

The Key to Addressing Michigan's Housing Needs: Building Partnerships at Every Level

The Michigan Municipal League celebrates the passage of the federal **21st Century ROAD to Housing Act**. Its strong bipartisan support demonstrates that federal leaders recognize the seriousness of our nation's housing shortage and are committed to advancing solutions built on partnership, local leadership, and shared responsibility.

The **21st Century ROAD to Housing Act** and Michigan's **MI Home Program** (HB 5660 and HB 5661) embrace the same incentive-based approach to expanding housing opportunities. Rather than imposing one-size-fits-all mandates, both prioritize collaboration, local planning, infrastructure readiness, and community-driven housing strategies. Together, they create a consistent policy framework that aligns federal, state, and local efforts to increase housing supply while respecting the unique needs of Michigan communities.

By contrast, the proposed zoning preemption package (HB 5529–5532 and HB 5581–5585) takes a fundamentally different approach. Instead of encouraging partnership and locally developed solutions, it overrides local decision-making, ignores community planning priorities, and limits the role local residents play in shaping the future of their communities.

The chart below illustrates the strong alignment between the **21st Century ROAD to Housing Act** and the **MI Home Program** (shown in blue) and contrasts that partnership-based approach with the state zoning preemption proposal (shown in red).

	21st Century ROAD to Housing Act (Federal)	MI Home Program Proposal (Michigan)	Proposed Preemption of Local Zoning (Michigan)
Overall Legislative Approaches	Uses incentives, grants, and financing reforms to encourage housing production.	Uses state-level incentives and partnerships to support locally driven housing growth.	Uses state mandates and zoning overrides to require local governments to allow denser development.
Philosophy	Encourages voluntary local action rather than imposing broad mandates.	Encourages collaboration with local governments instead of state preemption.	Centralizes land-use authority at the state level and severely limits local discretion.
Use of Incentives	Provides funding, technical assistance, and targeted infrastructure support to support housing growth.	Provides planning support and targeted gap funding for communities adding housing.	Relies completely on statutory requirements and preemption rather than voluntary incentives.
Local Zoning Authority	Respects local zoning authority while encouraging modernization.	Preserves local planning and zoning authority while promoting housing expansion.	Overrides local zoning authority through statewide density and land-use mandates.
Housing Density	Encourages increased housing supply but does not impose statewide density standards.	Aligns housing growth with community master plans, public input, and local conditions.	Mandates statewide density standards and by-right development regardless of local planning priorities.
Infrastructure Support	Pairs housing production with targeted infrastructure funding and financing tools to help communities support growth.	Supports zoning updates that align with infrastructure capacity, public investment needs, and long-term costs necessary to support future housing growth.	Requires additional housing density with no consideration of existing capacity or direct support for the infrastructure needed to accommodate that growth.
Relationship with Local Governments	Federal government acts as a partner, providing incentives and respecting local decision-making.	State government acts as a partner, providing incentives and respecting local decision-making.	State government act as the primary decision maker, not a partner, on local land-use policy.
Concluding Narrative	Bipartisan, supply-oriented housing strategy using incentives over mandates to significantly expand the nation's housing supply.	Collaborative, locally responsive housing strategy emphasizing partnership that will result in over 10,000 homes being built or rehabbed.	Top-down regulatory approach emphasizing uniform statewide standards that can't guarantee the production of more attainable housing.

How We Move Forward

At a time when federal housing policy is emphasizing partnership to increase housing supply, Michigan should adopt a housing strategy that complements those efforts rather than one that creates unnecessary conflict between state and local governments. Supporting the MI Home Program provides an opportunity to strengthen partnerships, align priorities, and leverage resources, resulting in a meaningful impact on Michigan's housing needs.

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