



**Called Mayor/Council Meeting Agenda
Thursday, July 30, 2026, 9:00 AM
Administration Building, Boardroom (3rd Floor)
300 Henry Ward Way, Gainesville, GA 30501
Mayor or Mayor Pro Tem Presides**

INVOCATION:

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING:

- A. To consider a resolution related to House Bill 1601.

RESOLUTIONS:

- A. Business Resolution 2026-26 2026 Special Election Relating to Question in House Bill 1601, Call, and Information

ADJOURNMENT:

Final: Tuesday, July 28, 2026, 5:42 PM
Revised Final: Wednesday, July 29, 2026, 9:34 AM



CITY OF GAINESVILLE

Mayor/Council Agenda Request

Item Created: July 28, 2026
Date Submitted: July 29, 2026
Final Approval Date: July 29, 2026
Presenter: Abb Hayes, City Attorney
Item of Business: To consider a resolution related to House Bill 1601.
Meeting Date: July 30, 2026

Purpose of Request:

Facts & Issues / History & Background:

Department Recommendation:

Department Director:
Bryan Lackey

If funding is involved, are funds approved within the current budget? No

Amount Requested: **Sources of Funds:**

Finance Comments:

Administrative Comments:

Attachments:
None



CITY OF GAINESVILLE

Mayor/Council Agenda Request

Item Created: July 28, 2026
Date Submitted: July 29, 2026
Final Approval Date: July 29, 2026
Presenter: Abb Hayes, City Attorney
Item of Business: Business Resolution 2026-26 2026 Special Election Relating to Question in House Bill 1601, Call, and Information
Meeting Date: July 30, 2026

Purpose of Request:

The purpose of this request is to authorize the Hall County Board of Elections to place a homestead exemption referendum question related to House Bill 1601 on the November 3, 2026 ballot.

Facts & Issues / History & Background:

The State of Georgia passed House Bill 1601 which provides that the City of Gainesville shall call and conduct an election on November 3, 2026 related to a homestead exemption.

Department Recommendation:

Adopt the resolution.

Department Director:

Bryan Lackey

If funding is involved, are funds approved within the current budget? No

Amount Requested:

Sources of Funds:

Finance Comments:

Administrative Comments:

Attachments:

1. BR-2026-26 Special Election for Homestead Exemption Related to HB 1601 Gainesville
2. HB 1601

RESOLUTION BR-2026-26

2026 SPECIAL ELECTION RELATING TO QUESTION IN HOUSE BILL 1601, CALL, AND INFORMATION

WHEREAS, the State of Georgia passed House Bill 1601 ("the Bill"), which provides that the City of Gainesville shall call and conduct an election on November 3, 2026, related to the homestead exemption referred to in the Bill.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the governing body of the City of Gainesville hereby authorizes the Hall County Elections Director to publish the call for the election on November 3, 2026, for the purpose of submitting the Bill to the electors of the City for approval or rejection, as set forth in more detail in the Bill, and authorizes the following:

1. Voting shall be at each voter's location designated by Hall County for voting in this special election.
2. The Hall County Elections Director shall execute necessary documents and proceed in accordance with this Resolution, the Georgia Election Code, and the Intergovernmental Agreement to Conduct Municipal Elections dated July 8, 2021.
3. The City Clerk and the Hall County Elections Director shall implement a plan that addresses public notices and other matters relevant to this election.
4. The Hall County Elections Board is hereby designated as the Election Superintendent for this special election.
5. The City Clerk, Mayor, City Manager, and City Attorney are hereby authorized to execute all such documents as may be necessary to conduct the election authorized by this Resolution.

Adopted this ____ day of July, 2026.

Zack Thompson, Mayor

This is to certify that I am City Clerk of the City of Gainesville. As such, I keep its official records, including its minutes. In that capacity, my signature below certifies this resolution was adopted as stated and will be recorded in the official minutes.

ATTEST:

Alisa Grayson, City Clerk

House Bill 1601 (AS PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE)

By: Representatives Dubnik of the 29th, Hawkins of the 27th, Cox of the 28th, and McCollum of the 30th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To provide a homestead exemption from City of Gainesville ad valorem taxes for municipal
2 purposes in the amount of \$10,000.00 of the assessed value of the homestead for residents
3 of that city; to provide for definitions; to specify the terms and conditions of the exemption
4 and the procedures relating thereto; to provide for applicability; to provide for compliance
5 with constitutional requirements; to provide for a referendum, effective dates, automatic
6 repeal, mandatory execution of election, and judicial remedies regarding failure to comply;
7 to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

9 **SECTION 1.**

10 (a) As used in this Act, the term:

11 (1) "Ad valorem taxes for municipal purposes" means all ad valorem taxes for municipal
12 purposes levied by, for, or on behalf of the City of Gainesville, including, but not limited
13 to, any ad valorem taxes to pay interest on and to retire municipal bonded indebtedness.

14 (2) "Homestead" means homestead as defined and qualified in Code Section 48-5-40 of
15 the O.C.G.A., as amended.

H. B. 1601

- 1 -

(b) Each resident of the City of Gainesville is granted an exemption on such person's homestead from City of Gainesville ad valorem taxes for municipal purposes in the amount of \$10,000.00 of the assessed value of such homestead. The value of that property in excess of such exempted amount shall remain subject to taxation.

(c) A person shall not receive the homestead exemption granted by subsection (b) of this section unless such person or person's agent files an application with the governing authority of the City of Gainesville, or the designee thereof, giving such information relative to receiving such exemption as will enable the governing authority of the City of Gainesville, or the designee thereof, to make a determination regarding the initial and continuing eligibility of such person for such exemption. The governing authority of the City of Gainesville, or the designee thereof, shall provide application forms for this purpose.

(d) The exemption shall be claimed and returned as provided in Code Section 48-5-50.1 of the O.C.G.A., as amended. The exemption shall be automatically renewed from year to year so long as the person granted the homestead exemption under subsection (b) of this section occupies such residence as a homestead. After a person has filed the proper application as provided in subsection (c) of this section, it shall not be necessary to make application thereafter for any year, and such exemption shall continue to be allowed to such person. It shall be the duty of any person granted the homestead exemption under subsection (b) of this section to notify the governing authority of the City of Gainesville, or the designee thereof, in the event that such person for any reason becomes ineligible for such exemption.

(e) The exemption granted by subsection (b) of this section shall not apply to or affect any state ad valorem taxes, county ad valorem taxes for county purposes, or county or independent school district ad valorem taxes for educational purposes. The homestead exemption granted by subsection (b) of this section shall be in addition to and not in lieu of any other homestead exemption applicable to City of Gainesville ad valorem taxes for municipal purposes.

(f) The exemption granted by subsection (b) of this section shall apply to all taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2027.

SECTION 2.

In accordance with the requirements of Article VII, Section II of the Constitution of the State of Georgia, this Act shall not become law unless it receives the requisite two-thirds' majority vote in both the Senate and the House of Representatives.

SECTION 3.

The municipal election superintendent of the City of Gainesville shall call and conduct an election as provided in this section for the purpose of submitting this Act to the electors of the City of Gainesville for approval or rejection. The municipal election superintendent shall conduct that election on the Tuesday following the first Monday in November, 2026, and shall issue the call and conduct that election as provided by general law. The municipal election superintendent shall cause the date and purpose of the election to be published once a week for two weeks immediately preceding the date thereof in the official organ of Hall County. The ballot shall have written or printed thereon the words:

"() YES Shall the Act be approved which provides a homestead exemption from City of Gainesville ad valorem taxes for municipal purposes in the amount of () NO \$10,000.00 of the assessed value of the homestead for residents of that city?"

All persons desiring to vote for approval of the Act shall vote "Yes," and all persons desiring to vote for rejection of the Act shall vote "No." If more than one-half of the votes cast on such question are for approval of the Act, Section 1 of this Act shall become of full force and effect on January 1, 2027. If the Act is not so approved or if the election is not conducted as provided in this section, Section 1 of this Act shall not become effective, and this Act shall be automatically repealed on the first day of January immediately following that election

67 date. The expense of such election shall be borne by the City of Gainesville. It shall be the
68 municipal election superintendent's duty to certify the result thereof to the Secretary of State.
69 The provisions of this section shall be mandatory upon the municipal election superintendent
70 and are not intended as directory. If the municipal election superintendent fails or refuses
71 to comply with this section, any elector of the City of Gainesville may apply for a writ of
72 mandamus to compel the municipal election superintendent to perform his or her duties
73 under this section. If the court finds that the municipal election superintendent has not
74 complied with this section, the court shall fashion appropriate relief requiring the municipal
75 election superintendent to call and conduct such election on the date required by this section
76 or on the next date authorized for special elections provided for in Code Section 21-2-540
77 of the O.C.G.A.

78 **SECTION 4.**

79 Except as otherwise provided in Section 3 of this Act, this Act shall become effective upon
80 its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law without such approval.

81 **SECTION 5.**

82 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.