

MAYORS SERVE LOCAL



On March 27, 2019, the Florida League of Mayors participated in an FLM Press Conference at the Capitol in Tallahassee. Then the mayors took a trolley ride to attend the Mayors Serve Local and Discussion Forum at the Apalachee Center in Tallahassee.

PRESS COVERAGE

Florida mayors blast Legislature for bills they say are an assault on home rule

Tallahassee Democrat

Nearly three dozen Florida mayors stood at the doors of the Florida Senate Chamber Wednesday to protest what they called an assault on home rule – the Legislature’s preemption of local regulations to the state. Hawthorne Mayor Matthew Surrency counted nearly 50 proposals this year that would give the state control of regulations governing a variety of issues. Bills are advancing at the state capitol that would give the state control of where vegetable gardens and short-term rentals can be located to when local governments can raise taxes and create community redevelopment agencies. “We believe the state has a lane and local governments have a lane and when we respect those lanes we can be a great state,” said Surrency, who also serves as president of the Florida League of Mayors. In recent years, lawmakers have preempted to the state regulation of guns, minimum wages and sick-leave benefits for workers and ride-sharing companies. The mayors say state lawmakers should stay out of local matters and let Florida’s 412 municipalities govern themselves.

<https://www.tallahassee.com/story/news/2019/03/27/florida-mayors-blast-legislature-bills-infringing-home-rule/3288470002/>

PRESS COVERAGE

Florida mayors to state lawmakers: Let us do our jobs locally and you stick to the state stuff

Florida Phoenix

A group of Florida mayors are in Tallahassee this week with a united message to state lawmakers: work with us on important issues affecting citizens, not against us. Officials say that there are some fifty bills circulating in the Legislature this year that involve the state preempting local decisions from cities and counties. “It is my belief that state preemption is a threat to the very nature of democracy,” says state Senator Bobby Powell, a Democrat from Palm Beach County. “It obstructs the potential for our localities and presents a possible challenge to the (state) Constitution.” Powell kicked off a press conference held by the mayors in the Capitol Wednesday. Language to preserve “Home Rule” – meaning the autonomy of local governments to make their own decisions – was proposed in a Constitutional revision in the mid-1960s and was adopted in 1968. After several legal challenges, the Legislature adopted the Home Rule Powers Act in 1973, which ended challenges related to city and county powers. But state lawmakers have been chipping away for years at taking control from local governments. And seemingly just as quickly as those cities or counties take action on an issue that rises up locally, the Legislature fights back

<https://www.floridaphoenix.com/blog/florida-mayors-visit-tallahassee-and-ask-them-to-let-them-do-their-job/>

PRESS COVERAGE

Mayors Fight Against State Preemption Efforts

Capitol News Service

The Florida League of Mayors is complaining about legislative attempts to preempt local governments from passing ordinances on everything from banning plastic straws to regulating short term home rentals through online booking services such as AirBNB. Hawthorne Mayor Matt Surrency is the group's President. "This is a local zoning issue. Each of our communities can decide how short term rentals fit within our communities. We're not necessarily for them or against them, but we want the opportunity to work with the short term rentals and figure out where they go and how they fit in our communities," said Surrency. The mayors say the local governments know their areas best, and shouldn't be prohibited from enacting restrictions local residents want.

<http://www.flanews.com/2019/03/27/mayors-fight-against-state-preemption-efforts/>

PRESS COVERAGE

Florida Mayors Visit Capitol To Oppose Preemption Bills, Talk Mental Health With AG Ashley Moody

WFSU

The Florida League of Mayors brought municipality heads to the Capitol Wednesday to oppose preemption bills this legislative session. The group of about 30 mayors also met with Attorney General Ashley Moody to discuss Florida's mental health system. Democratic Senator Bobby Powell stood alongside the mayors from around the state as he denounced legislation that takes away local control. "There's been legislation aimed at restricting local governments' ability to enforce exclusionary housing, ban plastic straws, and even regulate vegetable gardens," Powell said. Powell wants his colleagues in the Capitol to protect mayors' decision-making power. "The concept of home rule has been established in our state constitution for decades," Powell said. "And we as the legislature, ought to respect and trust our locals to make decisions that are in the best interest of their constituents." Matt Surrency is mayor of the City of Hawthorne. He spoke at the press conference on behalf of his counterparts. "There have been more than, this year alone, 1,500 general bills filed. We at the municipal level are following more than 600," Surrency said. And nearly 50 of those contain preemptions."

<https://news.wfsu.org/post/florida-mayors-visit-capitol-oppose-preemption-bills-talk-mental-health-ag-ashley-moody>

PRESS COVERAGE

Florida mayors hold round table discussion on mental illness

WCTV

More than 40 mayors from across the state of Florida gathered in Tallahassee Wednesday to discuss mental health. The round table discussion was held at the Apalachee Center. The leaders say coming together is the best way to tackle the problem and find solutions. Tallahassee Mayor John Dailey said, "We experience a lot of the same issues that everyone across the state is dealing with. So, we really need to come together to tackle these issues." Issues include opioids. The mayors say the growing epidemic is one of the forces impacting mental health. Ocala Mayor Kent Guinn offered a solution: he shared the success of an amnesty program in his city. "We had one gentleman who came in. He said, 'I'm an addict and I feel like I'm about to rob someone. I need some help.' So, we've got that and it's starting to spread around the country," Guinn said. One mayor says all drugs are destroying communities. He said, "We got to think outside the box. We can talk all day. But, until we start putting the resources where they really matter, we're going to continue just having this conversation." Pensacola Mayor Grover Robinson says more resources should come from the state.

<https://www.wctv.tv/content/news/Florida-mayors-hold-roundtable-on-mental-health-507751961.html>

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Pictured Left to Right: FLM President and Mayor Matthew Surrency, City of Hawthorne; Attorney General Ashley Moody; FLM President-Elect Mayor Kevin Ruane, City of Sanibel; FLC Legislative Director and FLM Executive Director Scott Dudley; Apalachee Center President and Chief Executive Officer Jay Reeve, PhD; and Mayor Drinda Merritt, Town of Inglis.

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Mayor John Dailey, City of Tallahassee, speaks at the Apalachee Center.

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