

South Carolina Inclusionary Zoning Act S.346

Due to a critical shortage of affordable housing in many municipalities across South Carolina, families are paying more than 50% of their household income for housing costs. This shortage of housing is also impacting workforce development as companies moving into the state with new jobs are being challenged to find housing affordable to their employees.

In addition, working families and individuals that are employed in professions that are integral to a community's success, such as teachers, police officers and those in the hospitality/tourism industry, are often unable to find housing in the communities where they work.

S346 is enabling legislation that would offer local governments an important tool to address this critical need. S346 would permit "inclusionary zoning" which promotes the development of housing for working families and individuals by offering incentives to developers in exchange for the creation of affordable housing units.

S346 would:

--permit (not force) municipalities to pass local ordinances requiring developers to rent or sell a percentage of their new housing units at below-market prices to families and individuals with qualifying incomes in exchange for incentives to help offset the cost of these units. The incentives offered to developers could take the form of an expedited permitting process, fee reductions, density or height bonuses or other incentives.

S346 would:

--not require municipalities to take any action – this would be a completely voluntary ordinance adopted at the local level and decided by the local community.

- o The average weekly wage of \$788 in South Carolina is still 19% lower than the national average of \$974 while housing costs continue to escalate.
- o A lack of affordable housing means that employees must live further from job centers, which increases traffic along with wear and tear on South Carolina roads and bridges.

If you have further questions about S.346 or would like to support this Bill, please contact Geona Shaw Johnson, Director of the City of Charleston's Department of Housing and Community Development at: johnsong@charleston-sc.gov or (843) 724-3768