



APRIL 2007

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HIGHWAY BEAUTIFICATION ACT SURVIVES ANOTHER SENATE ASSAULT

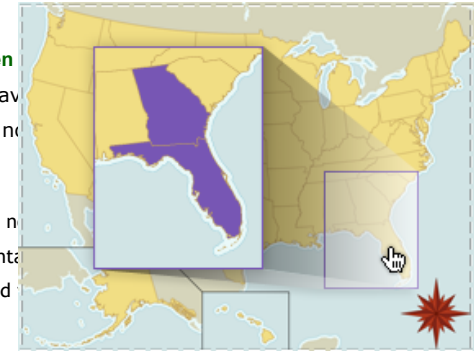
Scenic America is very pleased to announce that the U.S. Senate  has removed from the supplemental appropriation bill a provision that would have violated the principles of the Highway Beautification Act and weakened local authority over nonconforming signs.

As you may know, this provision was slipped into the appropriation bill covertly and with no fanfare. During Senate proceedings, the provision was ruled nongermane by the Senate parliamentarian and was not in order raised by Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn), and as of this writing it has been stripped from the final appropriation bill currently being worked out in Congress.

We would also like to offer our special thanks to every friend of the American landscape who contacted their members of Congress or local officials about this legislation. Scenic America is proud to have played a leadership role in assembling a powerful coalition to oppose this measure. Credit for our success is shared with: the [U.S. Conference of Mayors](#), the [League of Cities](#), the [American Planning Association](#), the [American Society of Landscape Architects](#), the [American Institute of Architects](#), the [Surface Transportation Policy Partnership](#) and the [National Association of Towns and Townships](#).

This was a great victory for American communities and the American landscape, and we applaud the courageous and principled actions of Sen. Alexander for making this possible. [Click here to read \(PDF\)](#) Sen. Alexander's moving remarks on the Senate floor regarding the provision he called "a big wet kiss to the billboard lobby."

We hope that this will now put an end to the billboard industry's persistent efforts to subvert the law and seek special privileges that it has no right to have and does not deserve. Our better judgment, however, tells us to remain ever vigilant.



SCENIC AMERICA'S NEW PUBLICATION TACKLES ELECTRONIC BILLBOARDS

The latest affront to our visual environments is the electronic billboard, also called digital or LED boards. Several hundred of them have already popped up around the country, and they are poised for a speedy roll-out, with predictions that there will be 75,000 electronic billboards by 2010.

In response, Scenic America's newest publication, *'Billboards in the Digital Age,'* explores the effects of these new signs on communities and provides information on ways to combat them. [Click here](#) to download a PDF version of the publication, or [click here](#) to request a copy (or three) be sent your way!

Be sure to regularly check [our new issue area](#) concerning electronic billboards. We'll be updating it often with news, multimedia and data concerning this developing issue.

If you have one of these monstrosities in *your* community, please [send us](#) pictures or video and we will post them on our website. Thanks!

REMINDER: 'PROTECTING PLACE' SYMPOSIUM IN LAKE TAHOE MAY 30-31

Scenic America and Scenic Nevada want to remind you of our plans to present 'Protecting Place: A Scenic Conservation Symposium' in Lake Tahoe, Nevada, May 30-31, 2007. The public is invited to join us for this special event, which will feature an array of distinguished guests speaking on issues of concern to the scenic conservation community.

You'll learn the latest place-based protection strategies, share success stories and hear from leaders in policy,

Alabama cities seek sign regulation...

 [PDF of Billboards in the Digital Age](#)

research and practice on a variety of scenic resource issues.

 [Lake Tahoe in the summer sun](#)

The symposium includes a half-day chartered bus tour of the [Lake Tahoe Eastshore National Scenic Byway](#).

Politics could trash Georgia's unspoiled land...

Calumet City limits billboards...


Improving the view in Virginia...

QUESTIONS/FEEDBACK:

Do you have questions about Scenic America or story suggestions for Scenic Overlook? Send an email to: ashburn@scenic.org.

[Click here for more information](#) about the Scenic Conservation Symposium, including transportation, lodging and registration information.

VETO IN VIRGINIA PROTECTS INTEGRITY OF LOCAL ZONING AUTHORITY

 [Scenic Virginia](#) is happy to announce that Governor Timothy Kaine has vetoed HB 2128 (concerning the relocation and adjustment of nonconforming billboards taken by VDOT for a road project). Scenic Virginia aggressively opposed this billboard industry-sponsored legislation during the 2007 Session.

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Governor Kaine, explaining his veto:


"This legislation would take away local governments' regulatory power over billboards and give billboards a preferred status among other types of property. I am reluctant to strip communities of the power to fairly regulate billboards as they regulate other properties."

Scenic Virginia is very pleased that Governor Kaine acted in this manner and that his explanation acknowledges two important reasons for opposing this legislation: First, that the bill strips local authority, and second, that the bill would force localities to treat one nonconforming business use differently from other business uses.

It's important to note that these are the same fundamental issues at stake in the recent battle in the U.S. Congress, and part of a coordinated industry effort nationwide.

CONTESTS UPDATES FROM SCENIC NEVADA AND SCENIC TENNESSEE

[Scenic Nevada](#) has selected winning photographs in their 2007 Photo Contest, "Beauty or Blight." The purpose of the contest was to create an awareness of the importance of preserving, protecting and enhancing the scenic character of Nevada.

Winners of the overall Grand Prizes in the Scenic "Beauty" category and the Scenic "Blight" category, respectively, were Julie Granata, Reno, NV, and Clayton Sellers, Henderson, NV. To read more about the contest and see  [Jobs Peek in Nevada](#) the winning photographs [click here](#).

Also, [Scenic Tennessee](#) has announced their 16th annual photo contest, and this year the focus is on historic preservation. [Click here](#) for details about entering the contest and to view past years' winners, or [click here](#) to download a PDF brochure about the contest.

Change is inevitable. Ugliness is not.

