Fiscal Year 2027 Tax Hearing

David Bennett, Chairman, Bulloch County Commissioners

11 AUG 2026

Outline

- TABOR
- Tax Digest Comparison
- HB 581
- Tax Rate Changes

Tax Payer Bill of Rights (TABOR)

- OCGA 48-5-32.1 was passed in 1999
- Protects taxpayers from indirect tax increases caused by inflation AND increases due to new/improved properties
  - If there is an increase in the tax digest, the governing body must adjust (roll back) the millage rate to ensure tax revenue remains the same as the previous year
  - If the governing body does not roll back to make revenue equal the previous year, it must hold three public hearings to allow public input
- TABOR only compares digest value from one year to the next
  - It does not consider any other laws/regulations that could lower the millage rate

Tax Digest Comparison

- FY 2026
- Net Digest
  - $3,842,586,372
- County Millage Rate
  - 11.35

- FY 2027
- Net Digest
  - $4,221,211,313
- Proposed County Millage Rate
  - 11.826
  - This does not include adjustment for FLOST

TABOR is binary. TABOR defines anything other than a full rollback a tax increase.

BUT WAIT,
THERE'S MORE

HB 581

- House Bill 581 provides for a Statewide Floating Homestead Exemption where annual increases in the assessed value of a primary residence are limited to the rate of inflation.
- Local taxing authorities were allowed to opt out of this exemption before March 1, 2025 – **Bulloch County did not opt out of the exemption.**
- In November 2025, the voters approved to levy an additional 1 cent sales tax for the purpose of reducing property taxes – known as (Floating Local Option Sales Tax) FLOST.
- By state law, ALL FLOST revenue must be utilized as a direct offset for local property taxes.
- FLOST collections began January 1, 2026.
- A recent amendment (SB 33) allows jurisdictions that have a FLOST in place to use FLOST proceeds received between January 1 and June 30 to use that money to offset their 2026 property taxes.

TABOR and FLOST

- TABOR (passed in 1999) only considers a rollback of the millage rate
  - No rollback = tax increase
  - Tax hearings

- FLOST provides an offset of property taxes that is NOT considered in TABOR

Millage Rate Calculation

	Adjustments	Millage Rate
Current (2025 Tax Levy)		11.350
Needed to Fund FY27 Budget	0.476	
Rollback for FLOST	-1.566	-1.090
Potential 2026 Tax Levy		10.260

Bulloch County Milage Rates

Fiscal Year	Millage Rate (M&O)
2017	12.340
2018	12.340
2019	12.340
2020	11.833
2021	11.833
2022	11.600
2023	11.350
2024	12.850
2025	11.350
2026	11.350

