

From: Mary Peloquin <marypeloquin@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 3:56 PM
To: Christina Currie; Cathy Stubbs; Colleen Lockwood
Subject: Fwd: CFLCA Opposition to Florida House Bill 1
Attachments: HB 1-Combating Public Disorder_CFLCA Opposition Letter.pdf

The following email and attached letter are for the minutes of the CFLCA.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Mary Peloquin** <marypeloquin@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, Feb 1, 2021 at 1:23 PM
Subject: CFLCA Opposition to Florida House Bill 1
To: <teddeutch@house.gov>, <farmer.gary@flsenate.gov>, <polsky.tina@flsenate.gov>, <thurston.perry@flsenate.gov>, LaMarca, Chip <chip.lamarca@myfloridahouse.gov>, <bobby.dubose@myfloridahouse.gov>, <pat.williams@myfloridahouse.gov>

Good Afternoon,

Please find attached a letter of opposition in regards to Florida HB 1 and the reasons for said opposition from the Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations.

Sincerely,

Mary C. Peloquin
1st Vice President, CFLCA



February 1, 2021

Members of the Florida Legislature:

The Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations, Inc. (“CFLCA”) is a recognized coalition of over 40 different Civic and Homeowner Associations representing Fort Lauderdale residents. The CFLCA maintains a *“focus on the issues relating to preservation of the present and future welfare of the City of Fort Lauderdale and its neighborhoods and citizens, be proactive and reactive to those issues, communicate any recommendations to the proper authorities, strive to ever improve communication and create a stronger partnership between City Government and the neighborhoods.”*

At the September 29, 2020 CFLCA Board of Directors meeting, the Governor’s proposed legislation “Combating Violence, Disorder and Looting, and Law Enforcement Protection Act” was discussed at length. This proposed Act, seemed to be directly contrary to the freedoms we hold so dear. The freedom of speech, expression, and to peacefully gather in groups when there is dissent among the masses. After discussion, the Board voted 10-1 to oppose such legislation.

On January 6, 2021, Representative Juan Fernandez-Barquin filed House Bill 1 (HB 1) – Combating Public Disorder. The proposed bill will disproportionately affect individuals from communities of color with its extended jail sentences, disproportionate bail requirements, enhanced charges for battery and assault, amongst other changes. Further, the proposal contains language that is too broad and ambiguous when defining mob intimidation, riot, and damaging and destroying memorials. While the proposal seeks to provide the same appeal process given to county law enforcement officers, to the municipal structure, it fails to take into consideration the Police Chief’s decision to potentially reduce operating costs. Finally, the proposal seeks to make changes to the application of an affirmative defense to civil liability cases. This change may embolden counter protesters to be violent – the opposite of the premise of this legislation.

The CFLCA Board of Directors met again on January 25, 2021 to discuss and vote on its continued opposition of what is now HB 1.

The CFLCA in no way condones violent protests, looting, or attacks on law-abiding citizens or law enforcement. We believe dissent can be expressed, in large groups, in a peaceful manner. However, we also understand, and want you to understand that agitators take advantage of peaceful protests and cause harm to not only those who are peacefully protesting, but to adjacent businesses. Those abiding by the rules or who are in the wrong place at the wrong time should not be collateral damage to violent and disruptive actions of others.

In conclusion, the CFLCA Board of Directors urges you to oppose HB 1 because it strips every Floridian of their freedom of speech, expression, and gather in groups. It places an undue burden on municipalities and has the potential to bankrupt the very city we live in.

We thank you in advance for your consideration. Should you have any questions or comments, please send them to Mary C. Peloquin at marypeloquin@gmail.com

Regards,

The Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations