



City of Indian Rocks Beach

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January 16, 2024

hutson.travis.web@flsenate.gov

Senator Travis Hutson
416 Senate Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100

Re: Opposition to Statutory Preemption of Short-Term Vacation Rental Regulation/SB 280 Fiscal Policy Committee

Dear Senator Hutson:

The City of Indian Rocks Beach appreciates your service to the State of Florida and its diverse constituencies. This letter is intended to bring your attention to a particular issue of concern in our barrier-island community in Pinellas County: the local regulation of short-term vacation rentals.

Since the Legislature's enactments in 2011 and 2014 preempting the breadth of municipal regulations directed to short term rentals, our community has witnessed its residential districts become fractured by pockets of corporate rental operations. The impact of this transition is even more poignant in beach communities like ours, where there is not sufficient space for suburban sprawl. Traditionally, commercial districts have been separated from residential districts by Euclidean zoning practices. Instead, once tranquil neighborhoods have become extensions of our community's commercial tourist district.

In the current legislative session, Senator Nick DiCeglie has filed Senator Bill 280, which proposes yet more explicit preemptions and attendant limitations upon our local stewardship and regulation of our community. There are many problems with the proposed statute, including only allowing a local jurisdiction fifteen (15) days to review and approve a registration application. Furthermore, the proposed statute imposes a \$150.00 limit on registration. While the City agrees that registration fees should correlate with the costs of administration, these arbitrary limitations substantially impede the ability of local jurisdictions to responsibly fund and manage short-term rental registration programs. **The bill does not provide any authority that local government already has. The actual effect of this bill would be to remove home rule authority already possessed by local government.**

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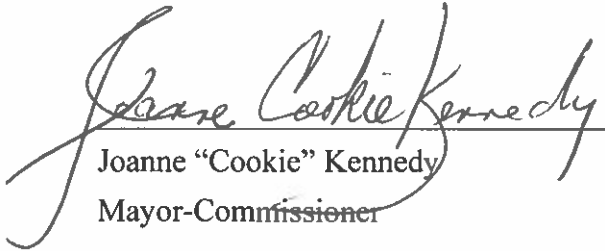
While not a full accounting of all the ways this proposed legislation hampers local governance, these provisions are representative of the added hurdles placed on local communities while we attempt to adapt to a changing landscape and respond to the vocalized concerns of our local constituents. These regulations compound the pressures placed on local jurisdictions, like ours, that are forced to regulate inherently dissimilar uses as though they are uniform. This is an unwelcome intrusion on our city's home rule powers.

As a popular travel destination, the City of Indian Rocks Beach is aware that tourism is a driving force in our local economy. This is especially true as our property owners adapt to find new sources of income in a transitioning economy. However, our desirable geography and unique resources should not be wielded as a sword to justify the erosion of our home rule powers memorialized in Florida's Constitution and statutes.

The City of Indian Rocks Beach urges you to not support Senate Bill 280.

Respectfully submitted,

THE CITY COMMISSION OF
THE CITY OF INDIAN ROCKS BEACH



Joanne "Cookie" Kennedy
Mayor-Commissioner

cc IRB City Commission
Randy Mora