



The Florida League of Cities calls on the Florida Legislature to take a stand in support of property rights protection (the Bert J. Harris Jr. Act) to avoid an explosion of lawsuits against cities.

## THE KEY POINTS

- 01 Protect property owners.** Some lawmakers want blanket entitlements that don't consider every person's property rights. If private property rights are changed for one property owner, they would change for everyone. The law wouldn't consider the size or density of property, historical listings or other strict zoning standards. There could be unintended consequences. Those special interests seeking private gain? This gives them a back door.
- 02 Avoid excessive lawsuits.** This would lead to a lawyer's dream because it would be easier to sue than reach a resolution with cities and counties. The Bert Harris Act was never intended to be a class-action lawsuit offering massive rewards for those who aren't willing to settle.
- 03 Taxpayers would pay the price.** Cities could expect to get stuck dealing with lawsuits, and residents could expect higher taxes to cover litigation costs. Legislators should prioritize community needs.
- 04 More changes to the Bert Harris Act are unnecessary.** Legal procedures already protect the rights of property owners who might be unintentionally harmed by a variance.

*The Bert J. Harris Jr. Act of 1995 gives landowners a way to seek compensation when a local government takes action that impacts the use/potential use of their property. The act is detailed and fair. It allows local governments to negotiate with property owners who are filing a claim and calls on courts to consider the unique conditions of each claim. Many Bert Harris claims are negotiated locally without going to trial. This approach saves taxpayer dollars and proves that the current system is working.*

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