



Memorandum

Memorandum No: 22-018

Date: February 14, 2022

To: Honorable Mayor and Commissioners

From: Chris Lagerbloom, ICMA-CM, City Manager

Re: Legislative Updates and Action Items

Attached please find a list of Legislative Updates and Action items from the 2022 Legislative Session, that are of interest to the City. For the most up-to-date information, please go to the Florida league of Cities' website at www.floridaleagueofcities.com.

If you have any questions, please contact me at: 954-828-5959 or clagerbloom@fortlauderdale.gov.

Attachment – List of Legislative Update and Action Items of interest to the City

c: Tarlesha W. Smith, Esq., Assistant City Manager
Greg Chavarria, Assistant City Manager
Alain E. Boileau, City Attorney
David Soloman, City Clerk
John C. Herbst, City Auditor
Department Directors
CMO Managers



SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY

CS/SB 974 (Gruters) – Oppose Amendment that Increases Limits (Barcode 368554)

Summary: CS/SB 974 increases the limit to \$300,000 per claim and \$400,000 per incident. Current law sets the statutory limits at \$200,000 per claim and \$300,000 per incident.

- We **oppose** the amendment that would increase the limits to \$1 million per claim and \$3 million per incident, which are unreasonably high.

OPPOSE CS/HB 985 (Beltran)

Summary: CS/HB 985 increases the limit to \$1 million per claim and no per-incident limit.

- We **oppose** unreasonably high increases in sovereign immunity limits because it would create a financial hardship for cities, significantly increase insurance premiums and become an additional burden on taxpayers.
- We **oppose** unreasonably high limits because the ability to collect larger settlements or judgments against government entities will create unlimited liability exposure and incentivize litigation.

SHORT-TERM RENTALS

OPPOSE CS/HB 325 (Fischer)

Summary: CS/HB 325 limits what local governments can regulate regarding short-term rentals, particularly for cities that do not currently have a registration program.

- We **oppose** this bill because it effectively prohibits cities from adopting a registration program if they do not have one already.
- We **oppose** this bill because it puts significant new responsibilities on the Department of Business and Professional Regulation with no meaningful enforcement.
- We **oppose** this bill because cities need more tools to regulate short-term rentals, not fewer.



SMOKING IN PUBLIC PLACES

SUPPORT HB 105 (Fine) and SB 224 (Gruters)

Summary: HB 105 and SB 224 authorize cities and counties to restrict smoking within the boundaries of any public beach or park they own.

- We **support** these bills because they would restore local decision-making and reverse the current smoking preemption on cities.

TREE PROTECTION

SUPPORT SB 518 (Brodeur) and HB 1555 (McClain)

Summary: SB 518 and HB 1555 amend current law provisions that prohibit local governments from requiring permits for the removal of "dangerous" trees on residential property.

- We **support** these bills because they would close loopholes and create standards that clarify the process for the removal of "dangerous" trees on residential property. Of note: current law exemptions from municipal tree ordinances have caused litigation and abuses, including the clear-cutting of land pre-development and the removal of healthy trees that present little, if any, risk to persons or structures.

CYBERSECURITY ASSISTANCE

SUPPORT HB 7055 (Giallombardo)

Summary: HB 7055 would appropriate \$37 million to the Florida Center for Cybersecurity to provide cybersecurity training for local government employees as well as another \$30 million for a grant program that would provide cybersecurity infrastructure and technical assistance to cities and counties. It also requires local governments to adopt cybersecurity standards, outlines reporting requirements for cyber and ransomware incidents and prohibits local governments from paying ransom demands.

- We **support** this bill because cyberthreats are only increasing, and this legislation would provide additional resources for cities to mitigate risk.