
T-SPLOST, Food Tax, Agenda 21 & Regional Government

"The tax levied by this article shall be applicable to the sale of food and beverages."

– H.B. 277 of 2010, Page 13, Line 441

Question. Where did a pharmacist, a professional earth-mover, a businessman, a veterinarian, a real estate agent and a retiree get a 33-page bill to implement Agenda 21 in Georgia?

Answer. A federally created NGO, the American Planning Association, published the *Growing Smart Legislative Guidebook: Model Statutes for Planning and the Management of Change* and its *User Manual* to provide model planning and zoning bills for use in any U.S. state.

The theme is government control of land use, with no regard for private property rights.

The transformative changes in H.B. 1216 of 2008 are, especially, astonishing since some of its provisions are contrary to Georgia representative government. Its 33 pages and the "day jobs" of the co-sponsors of the bill prompted the above question. The co-sponsors have very different occupations. Representative Stephens is a pharmacist; Representative Vance Smith is in the business of construction and earthmoving. Representative Joe Wilkinson is a businessman; Representative Gene Maddox, a veterinarian; Representative John Lunsford, a real estate agent; and Representative Barbara Sims, is a business owner.

Comparing the bill with Agenda 21 made the connection easy. H.B. 1216 reeks of Agenda 21, which has not passed Congress and is not a treaty. So, its strategies are being implemented throughout the U.S. as "soft law." It was endorsed by U.S. President G. H. W. Bush at the United Nations 1992 Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit. After that initial endorsement, Agenda 21 really took root in President Clinton's EO 12852, which created his President's Council on Sustainable Development (PCSD) June 29, 1993.

Clinton's PCSD published "Sustainable America, a New Consensus" with 150 U.N. Agenda 21 recommendations, 67 percent of which Clinton's 1993 Secretary of Commerce claimed could be implemented by using his rule-making authority. By 1997, 43 million acres were designated road-less areas, 1/3 of land in America was owned by government, ten percent by states.

Agenda 21 was Widely Applied ... Until 2011, when the Focus Shifted to Rural America
President Barack Obama established the White House Rural Council June 9, 2011, assigning 24 federal cabinet heads and his White Office to implement Agenda 21 in rural areas.

Legislators Tried to Repeal Regional Government and T-SPLOST Food Tax

- H.R. 81 of 2011, by Representative Ron Stephens proposed a constitutional amendment to prohibit taxes on "food and food ingredients." It died in committee.
- S.B. 86 of 2011, by Senator Frank Ginn would have abolished regional government.
It passed the House 159 – 7 and the Senate 47 – 0. Governor Deal vetoed it May 13, 2011.
- H.B. 938 of 2012, by Representative Ed Setzler would have provided an opt-out for counties and an answer to the constitutional question, but it died in committee.

T-SPLOST and the Adoption of Regional (Appointed) Government

The law governing the Georgia Department of Community Affairs was amended in 2008 by H.B. 1216. Its introductory paragraph mentioned that regional development centers would be renamed regional commissions, without mentioning the biggest “biggie:” *regional government* that was created to override the power of counties and municipalities in Georgia’s 12 regions.

H.B. 277 of 2010, arbitrarily, deemed those 12 commissions as *special* districts for T-SPLOST, wherein an unprecedented single regional vote of the population in each region will determine passage or failure of a ten-year, one-percent sales and use tax, which is taxation by appointees.

Further reading of H.B. 1216 revealed that the 12 regions were created by simply piggy-backing on an earlier division of Georgia’s 159 counties into 12 centers, renamed “commissions” in H.B. 1216. Originally, the regions were formed to enable the state to serve specific needs in specific areas of the state. No problem there! But *current infiltrations by global influences* supersede residential preferences and implement United Nations and/or international policies.

Regional government was “automatically” implemented in H.B. 1216. Page 11 contains this arbitrary order, “Each municipality and county in the state **shall** automatically be a member of the regional commission for the region which includes the municipality or county, as the case may be.”

No question, no debate, it’s a mandate!

Confiscatory dues (tax) must be paid by counties and municipalities. H.B. 1216 page 11 includes this mandate: “Each county and municipality in the state **shall** pay the annual dues for membership in its commission.”

