

TrueRoll

CASE STUDY

Effingham County's Blueprint for Local Governments in Georgia: Navigating HB-581 Floating Exemption Changes

ABOUT

Georgia recently passed a statewide floating homestead exemption (HB-581), which will change how local governments manage exemptions. The change has raised concerns about how under-resourced local governments will implement the new policies and handle the administrative burden. Luckily, Georgia can look to Effingham County as an example of what to expect.

The county passed a nearly identical local floating exemption over 15 years ago. After years of inefficient manual processes, Effingham implemented TrueRoll to manage its homestead administration proactively.

EFFINGHAM COUNTY'S HOMESTEAD CHALLENGES

Heavy administrative workload: In 2009, Effingham passed the floating homestead exemption (the Carter-Burns Bill). The bill caps homeowners' taxes by an inflationary rate (just like HB-581). Implementing new homestead tax laws required additional work from the already busy tax office. They had a hard time keeping up with all the work.

AT A GLANCE

Challenges

- Heavy administrative workload
- Insufficient technology
- Lost revenue

Results

- Over $361,000 in recovered tax dollars
- 272 ineligible homesteads identified
- Tax equity



Effingham County, GA

31,000+	71,541	XSOFT
Homesteads	Population	CAMA Provider

CHALLENGES CONT.

Insufficient technology: Up-to-date tax rolls were critical to ensure tax accuracy when implementing the new law. However, manual processes and ineffective auditing made it impossible to keep records current.

Lost revenue: Outdated tax rolls meant that ineligible homesteads went unnoticed, sometimes for five or more years. The county was missing out on significant tax revenue to support essential services.

THE SOLUTION

After years of struggling to manage its tax roll, Effingham County partnered with TrueRoll to clean up its records and automatically monitor the homestead eligibility of more than 31,000 parcels.

Proactive Monitoring: By scanning hundreds of sources, from voter records to rental listings, Proactive Monitoring flags potential violations and unclaimed homesteads as they happen. The county can now update eligibility as soon as something changes, so no violation or eligible homeowner slips through the cracks. That accuracy has helped Effingham manage the new tax laws, find residents who didn't know they qualified, and uncover ineligible homesteads.

"We have found a tremendous amount of money," said Effingham Senior Appraiser Jennifer Keyes. "When we go for budget hearings, it looks very good. When I can go to the county manager saying this is the money that I found for you, they get all happy-eyed."

RESULTS

- **Tax accuracy:** The county identified 272 ineligible homesteads to date. Ineligible homesteads are now caught before exemptions are granted.
- **Maximum tax recovery:** The county has recovered more than $361,000 to date.
- **Tax equity:** Actively monitoring homestead eligibility ensures everyone gets the exemption they deserve or pays their required taxes.



"Counties that have never had state or local floating [exemptions]—if you have a lot of homesteads or a lot of applicants—you are probably going to need someone to manage that now. This is where TrueRoll helps out, takes the labor intensity off your employees, and gives them a huge tool to be effective."

Neal Groover
Chief Appraiser
Effingham County, GA

METRICS & OUTCOMES



$361,000+
RECOVERED TO DATE



272 INELIGIBLE
HOMESTEADS IDENTIFIED



TAX EQUITY

Georgia Counties: Looking for an easy way to manage HB-581 changes? Book a demo

