



MICHAEL UDINE, MAYOR, COMMISSIONER, DISTRICT 3

115 S. Andrews Avenue, Room 411 • Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33301 • 954-357-7003 • FAX 954-357-7360

March 28, 2022

The Honorable Ron DeSantis
Governor, State of Florida
The Capitol
400 S. Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

RE: Veto SB 620 – Local Business Protection Act

Dear Governor DeSantis:

We write to you to respectfully request that you withhold your approval and veto SB 620 – Local Business Protection Act. SB 620 creates a new right granted only to businesses that provides for taxpayer-funded lawsuits. The bill, presented as pro-business legislation, will expose local taxpayers to untold millions of dollars in damages, while prohibiting local communities from protecting their quality of life.

Florida already preempts local governments from passing ordinances inconsistent with state or federal law, or that are unreasonable or arbitrary. Currently, anyone who is negatively impacted by a local ordinance may initiate a cause of civil action against a local government. SB 620 would serve as an inducement and accelerator for these civil actions, which would lead to a detrimental increase in litigiousness and egregious fiscal harm to local government.

[Florida TaxWatch](#), the business-backed research organization, estimates this legislation would “lead to a number of financially motivated and malicious lawsuits, costing local governments over \$900 million annually,” as local governments would be forced to increase taxes or reduce services to cover legal fees. SB 620 rewards bad actors at the expense of hard-working Floridians, many of whom are struggling due to surging inflation, fuel prices, and costs of housing. In South Florida, landlords are raising rents by as much as 40% percent, while wages have only increased about 6%, according to new statistics from the U.S. Bureau of Labor. Additionally, in Broward County alone, the median home price has increased 20 percent in the past 12 months.

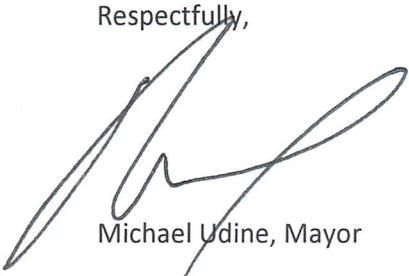
Broward County values and respects its relationship with the business community including our sustained partnership in the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance as we work together to attract, create, expand, and retain high-wage jobs and capital investment. SB 620 will undoubtedly stifle competition as emerging (even disruptive) businesses and technology enter the market. Local governments will be handcuffed in embracing new business models due to the competitive disadvantage to that of businesses in existence for more than 3 years.

Furthermore, SB 620 states that an ordinance, or even a voter-initiated charter amendment, that “has or will cause” a reduction of business profit would be subject to civil action. The legislation does not make it clear the alleged business damage or loss must be directly caused by or the direct result of the ordinance in question, nor is the calculation of damages limited to those damages that are directly caused by the ordinance. This places taxpayers on the hook for a collection of speculative damages that cannot be connected directly to the ordinance.

To protect the taxpayers of Broward County and the State of Florida, we urge you to please withhold approval and veto SB 620 – Local Business Protection Act.

For further information, please contact Marty Cassini, Intergovernmental Affairs/Boards Section Manager, at mcassini@broward.org.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Udine', written over a thin horizontal line.

Michael Udine, Mayor

- CC: Members of the Broward County Board of County Commissioners
Monica Cepero, County Administrator
James Uthmeier, Chief of Staff, Executive Office of the Governor
Chris Spencer, Director, Office of Policy & Budget, Executive Office of the Governor
Stephanie Kopelousos, Director, Legislative Affairs, Executive Office of the Governor