Proposed FY 2026
Millage Rate is 10.26

FLOST Savings in Bulloch County

$5,870,731
Real Property FLOST SAVINGS

$163
Average Real Property FLOST SAVINGS

$103
Median Real Property FLOST SAVINGS

$69,832
Maximum FLOST SAVINGS

($122)
Average Homestead Tax Decrease

$8,273.43
Average Homestead Value Increase

($187)
Average Non-Homestead Tax Decrease

$5,471.60
Average Non-Homestead Value Increase

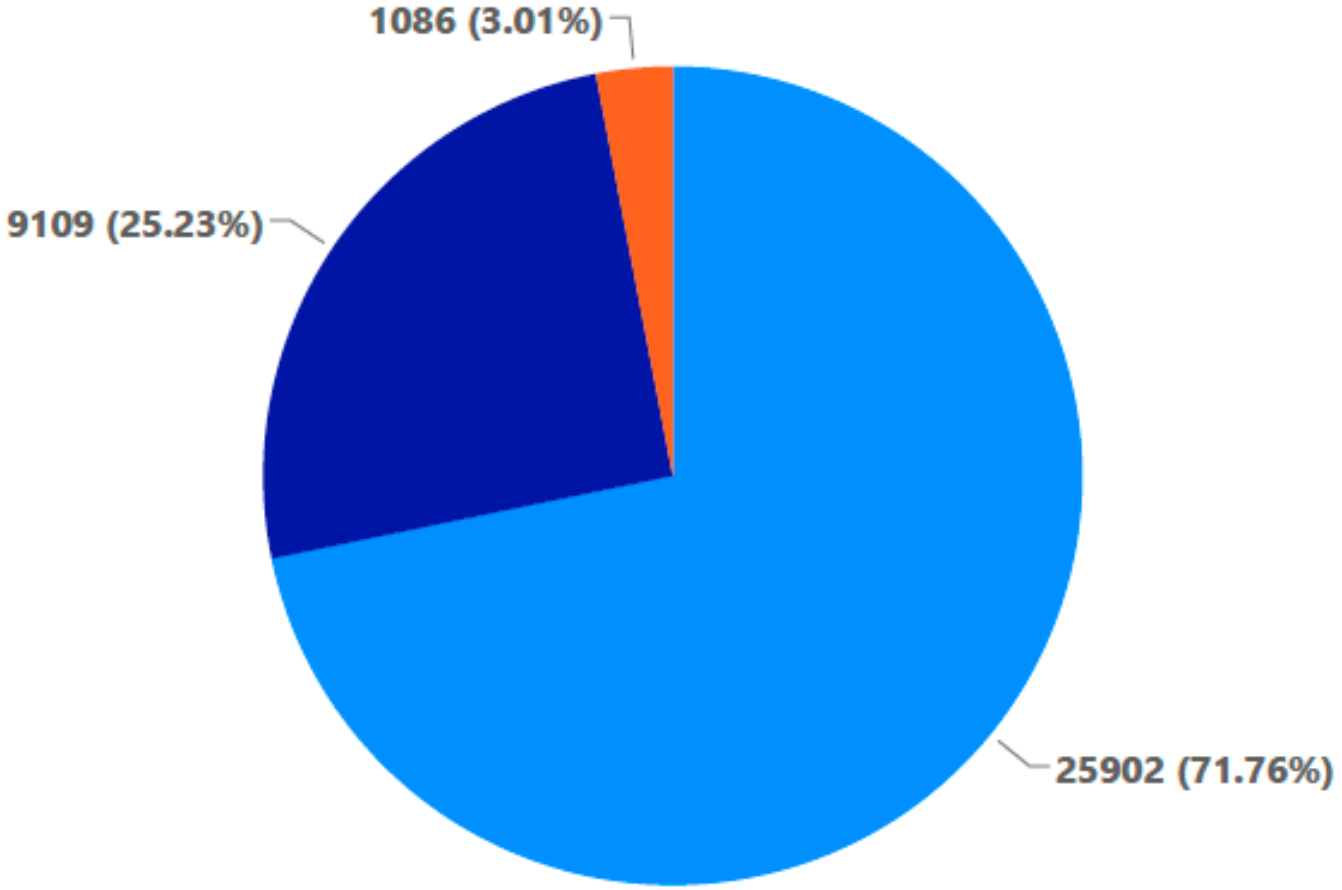
($212)
Average CUVA Tax Decrease

$35,985.23
