

Preemption Talking Points

As local leaders, we recognize that housing is one of the most pressing concerns facing our residents. In our communities, we listen carefully, plan thoughtfully for the future, and prioritize local decision-making. We live in the neighborhoods we serve, share in their challenges and opportunities, and are deeply committed to their long-term success.

We stand united in our effort to protect local decision-making and to reject efforts that would preempt local governance in favor of sweeping state mandates. Durable housing solutions require collaboration, flexibility, and trust in the people and institutions closest to the work, not policies that erode local voices.

1. Local Decisions Should Be Made Locally

- The proposed House Bills 5529-5532 and 5581-5589 would strip zoning authority from locally elected officials and centralize those decisions in Lansing, weakening the level of government closest to the people.

2. This Is State Government Overreach

- These bills represent state overreach — replacing community-driven planning with one-size-fits-all mandates that ignore the diversity of Michigan’s cities, villages, and townships.

3. Zoning Shapes Daily Life

- Zoning decisions determine where families live, where businesses grow, and how neighborhoods evolve. These are not abstract policies — they directly affect residents’ quality of life.

4. Preemption Undermines Democratic Accountability

- When zoning authority is taken away from local governments, residents lose meaningful influence over decisions that shape their own communities. That erodes trust in government.

5. Michigan Is Not One-Size-Fits-All

- Michigan includes urban, suburban, and rural communities — each with different infrastructure capacity, housing markets, and growth patterns. Local leaders are best positioned to respond to those differences.

6. Preemption Does Not Automatically Create Housing or Greater Affordability

- Housing supply is driven by financing, workforce availability, material costs, infrastructure capacity, and market conditions. Simply overriding local zoning does not build homes nor improve affordability.

7. Communities Are Already Delivering Results

- Cities and townships like Harper Woods, Canton Township, Lansing, Riverview, Rochester Hills, Orion Township, and many others like them are already approving housing, reforming zoning, and planning for attainable housing — without state mandates.

8. Infrastructure Capacity Matters

- Local zoning aligns development with roads, water and sewer systems, stormwater management, and public safety capacity. Removing local review risks overburdened infrastructure and higher costs for residents.

9. There Is a Better Alternative

- The MI Home Plan offers a collaborative solution — encouraging zoning reform, providing gap funding, and ensuring the availability of more homes while respecting local authority and encouraging partnership rather than preemption.

10. This Is Not Partisan — It's About Governance

- Leaders from different political backgrounds stand united: strong Michigan communities depend on strong local government, and strong local government requires authority, accountability, and respect.