



AS WE SEE IT

It is difficult to imagine anything more damaging to the charm of our city than unrestricted short-term rentals. The argument for doing so as presented by the sponsors of SB 1400, the House companion bill, 773, and other similar bills are based on multiple false premises.

The bills argue that no city should be permitted to restrict property rights by its zoning, most particularly the right to rent your home for transient use. There are three large holes in this argument:

1. The property rights being protected in these bills are only for those who want to rent their homes to transient renters. The property rights of those who do not want to live next door to a transient renter's home are being violated. Citizens have a commitment from their city that zoning laws will protect them from living next door to a transient rental. Indeed, the price of their property was based on that neighborhood standard.
2. People living in incorporated cities do not have, nor can they have, unlimited use of their properties. A residential home owner at the time of purchase or inheritance of a property enters into an agreement with the city that, in return for city services and amenities, the homeowner will abide by the city's zoning laws, land use regulations and multiple other requirements.

Home owners are willing to enter into that contract not only for services but also for protection against egregious encroachment by neighbors: a neighbor operating a dog kennel for example or a neighbor renting his or her home to vacationers. The latter brings to the property multiple life-style differences from those of permanent residents.

3. Most horrific of all, these bills deprive citizens of their right to Home Rule. Short Term Rentals are just one example of the attempt by the State of Florida to deprive citizens of their right to govern their own city. Other Home Rule denial bills include banning the right of cities to protect trees and prohibiting drivers from backing in to parking spaces in public garages. At least seven other anti-Home Rule bills have been introduced. We, the citizens of the state of Florida, have already been deprived of directing the destiny of the cities in which we live by prior legislation such as that limiting the language in our City Charters passed in 2011.

We urge you to email or write to our area's State Senators and Representatives at your first opportunity protesting all bills that would deprive our city of Home Rule and most especially those pertaining to short-term rentals. Contact information is provided as is a letter that you can use or modify to state, in your own words, your objections to all short-term rental bills as well as all bills depriving us of the Home Rule to which we are entitled.

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Suggested letter to area Senators and Representatives:

Dear _____,

As a voter in your district, I request that you vote against SB 1400 and all bills that would take away the zoning rights of a city for short term rentals.

My reason for opposing all such bills is two-fold: (1) I do not wish to have transient rentals in my neighborhood as transient renters/vacationers have a lifestyle that is disruptive for permanent residents (2) I strongly object to our State Government's further weakening Home Rule, the right of citizens to govern their cities as they choose.

The property rights argument for these bills is totally deceptive as the bills address the property rights only of home owners who wish to rent their homes to transients. The bills are in fact a violation of my right to have municipal zoning laws that are protective of my property, quality of life and financial investment.

It is my expectation that you will vote against all bills that would deprive cities of the right to create and enforce short-term rental zoning in their municipalities.

Sincerely, _____

Contact information for Florida State Representatives

State Senators:

District 14

Next Election: 2018

DOROTHY HUKILL (Republican)

406 Senate Office Building, 404 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399
(850) 487-5014

District Office:

209 Dunlawton Avenue, Unit 17, Port Orange, FL 32127
(386) 304-7630 Fax: (888) 263-3818

District 9

Next Election: 2020

DAVID SIMMONS (Republican)

408 Senate Office Building, 404 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399
(850) 487-5009

District Office:

220 Crown Oak Centre Drive, Longwood, FL 32750
(407) 262-7578

You can communicate via email with your Florida State Senators by using the email link provided on the left menu of the senator's page at: <https://www.flsenate.gov/Senators>

State Representatives:

District 24

Next Election: 2018

PAUL RENNER (Republican)

1101 The Capitol, 402 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399
(850) 717-5024

District Office:

4877 Palm Coast Parkway NW, Suite 1, Palm Coast, FL 32137
(386) 446-7644

District 25

Next Election: 2018

TOM LEEK (Republican)

1301 The Capitol, 402 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399
(850) 717-5025

District Office:

