



## Michigan Association of Planning

### **Legislative Alert – URGENT – Bill to prohibit local government from adopting and enforcing tree and vegetation removal ordinances introduced**

Senator Casperson introduced SB 1188, and referred the bill to Senate Committee Natural Resources on November 8, 2018. The bill would amend PA 110, the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, and would prohibit local government from adopting and enforcing tree and vegetation removal ordinances. The bill was introduced in response to an incident in a single community, and will affect every municipality in the state, and is unnecessary.

The Michigan Association of Planning strongly OPPOSES this bill and we urge you to reach out to your Senator and House Rep to express opposition.

The bill will be taken up by the Senate Natural Resources Committee, and testimony taken, at their meeting on Tuesday, November 27, 2018 at 8:30 a.m. in the Binsfield Office Building, 201 Townsend Street, Lansing, Michigan. A second hearing is scheduled for the next day, Wednesday November 28, 2018 at 12:30 p.m. and it is fully expected that the bill will move rapidly through the Senate Natural Resources Committee and on to the full Senate.

It is very important to reach out immediately to Senate Natural Resource Committee members AND your own Senator <http://www.senate.michigan.gov/committee/natlresources.html> to express opposition to the bill.

It is even more critical also to take action once it is taken up by the Michigan State House Committee that the bill will be referred to; we will notify you via a MAP legislative alert about that as well.

Local government has long recognized the economic, environmental, ecological, health and quality of life benefits of protecting trees and vegetation, and have adopted local vegetation protection ordinances to that end. You can create your own local story about the benefits of tree and vegetation protection codes in your town, and your opposition to Senate Bill 1188, by using the following talking points.

- Stormwater management and soil erosion and sedimentation control are two major benefits of tree and vegetation protection ordinances. These “green infrastructure” approaches are significantly less expensive than installing pipes, tanks and basins. Contemporary best practices for managing stormwater reduce the cost of development, and have been implemented in communities across the state.
- Trees and vegetation have a cooling effect, particularly important in urban areas where the pervious surface is greater. Populations like seniors, lower income families and our disabled

community members are particularly vulnerable in Michigan's hot – and getting hotter – summers. A robust tree canopy cools the temperatures of rooftops and hard road surfaces, and is particularly valuable where air conditioning is a luxury.

- Michigan has dozens, if not hundreds, of "Tree Cities" in Michigan who promote tree planting and maintenance for many reasons (see the Tree City website for reasons to save trees).
- Trees and vegetation increase property values and enhance the visual aesthetic of a community, contributing to the ability to attract and maintain residents in Michigan communities.
- Tree ordinances provide predictability to developers and investors who understand at the start of the site design process what to expect in communities that have tree and vegetation protection codes. Most developers recognize the value of preserving trees and vegetation as part of creating a high quality development.
- The bill is another attempt to preempt local control and to undermine local government's ability to address matters of local concern locally.
- The composition of the bill is in direct conflict with the good policy development, and does not account for the well-researched, established and recognized benefits of trees and vegetation.

Please contact your senator today.