



House of Representatives

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STANDING COMMITTEES:
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
& TOURISM
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
HIGHER EDUCATION
SMALL BUSINESS
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March 31, 2025

Dear Clayton County Elected Officials and Leaders,

In 2012, Delta Air Lines, Inc. (Delta) petitioned the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to enforce a legal interpretation that would redirect the Jet Fuel Tax away from Clayton County. The FAA ruled in Delta's favor, mandating that, effective December 2018, sales tax on jet fuel could only be used for airport operations.

Thanks to former State Representative Valencia Stovall's strong relationship with then-Governor Nathan Deal, the state allocated \$27 million—\$9 million annually for three years—to help Clayton County and its cities recover from this financial loss. Additionally, the Delta Air Lines Foundation provided Clayton County Public Schools (CCPS) with approximately \$18 million over the same period as part of an agreement with the state.

After extensive community meetings and discussions, Clayton County, its cities, and CCPS entrusted former Commission Chairman Jeffrey E. Turner, Dr. Morcease Beasley (former CCPS superintendent), Marshall Mitchell, and myself to lead the effort in reclaiming these lost funds. For the past seven years, we have worked diligently to advocate for Clayton County's interests.

With Chairman Turner stepping down, I proposed documenting our efforts in a book. This book serves as both a record of our work and a resource detailing the fight to restore the sales tax, which would have generated over \$30 million in 2024 for capital projects and property tax relief. It stands as proof of our dedication and the significant strides we have made for Clayton County.

On March 29, 2025, I distributed copies of the book to the Clayton County Commissioner's Office, the CCPS Administration Building, state representatives, and senators. I also mailed copies to the seven mayors serving Clayton County, our Federal Delegation, Marshall Mitchell, and Channon Hanna, our federal lobbyist.

The intent of this book is to inform and equip the community with knowledge about our ongoing battle to reclaim these funds. We undertook this effort to ensure that Clayton County never faces such a challenge again, and we hope this detailed account will help prevent similar financial losses in the future.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss the book's contents and any thoughts you may have at your convenience.

Thank you!



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Sincerely,

Rhonda M. Burnough

State Representative Rhonda M. Burnough
Georgia House District 77

RMB/