Q. How do regions use those dues?

Regions collect and pay dues based on population. Pages 11 – 12 of H.B. 1216 explain it this way: “While each regional commission must assess and collect annual dues in the amount of **25 cents** for each resident of each county within the regional commission ... to be eligible for any minimum funding from state appropriated funds, each regional commission must assess and collect annual dues in the aggregate averaging a minimum amount of **\$1.00** for each resident of each county within the regional commission.”

Q. How is this \$1.25 tax collected?

Regional government is BIG business. H.B. 1216, pages 10 – 11 explain regions: “Regional commissions are created and established as public agencies ... **shall** function as the regional planning entity for land use, environmental, transportation, and historic preservation planning in each designated region of the state. *Q. What happens when an area balks at regional planning?*

Each region has an appointed governing council. H.B. 1216, page 12 says membership on each council **shall** include, at least, the following: (a) the chief elected official of each county; (b) an elected official from one municipality in each county; (c) the Governor **shall** appoint three residents of the region (a school superintendent or school board member, two non-government employees); (d) the Lt. Governor **shall** appoint one non-government member and the Speaker **shall** do the same. *Q. If an appointed official refuses to serve, what is the penalty?*

Atlanta Region 3’s compliance with membership requirements results in 78 members. Region 3 has 10 counties and 63 municipalities that **shall** be on the council. An additional five members **shall** be appointed by the governor, lieutenant governor and House Speaker. Meaning, the total council members in Region 3 **shall** be at least 78, some appointed, some elected.

Q. Does a special facilitator secure region to region consensus?

T-SPLOST will be Decided by Regional Government

Is it constitutional? In 2008-09, legislators agreed a constitutional amendment was needed to create multi-county regions whose single regional vote would bind all counties in that region. Legislative staff attorneys also questioned the constitutionality of TIA, but to no avail.

When H.B. 1216 of 2008, renamed “regional development centers” “regional commissions,” a new layer of governance reared its head in Georgia – regional government. For T-SPLOST, the commissions became “*special*” regional governments that supersede county power.

The 2010 Transportation Investment Act (TIA) authorized T-SPLOST, a “transportation special local option sales tax,” which provides for a one-percent sales and use tax to be collected from 2013 – 2022, if it passes by regional popular vote July 31st. The constitutional question remains.

If the tax passes, four commissions created in TIA will for decades oversee transportation plans in 12 Georgia regions, with 10 to 18 counties in each. As in all regional government, the four commissions – (a) Regional Roundtable, (b) a Citizens Review Panel, (c) a Rural & Human Services Transportation Component, and (d) a Transit Governance Study Commission – will be comprised of appointed officials. Another constitutional question is its lack of an opt-out.

No opt-out. Counties cannot opt-out, although densely populated counties may carry the vote over other counties in the same region. DeKalb, Fulton, Gwinnett, and Henry counties could pass it by 60-percent YES, 40-percent NO, even if the other six voted just the opposite, 40 – 60.

Georgia: Agenda 21 Controls Rural Land, Water, Produce, Wildlife & People
Georgia. By Executive Order March 2007, Governor Sonny Perdue launched the Communities of Opportunity (Co-Op) Initiative to develop **rural** areas. Then, he empowered the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to implement it through agencies, local leaders and stakeholders.

Global pressure. The Georgia network of the International Council on Local Environmental Implementation (ICLEI), disguised as “Local Governments for Sustainability, U.S.A.” claims its network “spans the variety of Georgia communities, from urban Atlanta to **rural** Morgan County, to coastal Savannah and Tybee Island,” and offers resources and training to everyone.

The ICLEI network met in Morgan County September 1, 2010. In May 2012 the State Board of Education approved a charter school for Madison, Georgia, located in Morgan County. The charter school in Madison will be different. Its “classroom will be the farm.” Coincidence? I think not. Since the Agenda 21 focus is now on rural development, they’ll train rural children.

Q. Is Agenda 21 molding the minds of students to fit U.N. plans? Absolutely!

Agenda 21 Implemented in Rural Georgia in 2011

H.B. 225 passed in March 2011, became law July 1, 2011, and put rural Georgia under U.N. Agenda 21 policies, under the guise of “sustainable development.” Quoted below is that law, minus the modifying words. It’s a perfect outline of global interference in Georgia’s business.

