

# COLUMBUS CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT

## 2023 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

### Delayed Items for Work Session Agenda

#### I. **HOUSING AFFORDABILITY:**

The Columbus Consolidated Government is requesting that the local legislative delegation introduce an amendment to said statewide legislation to allow cities and counties to enact localized anti-displacement policies for properties in Qualified Census Tracts (QCTs) and Difficult Development Areas (DDAs) economically depressed zones as defined by general law of the General Assembly. (*Request of Councilor Toyia Tucker*)

#### **Explanation:**

O.C.G.A. Section 44-7-19 prohibits city and county governments from enacting, maintaining, or enforcing “any ordinance or resolution which would regulate in any way the amount of rent to be charged for privately owned, single-family or multiple-unit residential rental property.” Rising rents compound the overall financial insecurity of many households. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines a cost-burdened household as one that spends more than 30 percent of its income on housing costs. The onslaught of pandemic-related job losses, rising health care costs, and increased cost of necessities due to inflation and supply chain issues likely worsened the outlook for many renters. The pain of rising rents and the associated financial insecurity disproportionately affects single parents, individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with multiple or intersecting identities. The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent economic fallout succeeded in shining a harsh light on the ongoing housing crisis.

#### II. **MAYOR/MAYOR PRO TEM COMPENSATION:**

The Columbus Consolidated Government is requesting that the local delegation to the General Assembly introduce a local Act setting the salary of the Mayor of Columbus, Georgia at 70% of the salary of the City Manager; and setting the salary of the Mayor Pro-Tem at 35% of the salary of the Mayor; to be effective in January, 2027; and to repeal any conflicting provisions of the Columbus Charter. (*Request of City Manager Isaiah Hugley*)

#### **Explanation:**

The Consolidated Government Pay Plan has been reviewed and approved by the Columbus Council for public safety and general government employees. the current pay study from Evergreen consultants did not make a specific recommendation for the salary of the Mayor or Mayor Pro-Tem. This Council deems it appropriate to request that the local delegation to the General Assembly introduce a local Act to set the salary of the Mayor of Columbus at 70% of the salary of the City Manager and the salary of the Mayor Pro-Tem at 35% of the Mayor, to be effective in January, 2027.

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**III. DESIGNATION OF MUSCOGEE COUNTY AS A SINGLE COUNTY JUDICIAL CIRCUIT:**

The Columbus Consolidated Government is requesting the local legislative delegation introduce legislation to create a Muscogee Judicial Circuit comprised of judges from Muscogee County Superior Court. (*Request of Councilor Toyia Tucker, Evelyn Mimi Woodson and Bruce Huff*)

**Explanation:**

See attached letter.

**IV. CASINO GAMING REFERENDUM:**

The Columbus Consolidated Government is requesting the legislative delegation introduce or support legislation to authorize a statewide referendum for a constitutional amendment to allow Georgia citizens to vote as to whether casino gaming should be allowed in Georgia for the purpose of Hope Scholarship funding. Further, if any such constitutional amendment is adopted, this Council requests a local referendum be established for approval or rejection of any such casino gaming in Muscogee County. (*Request of Evelyn Mimi Woodson/Carry Over From Previous Years*)

**Explanation:**

To provide Hope Scholarships to college bound students to ensure that a lack of funding does not prevent them from going to college, staying in college and graduating from college.