

# Exhibit F

# Scenic North Carolina

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## New Bill Attempts To Make "Billboards Forever" In NC

Proposed new legislation in the N.C. General Assembly would force communities to approve the reconstruction of existing billboards along state and federal highways, even in areas where they have decided that billboards should not be allowed. As a result, statewide public interest organizations are calling the proposal the "Billboards Forever" bill.

Organizations opposing the billboard provisions include Scenic North Carolina, the N.C. Sierra Club, and the N.C. Chapter of the American Planning Association.

Senate Bill 112 includes provisions allowing existing billboards to be completely rebuilt into more permanent structures so that they continue to display advertising, even if a community has long ago decided not to allow heavily damaged or dilapidated signs to be reconstructed in order to improve community appearance.

"This legislation says in effect that billboards are forever," said Ben Hitchings, President of the North Carolina Chapter of the American Planning Association. "This is not a battle cry we think will have much appeal with residents across the state." A 2011 poll by Public Policy Polling, for example, found that 71% of North Carolinians think billboards detract from community appearance.

In an age when consumers are accessing more and more information through smart phones and the internet,

allowing billboards to be rebuilt in this way is like preserving a dinosaur in amber.

The bill provisions would also allow expanded tree cutting along highway on- and off-ramps so that billboards are more visible. This raises serious safety concerns, since this is a location where drivers need to be particularly focused on the road. The proposal comes on the heels of 2011 state legislation that allowed billboard companies to increase tree-cutting along public highways by as much as 50% around their signs.

Virtually no other land use is allowed to be completely rebuilt without being subject to local regulations. And such a provision would come at the expense of local control over community appearance. "New structures should have to abide by current community rules," said Molly Diggins, Executive Director of the N.C. Sierra Club. "Communities should continue to be allowed to set appropriate standards for the reconstruction of billboards," she noted.

Over the last few years, the billboard industry has already received major concessions at the public's expense. "Enough is enough," said Reyn Bowman, President of Scenic North Carolina. "Billboard companies should have to abide by the same rules as home builders and all other businesses," he added.

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