149 South Ridgewood Avenue, Daytona Beach, FL 32114
(386) 238-4865

District 26

Next Election: 2018

PATRICK HENRY (Democrat)

1402 The Capitol, 402 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399
(850) 717-5026

District Office:

101 South Palmetto Avenue, Suite 3, Daytona Beach, FL 32114
(386) 238-4650

District 27

Next Election: 2018

DAVID SANTIAGO (Republican)

406 House Office Building, 402 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399
(850) 717-5027

District Office:

849 Deltona Boulevard, Deltona, FL 32725
(386) 575-0387

Find your State Representative on this site:

<https://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Representatives/representatives.aspx> and, once found, use the provided email link on the left menu to send him or her an email.

Effective Communication With Your Representative

As a Floridian, one of your greatest responsibilities is to help elect the representatives who represent you and the state's more than 14 million other residents. But your role in the democratic process of government does not end at the polls. By sharing your opinions and ideas with your representatives and senators in Tallahassee, you help them decide what to do about the issues and pending legislation that affect us all. They value your suggestions and encourage you to express them.

Your representatives receive a huge amount of phone calls and mail from their constituents. Unfortunately, their full agendas limit their ability to personally read and respond to it all. How then, can you be sure your voice is heard? Here are some tips to help you get the most impact out of your communications with your representatives in Tallahassee.

General Tips

- ▶ Know who your representatives are and how to contact them. If you don't know who represents you, you can find out by using the online guide. Your representatives' web pages will give you their mailing addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses.
- ▶ Make sure you understand the legislative process. Even the most basic understanding of the process will help you effectively express your ideas.
- ▶ Contact your representative about a particular issue before the Legislature takes action on it. Most matters coming before the Legislature are well publicized before session.
- ▶ Use a variety of communication methods. You might choose to telephone, write, e-mail, fax, or visit your representative. You might also choose to give testimony at public hearings held by the Legislature. (To give testimony, you would need to contact the appropriate committee secretary before the hearing to sign up.)
- ▶ Tell your representative what effect you think a particular bill, if it becomes law, will have on you, your children, business, or community. Be concise, but specific.
- ▶ Be polite, even if you disagree strongly with the representative you are addressing. Lawmakers cannot please everyone. Your communication will be more effective if you are reasonable in your approach.
- ▶ Suggest a course of action and offer assistance. Don't make promises or threats.

Writing Effective Letters

Address letters to Members of the House of Representatives as follows:

- ▶ The Honorable John Doe
Florida House of Representatives
The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300.
- ▶ Address letters to senators this way:
Senator Jane Doe
The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100.
- ▶ Be absolutely certain you spell your representative's name correctly and use the correct address. If you don't, you could lose your audience.
- ▶ Type or print legibly. Sign your name neatly and give your address correctly so they can respond to your letter.
- ▶ Keep letters, e-mail, and faxes brief. Never write more than one page. Concise written correspondence is more likely to grab and keep the reader's attention.

- ▶ Identify your issue or opinion at the beginning of the letter, don't bury your main point under trivial text.
- ▶ Cover only one issue per letter. If you have another issue to address, write another letter. Back up your opinions with supporting facts. Your letter should inform the reader.
- ▶ Avoid abbreviations or acronyms, and don't use technical jargon. Rather than impressing your reader, such terms will only frustrate him or her.
- ▶ Don't send the same letter to more than one representative. Personalized letters have more impact.

Calling or Visiting Your Representative

- ▶ Plan your call or visit carefully. Keep to the point and discuss only one issue. Organize your thoughts ahead of time and make notes to help you stay on track.
- ▶ When planning to visit your representative, make an appointment. Don't just drop by your representative's office and expect him or her to drop everything to see you. Call or write for an appointment as soon as you know when you are going to be at the Capitol.
- ▶ Prepare a one-page fact sheet concerning your issue to give to your representative. This will help him or her better retain what you present.