

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
1987 SESSION

CHAPTER 204  
SENATE BILL 492

AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE MUNICIPALITIES WITHIN GASTON COUNTY TO  
ENTER INTO AGREEMENTS CONCERNING ANNEXATIONS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. It is the purpose of this act to authorize municipalities to enter into agreements concerning annexation in order to enhance planning by such municipalities as well as residents and property owners in areas adjacent to such municipalities.

Sec. 2. The words defined in this section shall have the meanings indicated when used in this act:

- (1) "Annexation" means any extension of a municipality's corporate limits as authorized by Article 4A of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes, the charter of the municipality, or any local act applicable to the municipality, as such statutory authority exists now or is hereafter amended.
- (2) "Agreement" means any written agreement authorized by this act.
- (3) "Municipality" means any city as defined by G.S. 160A-1.

Sec. 3. Two or more municipalities may enter into agreements with each other in order to designate one or more areas which are not subject to annexation by one or more of the participating municipalities. The agreements shall be of reasonable duration, but not to exceed 30 years, and shall be approved by resolution of the governing board and executed by the mayor of each municipality and spread upon its minutes.

Sec. 4. (a) The agreement shall:

- (1) State the duration of the agreement.
- (2) Describe clearly the area or areas subject to the agreement. The boundaries of such area or areas may be established at such locations as the participating municipalities shall agree. Thereafter, any participating municipality may follow such boundaries in annexing any property, whether or not such boundaries follow roads or natural topographical features.
- (3) Specify one or more participating municipalities which may not annex the area or areas described in the agreement.
- (4) State the effective date of the agreement.
- (5) Require each participating municipality which proposes any annexation to give written notice to the other participating municipality or municipalities of the annexation at least 60 days before

the adoption of any annexation ordinance, provided, however, that the agreement may provide for a waiver of this time period by the notified municipality.

(6) Include any other necessary or proper matter.

(b) The written notice required by subdivision (a)(5) of this section shall describe the area to be annexed by a legible map, clearly and accurately showing the boundaries of the area to be annexed in relation to: the area or areas described pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section, roads, streams and any other prominent geographical features. Such notice shall not be effective for more than 180 days.

Sec. 5. From and after the effective date of the agreement, no participating municipality may consider in any manner the annexation of any area in violation of this act or the agreement. From and after the effective date of the agreement, no participating municipality may annex all or any portion of any area in violation of this act or the agreement.

Sec. 6. Nothing in this act shall be construed to authorize the annexation of any area which is not otherwise subject to annexation under applicable law.

Sec. 7. (a) Each provision of the agreement shall be binding upon the parties thereto. A participating municipality which believes that another participating municipality is violating this act or the agreement may file a petition in the superior court of the county where any of the territory proposed to be annexed is located, seeking review of the action of the municipality alleged to have violated this act or the agreement.

(b) Within five days after the petition is filed with the court, the petitioning municipality shall serve copies of the petition by certified mail, return receipt requested, upon the respondent municipality.

(c) Within 15 days after receipt of the copy of the petition for review, or within such additional time as the court may allow, the respondent municipality shall transmit to the reviewing court:

(1) a transcript of the portions of the municipal journal or minute book in which the procedure for annexation has been set forth;

(2) a copy of any other document received or approved by the respondent municipality's governing board as part of the annexation.

(d) The court shall fix the date for review of the petition so that review shall be expeditious and without unnecessary delays. The review shall be conducted by the court without a jury. The court may hear oral arguments and receive written briefs, and may take evidence intended to show either:

(1) that the provisions of this act were not met; or

(2) that the provisions of the agreement were not met.

(e) Upon a finding that the respondent municipality has not violated this act or the agreement, the court may affirm the action of the respondent municipality without change. Upon a finding that the respondent municipality has violated this act or the agreement, the court may:

(1) Remand to the respondent municipality's governing board any ordinance adopted pursuant to Parts 2 or 3, Article 4A of Chapter

160A of the General Statutes, as the same exists now or is hereafter amended, for amendment of the boundaries, or for such other action as is necessary, to conform to the provisions of this act and the agreement.

- (2) Declare any annexation begun pursuant to any other applicable law to be null and void. If the respondent municipality shall fail to take action in accordance with the court's instructions upon remand under subdivision (e)(1) of this section within three months from receipt of such instructions, the annexation proceeding shall be deemed null and void.

(f) Any participating municipality which is a party to the review proceedings may appeal from the final judgment of the Superior Court under rules of procedure applicable in other civil cases. The appealing party may apply to Superior Court for a stay in its final determination, or a stay of the annexation ordinance, whichever shall be appropriate, pending the outcome of the appeal to the appellate division; provided, that the Superior Court may, with the agreement of the parties, permit annexation to be effective with respect to any part of the area concerning which no appeal is being made and which can be incorporated into the respondent municipality without regard to any part of the area concerning which an appeal is being made.

(g) If part or all of the area annexed under the terms of a challenged annexation ordinance is the subject of an appeal to the Superior Court or appellate division on the effective date of the ordinance, then the ordinance shall be deemed amended to make the effective date with respect to such area the date of the final judgment of the Superior Court or appellate division, whichever is appropriate, or the date the respondent municipality's governing board completes action to make the ordinance conform to the court's instructions in the event of remand.

(h) This act does not authorize any court to stay any annexation proceeding, except as specifically set forth in subsections (f) and (g) of this section.

Sec. 8. This act shall apply only to municipalities located wholly or partly in Gaston County.

Sec. 9. This act is effective upon ratification.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 18th day of May, 1987.