



## **Capitol Update: Week of March 23, 2026**

### **Thank You for Your Outreach!**

We asked and you delivered! We entered this week facing numerous serious threats to county government authority. Many of you reached out and made calls or even came to the legislature to make your views known and your voices heard. This made a big difference during a crucial week of the legislative session.

### **Property Tax Cap**

The proposed cap on county property taxes ([HB1873/SB2064](#)) was scheduled to be heard in both the House and Senate State and Local Government Committees this week. With a lengthy calendar, the House Committee did not get to the item. The Senate committee was trying to complete its entire agenda and close this week. In that chamber, tremendous pressure was put on state senators to advance the measure to the Finance Committee for additional work and amendments. In the end, the members of the committee listened to their local officials and chose to leave the taxing authority of county and city governments intact. While a final vote was not taken on the measure, the Senate sponsor appeared, talked briefly about his proposal and then acknowledged it did not have enough votes to pass the committee. He took it off notice for the year. Multiple similar proposals had already been taken off notice or defeated in various committees. This issue should be put to rest for this year, but county associations will almost certainly face this battle again next year. If your State Senator serves on the State and Local Government Committee please thank them for their support.

### **Land Use Regulatory Authority**

The week started on Monday with actions taken on a proposal that would have undermined virtually all land use regulations by county and city governments. [HB1837/SB1908](#) would have

allowed landowners to make claims for financial damages from local governments when they felt that a land use regulation had the effect of reducing the fair market value of their property. While landowners are authorized under current law to seek legal remedies in courts for regulatory actions that result in a “taking”, this bill would have greatly expanded that likelihood through a non-judicial remedy that simply allowed a landowner to file a claim for damages without a requirement of proof. There had been testimony in both the House and Senate Judiciary Committees previously raising concerns and objections to the bill. Votes were expected to be tight in both committees. The Senate sponsor took his version of the bill off notice early Monday afternoon, acknowledging the support wasn’t there. The House sponsor followed suit later that day. This session has seen a higher than usual volume of bills to limit the authority of local government to make land use decisions. There is more about this topic below.

## Senate State and Local Government Committee Showdown

With the Senate State and Local Government Committee announcing its final calendar, it met twice this week in an attempt to work its way through a lengthy agenda with 129 items to consider. While it did not complete all of its business and is scheduled to meet again next week, it did dispose of more than 100 items, including several of critical importance to counties. These include:

- [HB2114/SB2450](#) was amended to call for a TACIR study on allowing required public notices to be placed on websites instead of publishing them in newspapers. It heads to the Senate floor for a vote and is scheduled to be heard in the House State and Local Government Committee.
- [HB1670/SB1675](#) - This bill, which was amended to state that all parcels of property that include a single family home or townhouse must be classified as residential, regardless of the use of the property, failed on a close vote in the committee. The fiscal note on the bill estimated a loss of revenue to local governments in excess of \$20 million. The bill is still scheduled to be heard next week in the House State and Local Committee.
- [HB92/SB387](#) - This bill authorized recall elections for county officials. Although it was put on notice multiple times, it ended up not being presented in either the House or Senate.
- [HB1451/SB2257](#) - As originally filed, this bill required all counties to establish a county ethics commission. The Senate sponsor amended the bill to only apply to Shelby County. In that form, it was approved by the Senate State and Local Committee this week. However, no action was taken in the House.
- [HB1931/SB2043](#), which prohibits county commissions in charter counties from cutting the sheriff’s budget without the sheriff’s approval, was taken off notice by the sponsors in both chambers.
- [HB1969/SB1916](#) - This bill would alter the property assessment process for movable structures like campers that are being used for residences and undoes a reform recently passed by the General Assembly. The Senate sponsor took the bill off notice in committee this week.

## **Land Use Regulations**

A number of proposals related to cities and counties' ability to enact and enforce land-use regulations and manage growth are still moving. Some would expand the authority of counties. Others would limit it. An administration bill that sets time limits for approving development applications, plans, and site inspections, [SB2237/HB2552](#), raises serious concerns for counties, especially those trying to manage growth. Individual counties and the associations have been working back and forth with the administration on amendments to address concerns. We are still hopeful most of the problems pointed out by local government representatives will be addressed by an amendment expected next week.

A separate bill, [SB2053/HB1827](#), which grants local governments the ability to approve the location of any quarry or digital asset mining facilities in a public meeting, is moving forward. The bill was scheduled for a floor debate in the Senate, but was deferred. It is scheduled to be heard in both chambers on March 30th.

Another item, [SB1045/HB608](#), would prohibit a local government from asking a developer to contribute to the building or development of infrastructure that is deemed “nonessential” to the development. Under current law, such a request must have a nexus with the property and must be roughly proportional to the impact of the development. This new standard of “nonessential” would likely result in litigation and make it harder for counties and cities to get developers to help offset infrastructure costs caused by their development. The bill will be on the State and Local Committee calendar next week in the Senate and House.

## **Some More Positive Notes...**

While it seems like there are serious threats everywhere you look, there are also positive developments.

- [HB1815/SB1724](#), which allows a sheriff to refuse to accept an arrestee in need of medical attention until the arresting agency obtains the necessary care for the individual, has passed the House and Senate and is headed to the Governor’s desk.
- SJR48 to ratify an increase in the 911 fee was approved by the House State and Local Government Committee. It now moves to the Finance Subcommittee. The resolution passed the Senate last year.