalities to continue to control tree removal, replacement, and preservation at the local level; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Durham Environmental Affairs Board opposes the passage of Bill Draft 2013-TQz-22.

WHEREAS, The Board of Keep Durham Beautiful (KDB) is a non-profit affiliate of Keep America Beautiful working in partnership with the City of Durham and Durham County with the mission to engage and inspire individuals to take greater responsibility for their community environment; and

WHEREAS, Focus areas include litter prevention, beautification and community greening, recycling and waste reduction; and

WHEREAS, The Strategic Plans adopted by the City of Durham and Durham County support a program to plant and care for trees throughout Durham in conjunction with community partners; and

WHEREAS, Bill Draft 2013-TQz-22 would prevent counties and municipalities from regulating the removal, replacement, and preservation of trees on private property within their jurisdiction, and;

WHEREAS, Trees provide numerous health benefits including

- helping provide clean water
- filter carbon dioxide and filter air of pollutants
- reduce erosion and buffer noise and wind
- healthy places for outdoor activities and exercise; an
- Reduce energy consumption and heat island effect by cooling buildings, streets and parking lots and moderate temperatures
- Slow runoff to reduce flooding problems and stormwater issues and reduce the cost to protect watersheds
- Build soils and provide wildlife habitat
- Shield residents from ultraviolet rays reducing health problems related to sun exposure; and

WHEREAS, Trees beautify the City and County, enhance the value of property and provide pleasant surroundings for residents and for new and existing businesses; and

WHEREAS, Municipal design and green infrastructure requires local governing and management; and

WHEREAS, Tree loss may have adverse unintended environmental consequences; and

WHEREAS, It is critical for counties and municipalities to continue to control tree removal, replacement, and preservation at the local level; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Keep Durham Beautiful opposes the passage of Bill Draft 2013-TQz-22.