Law over Rural Georgia: “Sustainable agriculture or sustainable agricultural practices means science-based agricultural practices, technologies, or biological systems ... which may include but not be limited to ... improving human health ... through the stewardship of water, soil, air quality, biodiversity, and wildlife habitat ... while advancing progress toward environmental, social, economic goals and the well-being of agricultural producers and rural communities.”

What can be done about Agenda 21? Explain it to your friends and legislators. The Georgia General Assembly can pass laws to stop it.

Vote NO July 31st: T-SPLOST Taxes Food & Beverages, Exempts Motor Fuel

Revenue collection and household costs vary by region. Residents in Region 3 may pay \$3,000 more taxes per household over ten years, beginning January 2013. However, the ten-year T-SPLOST limit is not firm! It may be extended or collected for decades-long maintenance funding for transportation projects or may be re-imposed for additional years at any time, even before the first ten years expire, if costs overrun projections.

Exempted from T-SPLOST

- Off-road heavy-duty equipment, off-road farm or agricultural equipment, or locomotives;
- Jet fuel sold to or used by a qualifying airline at a qualifying airport;
- Motor vehicles on public highways and requiring operator's license;
- Motor vehicle fuel for mass transit; and
- Energy used in manufacturing or processing tangible goods primarily for resale.

T-SPLOST Ten-Year Revenue Projections by Region

Region: (1) \$1.487 Billion (2) \$1.259 Billion (3) \$8.468 Billion (4) \$947 Million
(5) \$987 Million (6) \$876 Million (7) \$841 Million (8) \$594 Million
(9) \$399 Million (10) \$530 Million (11) \$670 Million (12) \$1.608 Billion

Counties and Chairmen by Region

1. *Ch. Mike Babb:* Dade, Walker, Catoosa, Whitfield, Murray, Fannin, Gilmer, Chattooga, Gordon, Pickens, Floyd, Bartow, Polk, Paulding, Haralson
2. *Ch. David Stovall:* Union, Towns, Rabun, Dawson, Lumpkin, White, Habersham, Stephens, Forsyth, Hall, Banks, Franklin, Hart
3. *Ch. Tad Leithead:* Cherokee, Cobb, Douglas, Fulton, Gwinnett, DeKalb, Rockdale, Clayton, Fayette, Henry
4. *Ch. Lanier Boatwright:* Carroll, Heard, Troup, Coweta, Meriwether, Spalding, Butts, Pike, Lamar, Upson
5. *Ch. James R. Dove:* Jackson, Madison, Elbert, Barrow, Athens-Clarke, Oglethorpe, Oconee, Walton, Greene, Newton, Morgan, Jasper
6. *Ch. Tom McMichael:* Putnam, Monroe, Jones, Baldwin, Crawford, Bibb, Twiggs, Wilkinson, Peach, Houston, Pulaski
7. *Ch. Andy Crosson:* Wilkes, Lincoln, Taliaferro, Warren, McDuffie, Columbia, Augusta-Richmond, Hancock, Glascock, Washington, Jefferson, Burke, Jenkins, Screven
8. *Ch. Terrell Hudson:* Harris, Talbot, Taylor, Columbus-Muscogee, Chattahoochee, Marion, Schley, Macon, Stewart, Webster, Sumter, Dooly, Crisp, Quitman, Clay, Randolph
9. *Ch. James Thomas:* Johnson, Emanuel, Laurens, Truetlen, Candler, Bleckley, Dodge, Wheeler, Montgomery, Toombs, Tattnall, Evans, Wilcox, Telfair, Jeff Davis, Appling, Wayne
10. *Ch. Dan Bollinger:* Terrell, Lee, Calhoun, Dougherty, Worth, Early, Miller, Baker, Mitchell, Colquitt, Seminole, Decatur, Grady, Thomas
11. *Ch. Travis Harper:* Turner, Ben Hill, Irwin, Coffee, Bacon, Tift, Berrien, Atkinson, Ware, Pierce, Brantley, Cook, Lanier, Clinch, Brooks, Lowndes, Echols, Charlton;
12. *Ch. Walter Gibson:* Bulloch, Effingham, Bryan, Chatham, Liberty, Long, McIntosh, Glynn, Camden, Screven.

Vote NO: It's heavy on rail, light on remedies, and taxes food!

Georgia Insight is a conservative publication, financed entirely by its recipients.