



**April 4, 2017**

**Community Redevelopment Agencies (CRAs) – Oppose CS/HB 13**

**CS/HB 13 (Raburn) will be considered by the House Ways and Means Committee Tomorrow, Wednesday, April 5 at 9:00 a.m.**

The Florida League of Cities has been working with Representative Raburn, the sponsor of **CS/HB 13**, and Chairman Caldwell to address concerns with a bill that would severely restrict the ability of CRAs to conduct their original purpose and creates a process to terminate all CRAs in Florida.

Several municipal concerns will be addressed under a proposed amendment which will be considered by the committee. The original bill prohibited CRAs from initiating new projects or incurring new debt. This provision would be removed under the proposed amendment. Additionally, under the proposed amendment, the language calling for the termination of all CRAs by 2037 has been addressed to allow their continuation if approved by a supermajority vote of the governing body that created the CRA. Lastly, under the proposed amendment many accountability and transparency provisions have been reworked to facilitate compliance by CRAs.

Despite the progress made in several areas of the bill, the League still has concerns, specifically regarding language prohibiting the creation of any new CRA. Additionally, the use of TIF (Tax Increment Finance) funds is limited only to those purposes specified in statute.

**Talking Points**

- Part III of Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, allows a county or municipality to create a CRA to carry out redevelopment of slum or blighted areas when certain conditions exist.
- There are currently 222 active CRAs in Florida. They were established to encourage new investment and job creation in urban areas that were blighted as a result of substantial growth moving away from the urban core.
- The Florida League of Cities supports provisions of CS/HB 13 seeking to strengthen accountability and transparency requirements for CRAs; such as requiring CRA board members to undergo 4 hours of ethics training, requiring CRAs to use the same procurement process as the city which created it, and expanding reporting and audit requirements.

- The Florida League of Cities opposes provisions of CS/HB 13 which seek to terminate or phase out CRAs in Florida.
- The Florida League of Cities opposes provisions which restrict the use of TIF to be tailored to the specific needs of individual communities.
- The state should be wary of attempts to restrict CRAs, particularly if the debate is over money and control and not about the merits of revitalizing blighted areas. CRAs have demonstrated that the use of TIF funding dramatically improved the economic and social outcomes within the targeted areas. These outcomes benefit the cities and counties and, most importantly, the taxpayers.

**Please contact members of this committee and urge them to Oppose provisions of CS/HB 13 which propose to terminate or restrict the creation of new CRAs.**

**House Ways and Means Committee**

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**You can also use the League’s [Contact Your Legislator](#) advocacy tool to e-mail your legislators.**

Should you have any questions, please contact: David Cruz at [dcruz@flcities.com](mailto:dcruz@flcities.com) or 850-701-3676.

**Thank you for your advocacy efforts!**