



2006 Legislative Agenda

Support the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District

The Metro Atlanta Chamber supports three areas for the Metro North Georgia Water Planning District that will or may require legislative action in the future:

- (1) Include funding for the District in the amount of \$250,000 in the FY07 budget. These funds are used as "matching funds" and are combined with the local government dues that make up approximately two-thirds of the District's budget.
- (2) Oppose efforts to further restrict or ban the use of interbasin transfers as a water management tool in the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District. Although the District plans seek to minimize interbasin transfers, most of the counties in the metropolitan region are located in two or more river basins (some are in as many as four) and these jurisdictions have no option but to move water between basins to serve their residents.
- (3) Incorporate the District's long-term water management plans into the statewide comprehensive water management plan that is under development; and
- (4) Reduce Metro Atlanta's reliance on septic tanks as the region grows.

Support limited changes to eminent domain laws

In response to the U.S Supreme Court's June 2005 decision in *Kelo v. New London*, The Georgia General Assembly is considering changes to state law limiting the permissible uses of eminent domain. While acquiring private land through eminent domain for roads, utilities, courthouses and other traditional public purposes is well settled, the use of eminent domain for economic development is in dispute. The Metro Atlanta Chamber supports limited changes to existing laws where:

1. eminent domain can be used to redevelop property in blighted areas (impacting the health, safety and welfare of a community) where necessary to execute a publicly adopted redevelopment plan; or
2. where necessary to carry out State and federally mandated environmental cleanup.

The Chamber does not support the use of eminent domain simply to promote increased tax revenue.

Oppose expanding the definition of inverse condemnation

Responsible land use planning and environmental regulations are a necessary government function to protect the safety, health and well-being of its citizens and their property. Current law adequately provides property owners with remedies for inadvertent impacts on their properties caused by government action. Expanding the claims private land owners can bring against State or Local Governments for compensation for inverse condemnation is not warranted at this time.

Support higher education

The chamber supports higher education and the ongoing efforts for seamless education that will prepare middle school and high school students to enter either college, tech school or the workforce. The chamber supports funding for:

- University System of Georgia and Department of Technical and Adult Education
- Tuition Equalization Grant program for private colleges and universities
- HOPE Scholarship Program
- Georgia Research Alliance.