

Dear Friends,

We are writing today to alert our members, supporters and friends to an impending State legislative effort, **House Bill 5626**, known as "*Building Up Illinois Development*." The Build Act is a legislative effort to address the shortage of affordable housing in Illinois. While well intentioned, the Build Act adopts a "one size fits all" approach that, if passed, could irreparably damage our community (and many other communities across the State). A summary of the Build Act's major features is included below.

At its core, the Build Act will require municipalities to amend and eliminate local zoning/subdivision codes, building codes and public review processes with the hope of creating more affordable housing.

**Stated simply, the Build Act would in many instances strip Lake Forest (and all communities in Illinois) of the zoning and building codes that have guided the City's development for decades. New six and eight unit rental properties could be built on lots that meet new size requirements (that the State has yet to define) in the City, including properties currently zoned for single family homes, irrespective of any zoning, building, or other codes currently in effect. With respect to historic properties, the draft legislation, while still in flux, appears to substantially limit the instances in which formal preservation review would continue to operate, while also broadly limiting local discretionary review, substantive design review, density limits, setbacks, parking rules and other zoning tools that have historically been used to protect historic properties.**

**In particular, older or historic-looking properties that are not formally designated as local landmarks or formally designated as part of a local historic district would likely be much more vulnerable to Build Act mandates.**

To put this in perspective, a developer could tear down a single-family home in one of our wonderful neighborhoods and build an eight- or six-unit

apartment building irrespective of any current zoning or other land use regulations, and without any input from the community.

Local City review, informed by public comments, on the development and preservation of our community would be substantially limited by the Build Act. Our Lake Forest Building Review Board, the Historic Preservation Commission, and our conservation efforts would all be impacted. Most importantly, the unique visual characteristics that define Lake Forest may be lost.

The Build Act is the most sweeping preemption of local housing regulation in Illinois since home rule was adopted in 1970. While all of us understand and support the need for affordable housing, it should not come at the cost of stripping communities of their ability to adopt zoning and building codes that ultimately strengthen our communities and protect our historic structures. We believe that locally devised solutions that rely on our local governments with thoughtful input from our communities' residents is a far better path to address the issue of affordable housing.

We encourage our elected officials not to rush **House Bill 5626** through the legislative process but rather to engage with local communities and work collaboratively with residents regarding how to best address the issue of affordability in housing for the good of all citizens of Illinois and for the good of the communities in which they reside.

Please join us in our important efforts to continue to advocate and protect the historic visual character of our beloved Lake Forest by reaching out to our Governor and our local State representatives to express your concerns with the current formulation of the Build Act.

Thank you for your attention to this very important matter!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Jim" followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Jennifer M. McGregor,  
Executive Director  
& The Board of Directors of the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation

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Below is contact information for our Governor and local representatives and a summary of the BUILD Act.

**JB Pritzker, Governor**

555 W. Monroe, 16th Floor

Chicago, IL 60661

Phone: 312.814.2121

Message: <https://gov.illinois.gov/contact-us/voice-an-opinion.html>

**Julie Morrison, Illinois State Senator**

400 Lake Cook Road, Suite 100B

Deerfield, IL 60015

Phone: 847. 945.5200

Email: [morrison@senatedem.illinois.gov](mailto:morrison@senatedem.illinois.gov)

**Bob Morgan, Illinois State Representative**

425 Sheridan Road

Highwood, IL 60040

Phone: 847.780.8471

Email: [info@repbobmorgan.com](mailto:info@repbobmorgan.com)

**SUMMARY OF THE BUILD ACT**

The Build Act includes multiple bills in both chambers, with House Bill 5626 as the centerpiece. The legislative goal of the Build Act is to provide for a current shortage of 142,000 units of affordable housing and over the next five years provide an additional 225,000 units of affordable housing.

**Key issues of concern include:**

- **Preemption of Local Zoning Authority:** Municipalities would be stripped of most regulatory control over residential developments with 8 or fewer units, in districts where single-family homes are allowed by right.
- **Middle (multi-family) Housing Expansion:** Requirements for the permitting of duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, cottage clusters, townhomes and other "middle housing" by right, while limiting or removing local standards stricter than those for single-family homes.
- **Accessory Dwelling Unites (ADUs):** Mandates allowing for at least one ADU on every single-family lot.
- **Parking Requirements:** Substantially eliminating minimum local parking rules.
- **Single-Stairway Exemptions:** Allows single stairways as exits in qualifying (not yet defined) multi-story, multi-family units beginning January 1, 2027.
- **Impact Fees:** Replaces local impact fees and ordinances with state-standardized fee formulas and ordinances.
- **Third Party Review:** (SB4063) Replaces local and municipal plan reviews and inspections, with third-party reviewers where demand may warrant.

**Feel free to use the letter below to send to the Governor and our local State Representatives:**

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Re: BUILD Legislation / HB 5626 and Associated Bills

[Date]

Governor, Representative, Senator:

I am writing to respectfully share concerns regarding the proposed BUILD legislation, HB 5626, and related bills. I recognize that Illinois, like communities across the country, faces a serious housing challenge. The need

for more attainable and affordable housing is real and deserves thoughtful, practical, and collaborative solutions.

Because this legislation could significantly affect local planning and decision-making, I respectfully ask that sufficient time be provided for public input, expert review, and careful implementation planning. Communities need the opportunity to help shape housing solutions that expand supply while also respecting infrastructure capacity, public safety, preservation, and the established fabric of our neighborhoods.

As currently drafted, the legislation raises important questions, including the lack of a clear, quantifiable definition of affordability; identified funding and implementation mechanisms; and oversight safeguards. It may also preempt aspects of local zoning authority, require by-right middle housing, mandate ADUs on single-family parcels, limit parking requirements, alter building-code standards, establish a statewide impact-fee formula, and create third-party review and inspection processes.

These are complex issues with long-term consequences. Of particular concern is the potential damage to home rule authority, which could trigger costly litigation, delay implementation, and consume significant time and resources for the State, municipalities, and affected communities. A balanced housing policy should address affordability and supply while allowing municipalities to plan responsibly for transportation, schools, utilities, stormwater, emergency services, preservation, and neighborhood compatibility.

I am asking for your leadership in pausing or slowing advancement of this legislation until housing, finance, infrastructure, transportation, building safety, planning, preservation, home rule, municipal governance, and community stakeholders can work together on a durable and workable approach.

I believe there is a constructive path forward that can expand housing opportunities while protecting the character, safety, and vitality of Illinois communities. Taking the time to plan carefully will help ensure the final policy

is effective, balanced, and worthy of the important goals it seeks to accomplish.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Name

Address