

About Legislation

House Bill 282 sponsored by Rep. Steven Meeks (R-Screven) seeks to ensure legislative intent is adhered to in the Department of Revenue's (DOR) rulemaking process for the Qualified Timberland Properties (QTP) Program so that forest landowners across the #1 forestry state can reap the full benefits of the program as intended. The QTP program was created by Amendment 3, which was approved by GA voters in 2018, and provides forest landowners with another ad valorem tax enrollment option in addition to CUVA and FLPA that seeks to recognize forest landowners for the benefits their lands provide to all 10 million Georgians.

According to a 2017 Univ. of Georgia study funded by the [Georgia Forestry Foundation](#), around 3.7 million acres of forestland is not enrolled in CUVA or FLPA and is being taxed as rural woodlands at an average of \$15.42/acre. QTP offers an excellent alternative for those landowners, and that's why the changes in HB 282 are important to ensure the program achieves its intended purpose.

Key Provisions to help Landowner Qualify and Enroll

- Eliminating onerous application requirements such as a requirement to have a forest management plan or costly surveys, which the underlying legislation does not require
- Ensuring current use of timberland property considered in valuations of tracts
- Incorporating beneficial language from CUVA/FLPA that makes clear things like right of ways, railroad tracks, and highways do not split an otherwise contiguous tract, and prevent lands from being enrolled in QTP

Background on QTP

- Requires 50 contiguous acres of forest land
- Evidence of forest management for commercial timber production
- No covenant period – landowners choose whether or not to re-enroll their land each year
- Alternative for the 3.7 million acres of forest land not enrolled in CUVA/FLPA
- Establishes a fair and uniform system for assessing timber across all 159 counties

Contact

For questions on this issue, please reach out to the Georgia Forestry Association.

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