Average CUVA Value Increase

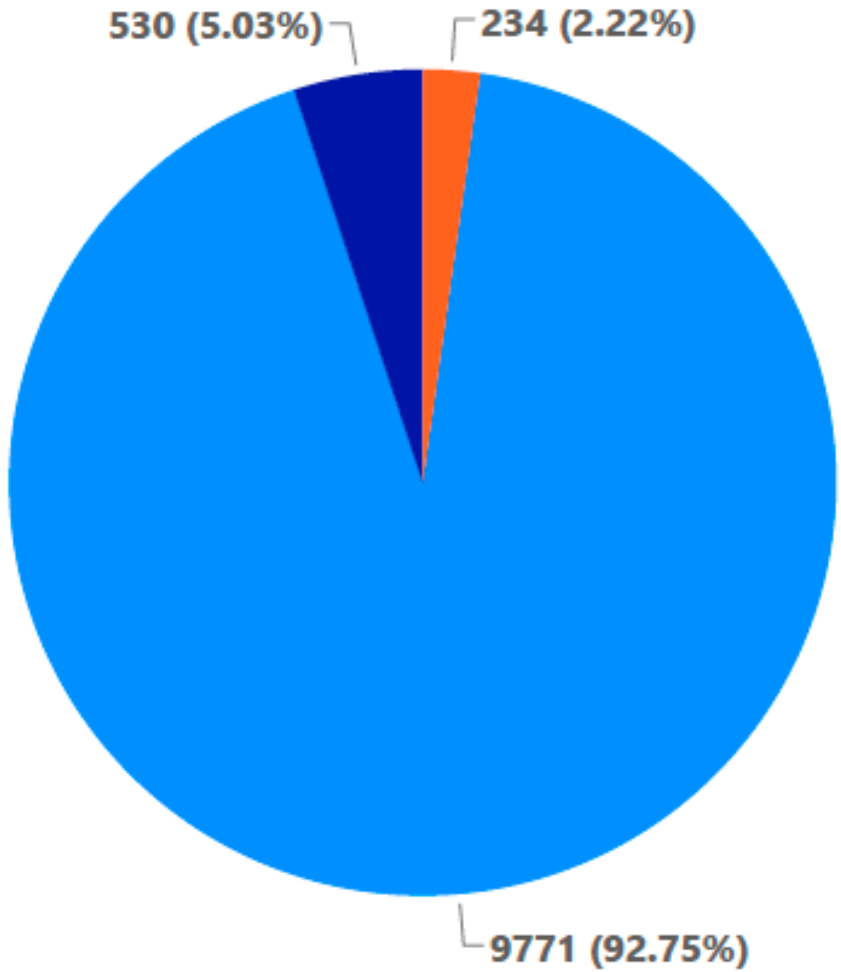
Two Things Can Be True At The Same Time

- The county is NOT executing a millage rate rollback
  - By TABOR definition this is considered a tax increase.
  - TABOR does not take other tax offsets like FLOST into consideration
- Once the FLOST offset is applied, Bulloch County's property tax millage rate is lower than last year
  - FY 2026 rate 11.35
  - FY 2027 rate 10.26

Property Tax Change (All Properties)

