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Home builders tout industry's impact

Economist for group says new homes bring jobs, tax revenue to county

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A national economist armed local homebuilders with information he hopes they'll use to encourage governments not to impose fees or add burdens on their industry.

On Friday, Elliot Eisenberg, senior economist for the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), equipped members of the local home builders group with results of a new economic impact study by the group on home building in Greenville County.

The study reveals the economic impact of the industry in its construction, ripple effect and occupancy phases. The impact of the three phases is added up and compared to the cost providing services to support new housing units, including education, fire and police protection, utilities, and recreation.

The results show that home building is more than paying its own way and should put to rest the notion that existing home owners are subsidizing new home construction in Greenville, Eisenberg said.

The estimated one-year metro area impact of building 1,852 single-family homes in Greenville County include $308.8 million in local incomes, $51.2 million in taxes and other revenue for local governments, and 5,388 local jobs, the study said.

Even in the current economy, home building is the county's third largest employer, behind the Greenville Hospital System and Greenville County Schools, Eisenberg said.

And in a good year, no the best, it is the county' top employer, he said

Housing is an unambig uous boon to the econo my, Eisenberg said.

The federal goverr ment thinks housing is im portant enough to give a $8,000 tax credit to hel stimulate construction purchasing and hom building and all the goo things that happen in th economy, he said.