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Buy the land while it's here

The North Carolina we used to know is disappearing under buildings and pavement. If we want to save pieces of our natural landscape and historic places, we'd better act fast. The General Assembly is being asked to offer real help to conservation and preservation. It's being asked to let voters decide in November whether they'd like to spend \$1 billion over five years to buy land, buildings, farms and other pieces of our state's heritage and identity. The money would go to existing, proven organizations such as the N.C. Coastal Land Trust and the Nature Conservancy, and to local governments across the state. It would be up to them to make the case for a particular project.

Not many Honorables are willing to say they're against this, but Democratic Senate leaders, who act as if they were elected thanks to Newt Gingrich or possibly Herbert Hoover, apparently prefer to spend everything the state can borrow on the university system, prisons and state buildings.

It goes without saying that those are important needs. It also goes without saying that with 100,000 acres of natural North Carolina being destroyed every year, it's time to act. We can reconstruct public buildings anytime. We can't reconstruct a forest that's been replaced by a shopping center.
