

THE FLORIDA SENATE
2023 SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION PASSED
Committee on Community Affairs

CS/CS/SB 170 — Local Ordinances

by Rules Committee; Community Affairs Committee; and Senators Trumbull and Perry

The bill pertains to the passage and challenging of local ordinances. It adds to the process for local governments passing ordinances and gives certain additional rights to those challenging local ordinances.

The bill requires counties and cities to produce a “business impact estimate” prior to passing an ordinance, with exceptions. The estimate must be published on the local government’s website and include certain information, such as the proposed ordinance’s purpose, estimated economic impact on businesses, and compliance costs.

Additionally, the bill imposes certain conditions on lawsuits brought by any party to challenge the legal validity of local ordinances as preempted by state law, arbitrary, or unreasonable. In these cases, the bill:

- Requires the local government to suspend enforcement of an ordinance of such legal challenge, under certain circumstances.
- Requires the court to give those cases in which enforcement of the ordinance is suspended priority over other pending cases and render a preliminary or final decision as expeditiously as possible.
- Provides that a court may award up to \$50,000 in attorney fees to a prevailing plaintiff who successfully challenges an ordinance as arbitrary or unreasonable.

The bill also provides, remedially and effective upon becoming a law, that properly noticed consideration of a proposed ordinance may be continued to a subsequent meeting under certain circumstances without further publication, mailing, or posted notice.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor’s signature, these provisions take effect October 1, 2023, except where otherwise provided.

Vote: Senate 28-12; House 82-33