



Over this past year, we have seen state lawmakers repeatedly discuss the role of local authority, trying to shift many hometown responsibilities to the state. One-size-fits-all proposals by the Legislature will not fix or help our neighborhoods meet new challenges nor create opportunities. As we prepare for the 2018 Legislative session, our message to the legislature must not waver.

Let cities work.

Together, we must stand up for the right of our communities to determine their own destinies. Join me in taking these key actions now to ensure we are ready to confront and defeat legislative attacks against Home Rule.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gil Ziffer".

Gil Ziffer

President, Florida League of Cities

Now is the time to get engaged. Now is the time to take action.

- 1. REINFORCE RELATIONSHIPS.** The most persuasive messages come from familiar faces. Connect with members of your legislative delegation year-round. The more legislators see you and learn about the ways you are working to improve services and the quality of life for your citizens, the more they will want to support your city's goals.
- 2. BE PREPARED.** To be successful, you must know the issues and how they affect your city. The more information you can provide on local impact, the more effective you will be with your legislators.
- 3. BE CONCISE.** The key to influence is not volume, but precision. Value their time and yours by knowing what you want to accomplish. Do not overwhelm your legislator with details but establish yourself as a trusted source for when more details are needed.
- 4. MAKE THE ASK.** When communicating with legislators to discuss issues, be specific in your ask and give them the opportunity to say yes. Do not assume they will support your position by the strength of your argument or because you had a pleasant conversation.
- 5. SHOW APPRECIATION.** A brief, well-written thank you card is always appreciated. Even if you disagree with your legislator on an issue, they are more likely to listen if you have found a way to praise them. Don't be afraid to take your praise social. A picture with an appreciative caption on Facebook or Twitter can go a long way. Be sure to tag them!
- 6. STAY INFORMED.** The League offers a variety of resources with the latest information on bills filed and potential impact to cities. Be sure you are receiving our legislative communications and text alerts. You can always call the League with questions or for additional information.
- 7. BE FRIENDLY TO STAFF.** Legislative aides, district secretaries and even interns often play gatekeeper for a legislator and can have tremendous sway in ensuring your meeting requests and phone calls get shared. Legislators are busy – especially during session. Meetings with staff can be just as effective.
- 8. LEARN THE PROCESS.** The rules in Tallahassee can vary greatly from your local rules. Understanding bill drafting, companion bills, committee referrals, etc., will prove useful. What is similar to local government is the art of compromise. Expect it.
- 9. ENGAGE ALLIES.** Bring as many diverse voices to your cause as possible. Use the media, traditional and social, to amplify your message in the community. Don't be shy to talk about your issue at dinner parties and social events – you never know who can become a useful ally.
- 10. SHARE WHAT HAPPENED.** We have a great team of lobbyists in Tallahassee who are constantly communicating with legislators. Knowing when you call, write or visit with a legislator on a specific issue and what the outcome of that contact was helps our lobbyists be more effective advocates for our issues.

For more advocacy tips or how to get involved, visit www.LetCitiesWork.com.

The League is Your Resource. Our Legislative Affairs Team is ready to assist.



SCOTT DUDLEY

Legislative Director

sdudley@flcities.com

- » State and Federal Legislative Issues
- » Governmental Relations



JEFF BRANCH

Legislative Advocate

jbranch@flcities.com

- » Affordable Housing/Foreclosures
- » Building Codes/Construction
- » Charter Counties
- » Charter Schools
- » Emergency Management
- » Homelessness/Mental Health
- » Special Districts
- » Transportation/Highway Safety/Aviation
- » Veterans Affairs



CASEY COOK

Senior Legislative Advocate

ccook@flcities.com

- » Economic Development
- » Gaming
- » Medical Marijuana
- » Ordinance/Code Enforcement
- » Procurement
- » Public Records/Public Meetings
- » Public Safety



DAVID CRUZ

Deputy General Counsel

Legislative Counsel

dcruz@flcities.com

- » Annexation
- » Community Redevelopment
- » Eminent Domain
- » Growth Management
- » Insurance
- » Land Use
- » Property Rights
- » Tort Liability/Sovereign Immunity
- » Workers' Compensation



AMBER HUGHES

Senior Legislative Advocate

ahughes@flcities.com

- » Finance and Taxation
- » National Flood Insurance Program
- » Personnel and Collective Bargaining
- » Retirement/Pension Issues
- » Revenues and Budgeting
- » Telecommunications
- » Workers' Compensation



REBECCA O'HARA

Deputy General Counsel

rohara@flcities.com

- » Energy
- » Environmental
- » Ethics and Elections
- » General Utilities
- » Rights of Way
- » Solid Waste
- » Stormwater
- » Water Quality/Wastewater
- » Water Supply/Policy



ALLISON PAYNE

Manager, Advocacy Programs and Federal Affairs

apayne@flcities.com

- » Local/Regional Leagues
- » Key Contact Program
- » Advocacy Programs/Regional Teams
- » Federal Affairs/NLC Liaison



MARY EDENFIELD

Legislative Coordinator

medenfield@flcities.com

- » Legislative Policy Committees
- » Legislative Action Days



TARA TAGGART

Administrative Assistant

ttaggart@flcities.com



KATHERINE DUNN

Administrative/Legal Assistant

kdunn@flcities.com

Every time you call, write or visit with a legislator to reinforce the message that cities work, let the League know. The outcome of your contacts will help our lobbyists be more effective advocates for our issues.

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Florida League of Cities, Inc.
850.222.9684