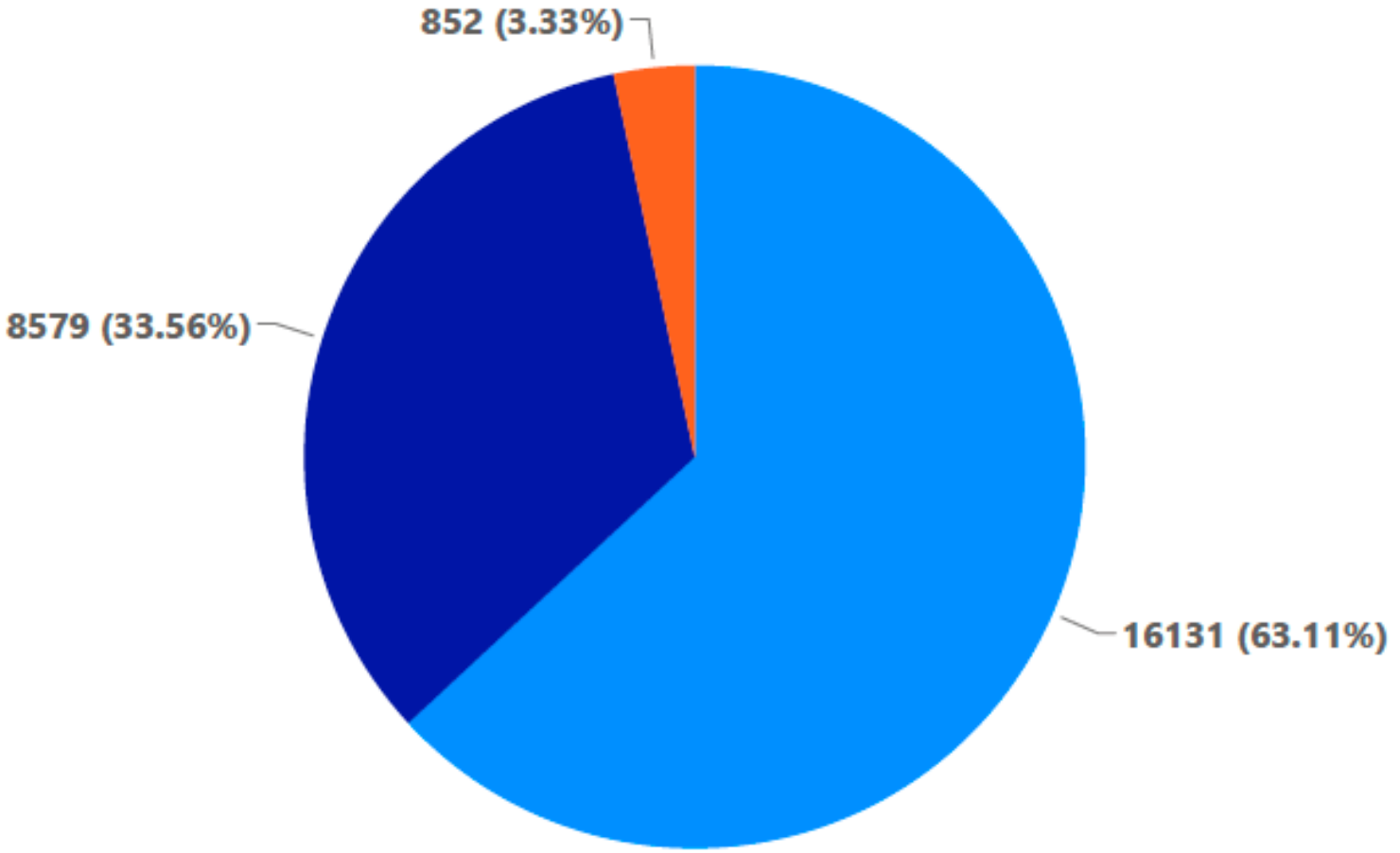


Property Tax Change (Homesteaded Property)

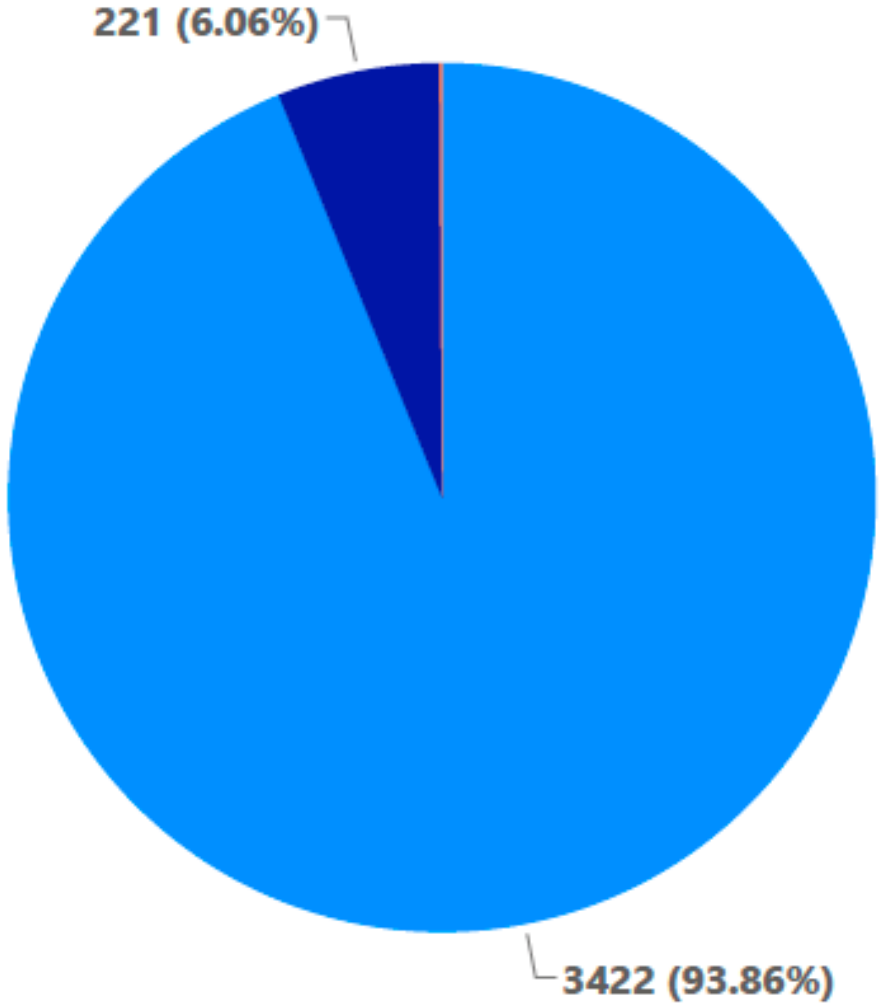


There are approximately 4000 properties in Bulloch County that are eligible for a homestead exemption that are not currently enrolled

Property Tax Change (Non Homesteaded Properties)



Property Tax Change (CUVA)



Summary

- Without FLOST, Bulloch County would experience an 8.17% increase in property taxes.
  - Bulloch County will not execute a full rollback this year
  - TABOR states this is a tax increase

- With the application of FLOST, the millage rate will decrease county wide (11.35 > 10.26).
  - Five months of FLOST collections equated to a $6.6 million offset in property taxes for Bulloch County.