

1 SJR58
2 211437-3
3 By Senators Orr, Melson, Price, Williams, Gudger, Waggoner,
4 Barfoot, Chesteen, Elliott, Stutts, Roberts, Sessions,
5 Albritton, Marsh, Jones and Whatley
6 RFD:
7 First Read: 09-MAR-21

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8 OPPOSING PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE STANDARDS FOR
9 DELINEATING METROPOLITAN AND MICROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREAS.
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11 WHEREAS, in August 2019, the United States Office of
12 Management and Budget first released a draft of the "Report
13 and Recommendations from the Metropolitan and Micropolitan
14 Statistical Area Standards Review Committee to the Office of
15 Management and Budget Concerning Changes to the 2010 Standards
16 for Delineating Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical
17 Areas"; and

18 WHEREAS, the recommendations within the report would
19 double the population threshold between a metropolitan
20 statistical area and a micropolitan statistical area, from
21 50,000 to 100,000, based only on the doubling of the national
22 population since the threshold was initially formed, without
23 regard to the changing densities of urban and rural
24 populations or the qualities of the affected population
25 centers themselves; and

26 WHEREAS, that draft report projected that the new
27 standards would be implemented in 2023 if adopted by the

1 Office of Management and Budget; on January 19, 2021, the
2 Office of Management and Budget issued a notice seeking public
3 commentary on the proposed new standards, due within 60 days
4 of that date; and

5 WHEREAS, among those 144 population centers
6 nationwide that would change from metropolitan statistical
7 areas to micropolitan statistical areas under the new
8 standards, seven Alabama population centers would be affected;
9 this disproportionate effect makes it incumbent upon this body
10 to comment on the proposed new standards; and

11 WHEREAS, a change in designation from a metropolitan
12 statistical area to a micropolitan statistical area may
13 negatively impact recruitment of businesses and expansion of
14 jobs within some of Alabama's largest population centers; if
15 the new standards usher in a substantive distinction between
16 metropolitan and micropolitan areas in the context of federal
17 aid, Alabama communities could be further negatively impacted;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, any negative impact suffered by a
20 statistical area due to a change in designation from
21 metropolitan to micropolitan would be undeserved and would
22 have no correlation to the suitability of the area to host
23 businesses; this is evidenced by the Decatur and
24 Auburn-Opelika Metropolitan Statistical Areas, among numerous
25 others; in 2020, Site Selection magazine named the Decatur
26 Metropolitan Statistical Area the second best of its class in
27 the nation for total projects and the fourth best of its class

1 for projects per capita, and the Auburn-Opelika Metropolitan
2 Statistical Area the sixth best Metropolitan Statistical Area
3 of its class in the nation for total projects and the ninth
4 best of its class for projects per capita; under the new
5 standards, both the Decatur and the Auburn-Opelika
6 Metropolitan Statistical Areas would become micropolitan
7 statistical areas, despite outperforming almost all
8 metropolitan statistical areas in terms of suitability for
9 businesses; and

10 WHEREAS, in addition to the Decatur and
11 Auburn-Opelika Metropolitan Statistical Areas, the
12 Metropolitan Statistical Areas of Anniston-Oxford,
13 Daphne-Fairhope-Foley, Dothan, Florence-Muscle Shoals, and
14 Gadsden would all be adversely affected by the report and
15 recommendations of the review committee; now therefore,

16 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
17 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That this body hereby strongly
18 opposes the new standards proposed by the United States Office
19 of Management and Budget, relating to a change in the
20 threshold between metropolitan and micropolitan statistical
21 areas.

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this
23 memorandum be delivered to the Office of the President of the
24 United States and the Director of the United States Office of
25 Management and Budget, so that the strong sentiments of this
26 body on the proposed new standards may be known and may be

1 recorded by the Office of Management and Budget as an official
2 comment on the proposal.