



Charlotte County Government

"To exceed expectations in the delivery of public services."

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April 8, 2022

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

Dear Governor DeSantis,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners and the citizens of Charlotte County regarding CS/SB 620 - The Local Business Protection Act. We respectfully request that you withhold your approval and veto this bill.

CS/SB 620 represents an unprecedented attack on local government legislating and elector approved home rule charter provisions. CS/SB 620 will severely curtail the right of ordinary citizens to obtain solutions to local issues from their locally elected officials, even reasonable actions, for fear of claims and lawsuits. Furthermore, the provisions of CS/SB 620 related to the recovery of damages are arbitrary and will create inequities among business entities within local government jurisdictions.

This legislation will likely result in more litigation to resolve not only business damage disputes, but also attorney fees and costs related disputes even when a business and local government settle on business damages. The most egregious of these is the fact that a business is not even required to have raised any issue with the proposed ordinance to the local government before its enactment or placement on the agenda prior to submitting a claim for business damages. If a County Commission is made aware of a business' concerns with a proposed ordinance prior to adoption, at least the Commission is given the opportunity to modify or deny a proposed ordinance before facing a lawsuit for damages.

County government in Florida works for all Floridians. Florida's citizens place their trust in local government to maintain safe and secure communities, clean up and prevent environmental risks, assure quality infrastructure, protect Florida's natural resources and overall craft livable communities. CS/SB 620 erodes the authority of the county by shifting oversight of government actions to a few select business entities and to the Judicial Branch. This shift of county authority to the court system for certain plaintiffs creates "winners and losers" and impedes the ability of local officials to effectively plan and regulate vital government functions for all citizens.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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We respectfully and unanimously request that you consider the adverse impacts to Florida's taxpayers and to the local governments that serve them and veto this unfair bill.

Thank you for your many personal visits to our area that have been a symbol of local and state partnership in responding to disasters here in Southwest Florida and across the state. We truly appreciate your presence here for hurricane mitigation, tornado response, epidemic management and many other public services. If I can ever be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact my office at (941) 743-1300.

Sincerely,



Christopher G. Constance, M.D.

Vice Chairman

Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners

CC/jms

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