Sent via e-mail

Date: Wednesday, May 5, 2021
To: Senator Bush
From: Ann Moroney, Johnson Research Group, Inc.
Subject: SB 2298

Dear Senator Bush,

I would like to express my opposition to SB2298. I am an urban planner and economic development professional in the Chicago area with more than 25 years of experience working with economic incentives and can attest to the importance of TIF as one of the few project-funded, multi-year financing tools that remains available to communities. This tool was developed in response to declining federal funding for redevelopment projects and changes to the nature of federal funding from long term commitments to annual appropriations. Many redevelopment projects occur over several years and require financial commitments for ten years or more after completion. TIF offers flexibility and control while providing dedicated funding streams tailored to the needs of the community and the redevelopment project. The proposed changes to the TIF Act - shortening the duration of the TIF life from 23 years to 10 - would dramatically affect the utility of the tool. Many of the affordable housing projects we've shepherded through the process could not pay for themselves in that timeframe. And transformative, multi-phased projects like Chicago Housing Authority's Plan Forward projects or Chicago's Pullman Industrial Park development could not succeed under the proposed framework.

The "Synopsis As Introduced" text that is presented on the Illinois General Assembly portal and then communicated to the public is misleading and substantially underrepresents the change to eligibility requirements proposed by bill. If the reference to "Removes or modifies various factors…" more accurately identified that 7 of the 13 factors were being eliminated and an 8th was modified to a shell of its intended utility, municipalities – urban planning professionals – and possibly legislators would be better informed as to the substantive limitations imposed by the proposed legislation. The presence of these factors can be notable individually and impactful together when documented and evaluated as the TIF Act intended, "present to a meaningful extent and reasonably distributed." The wholesale removal of more than half of the eligibility factors infers that these factors, if left unchecked, would not have any impact on the deterioration or decline of an area, which I wholeheartedly disagree.

I am available to discuss any of these points further if you are interested.

Sincerely,

Ann T. Moroney, AICP
President

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