



4.27.2018

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## **Tucker, Georgia, Sees Firsthand the Risk of Combustible Buildings, as Floors Pancake During Apartment Fire**

*Blaze occurs while state of Georgia considers bill to restrict local autonomy on stronger building codes*

**Silver Spring, MD** – [Earlier today](#), several residents at a 3-story, wood-framed apartment complex in Tucker, Georgia, were forced to jump from their windows, after a fire broke out just after midnight. A 13-year-old girl, who jumped, was hospitalized with non-life-threatening injuries,

[According to FOX 5 Atlanta](#), officials said 12 units were destroyed, as several floors pancaked on top of one another, collapsing under the weight of water and fire damage.

The fire comes at a time as several cities throughout Georgia, including Tucker, [Sandy Springs](#), [Dunwoody](#) and others, have adopted measures to strengthen their local building codes, but are now facing a challenge from state lawmakers.

Earlier this year, the Georgia House of Representatives and State Senate [sent House Bill 876 to Governor Nathan Deal's desk](#), which would not only rescind the previously passed ordinances, but would prevent other communities from adopting stronger codes that call for limiting the use of combustible materials in certain building elements with the aim of providing increased quality, sustainability, durability and longevity.

“Combustible building materials have no place in larger, multi-residential apartment complexes,” said Kevin Lawlor, spokesperson for Build with Strength, a coalition of the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association consisting of community organizations, fire safety professionals, engineers, architects and industry experts committed to strengthening the nation’s building codes and ensuring greater access to secure housing. “If a fire breaks out in a single unit, the entire structure – and the homes and well-being of countless other residents – is immediately put at risk. The fact that Georgia is actively working to prevent local cities and towns throughout the state from taking strides to prevent such tragedy from befalling their communities is shameful.”

In early March, Build with Strength, stood alongside local leaders – including State Senator John Albers (R-56), Sandy Springs’ Mayor Rusty Paul and Fire Chief Keith Sanders, and P.E. Steve Skalko of Macon – [in a press conference](#), during which the group spoke out in opposition to HB 876.

The desire to strengthen local building codes is popular throughout the state. According to [polling conducted in September 2016](#), Georgia voters are highly supportive of Sandy Springs' ordinance (96% support), and were in favor of their own city passing similar regulations by overwhelming margins (94% support). The poll of 400 registered voters living in Georgia was commissioned by Build with Strength.

“The decision by Georgia’s state lawmakers to move forward with HB 876 was incredibly shortsighted,” continued Lawlor. “It’s one thing to establish a minimum requirement for building codes; it’s something completely different to dictate terms on what should be a local decision, in which communities looking to go above and beyond to construct more resilient buildings are allowed to do so. We’re hopeful Governor Deal takes steps to protect his constituents and vetoes this ill-fated bill.”

Learn more at [www.buildwithstrength.com](http://www.buildwithstrength.com).

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