

Last year, a bill favored by pro-development interests, which aimed to reduce the landward jurisdiction of Georgia's Shore Protection Act (SPA) to a mere 25 feet from the sand dunes or, in the absence of dunes, the high tide line, was passed by the Georgia House of Representatives. Thanks to a storm of public protest (which many of you participated in), that bill (HB 271) stalled last March in the Senate's Natural Resources Committee and appeared to be going nowhere during this year's legislative session. [\[See the Brunswick News article "Shore Protection Bill Kaput for 2018."\]](#)

Now, a group of coastal legislators, including State Representative Don Hogan, whose district includes Jekyll Island, apparently intend to move the bill forward. Not yet known is whether they plan to amend HB 271 or simply push for a vote on the bill in its current form.

Given the impact of Hurricane Irma on Georgia's shoreline, especially Jekyll Island, one would hope that if the bill moves forward it would be amended to provide additional, not less, protection for our fragile coast. Clearly, the long-term interests of Jekyll Island would be jeopardized by legislation that would facilitate building close to the beach on previously undeveloped oceanfront land, such as the area shown below, which was coveted by developer Linger Longer Communities just a decade ago.



If HB 271 is resurrected, IPJI will do all it can to rally public support to ensure that shoreline protection is not weakened by this bill. In addition, we will be urging state lawmakers to form a study committee, as recently proposed by the Center for a Sustainable Coast, tasked with providing fact-based recommendations on how best to deal with the growing natural threat to Georgia's shoreline.

IPJI will provide details as they emerge regarding this important issue for Jekyll Island State Park.