



## CITY OF WINTER PARK

401 South Park Avenue

Winter Park, Florida

32789-4386

## OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

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February 16, 2018

Dear Winter Park resident,

I am writing to you today about matters important to the future of the quality of life in our great city. There are several proposed House Bills (HB) and Senate Bills (SB) before the State Legislature that would preempt the **Home Rule** authority of your local elected officials and apply one-size-fits-all statewide rules that may or may not be in your best interest.

The Home Rule language in Florida comes from the 1968 Florida Constitution revision that was adopted by the people. It states in Article VIII, Section 2(b):

*"Municipalities shall have governmental, corporate and proprietary powers to enable them to conduct municipal government, perform municipal functions and render municipal services, and may exercise power for municipal purposes except as otherwise provided by law."*

Home Rule gives each community the ability to decide through their local elected officials what is important for their community, which is one of the main reasons cities exist. A few of the bills that are most egregious are as follows:

### **Short-term Rentals:** *HB 773 (Representative La Rosa)*

Prohibits cities from establishing ordinances specific to short-term vacation rentals. With the massive growth of the vacation rental industry through on-line sites like VRBO and Airbnb, residents are being impacted by mini-hotels operating in their neighborhood. Problems including noise, inadequate parking and strangers in the neighborhood are affecting permanent residents' quality of life. This bill would preempt the city's ability to regulate these type of short-term rentals.

### **Community Redevelopment Agencies (CRA):** *HB 17 (Representative Raburn) and SB 432 (Senator Lee)*

Allows a CRA to be phased out if not reauthorized by a super majority vote of the body that created the CRA. Our CRA was created in the mid 90s and has been the catalyst for the transformation of the Hannibal Square commercial area, Park Avenue streetscape, Orange Avenue streetscape, Morse Boulevard streetscape, construction of the Winter Park Community Center, numerous affordable housing projects, after school programs, housing rehab programs and various other community improvements. These projects and programs would not have been feasible without the CRA.

### **Tree Trimming:** *HB 521 (Representative Edwards) and SB 574 (Senator Steube)*

This bill began as a preemption of the city's ability to regulate the planting, trimming or removal of trees. It has been modified several times but in its current form, this bill would still impair the city's ability to regulate trees near power lines. It would also shift the responsibility for electric utility storm repair costs, even those outside our electric service area, from other electric providers to the city to pay, in certain circumstances.

The Florida League of Cities and Florida League of Mayors are also opposed to these House and Senate bills.

**CALL TO ACTION!**

I urge you to contact your Senators and Representatives and implore them to vote against these bills, as well as any bill that preempts local government's ability to create and maintain regulations that support the community standards that protect the charm and character of our beloved City of Winter Park.

Please contact our following Senator and Representatives:

**Senator Linda Stewart**, District 13  
[stewart.linda.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:stewart.linda.web@flsenate.gov)  
407-893-2422

**Representative Mike Miller**, District 47  
[mike.miller@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:mike.miller@myfloridahouse.gov)  
407-245-0588

**Representative Robert "Bob" Cortes**, District 30  
[bob.cortes@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:bob.cortes@myfloridahouse.gov)  
407-262-7420

Here is where you can find a listing of all Florida's senators and representatives:

**Florida Senate** [flsenate.gov/Senators/](http://flsenate.gov/Senators/)

**Florida House of Representatives** [flhouse.gov/Sections/Representatives/representatives.aspx](http://flhouse.gov/Sections/Representatives/representatives.aspx)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randy B. Knight". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Randy Knight, City Manager, on behalf of the City Commission  
City of Winter Park