



## ***Press Release***

**For Immediate Release — June 18, 2020**

### **Pittard Receives Distinguished Northeast Georgian Award**

The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission (NEGRC) at its scheduled June Council meeting awarded Billy Pittard the “Robert L. and Betty Williford Distinguished Northeast Georgian Award.” The award is presented annually to an individual who supports regional cooperation and contributed to the advancement and quality-of-life of the region.

The award is named after the Willifords who themselves were strong advocates and supporters of the NEGRC and state and regional partnerships. They lived in Elberton, Georgia where Mr. Williford was a newspaper publisher and influential in the development of the Richard B. Russell Dam. Mrs. Williford, a graduate of Vanderbilt University and the University of Georgia, devoted most of her life to literacy and as an educator.

This year’s recipient is the current Chairman of the Oglethorpe County Board of Commissioners, Chairman of the NEGRC Council, and former president of the Association of County Commissions of Georgia. Chairman Pittard was elected to public office in 2008 and has served two consecutive terms as Chairman. During his terms, he is noted for leading efforts to partner with adjacent county governments to offer cost-savings in needed road construction and resurfacing projects. His 20 years of work experience in the private sector contributed to his emphasis on fiscal policies and cost-savings measures.

The award was made on behalf of the NEGRC Council and presented by its NEGRC Award’s Committee Chairperson, Amrey Harden of Oconee County. In presenting the award, Harden said, *Chairman Pittard has done so much for not only his home County of Oglethorpe but for the entire State of Georgia and the Northeast Georgia Region. He is very deserving of this award. Our thanks to him for all that he has done over his many years of service.*

The NEGRC is a public agency established by the Georgia Planning Act (O.C.G.A. 50-8-32) to assist local governments with regional efforts. The NEGRC is one of twelve state-wide Commissions that provides assistance to its 54-member local governments related to land use planning, economic development, transportation planning, workforce development, and aging services. It is overseen by its current Executive Director, Burke Walker, and governed a Council comprising forty elected officials, private-sector representatives, and state appointees. For information about the NEGRC and its services, visit: [www.negrc.org](http://www.negrc.org).

NEGRC Chairperson Pittard's term will conclude at the end of the year after he leaves public office. Bill Palmer of Elbert County will succeed Pittard beginning on January 1, 2021.



*Billy Pittard [left] pictured with Burke Walker, NEGRC Executive Director, receiving the "2020 Distinguished Northeast Georgian Award."*