## Florida House of Representatives - 2002 By Representative Bendross-Mindingall

A bill to be entitled 1 2 An act relating to the Florida Home Loan 3 Protection Act; providing a short title; providing legislative findings; providing 4 5 purposes; providing definitions; specifying certain prohibited acts and practices relating 6 7 to creditors making home loans under certain 8 circumstances; providing limitations and prohibiting certain activities or conditions 9 relating to creditors making high-cost home 10 11 loans; providing a right to reinstate a loan 12 under certain circumstances; specifying grounds 13 for reinstatement; proscribing certain fees, 14 charges, or penalties under certain 15 circumstances; prohibiting foreclosure 16 proceedings under certain circumstances; providing for preservation and enforcement of 17 certain claims and defenses by borrowers; 18 19 providing for liability of assignees and other 20 holders under certain circumstances; proscribing subterfuge; providing for civil and 21 criminal enforcement; providing penalties; 22 providing for damages, costs, and attorney's 23 24 fees; specifying certain loan agreements as void and unenforceable under certain 25 26 circumstances; providing for a right of 27 recission under certain circumstances; 28 protecting borrowers' remedies; providing 29 exceptions for corrections and unintentional 30 violations; providing criteria; specifying 31 certain rights and remedies as cumulative; 1

1 providing application; providing severability; providing an effective date. 2 3 4 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida: 5 Section 1. Short title; purposes.--6 7 (1) This act may be cited as the "Florida Home Loan 8 Protection Act." (2)(a) The Legislature finds that abusive mortgage 9 10 lending has become an increasing problem in this state, exacerbating the loss of equity in homes and causing the 11 12 number of foreclosures to increase in recent years. One of the 13 most common forms of abusive lending is the making of loans that are equity-based rather than income-based. The financing 14 15 of points and fees in these loans provides immediate income to 16 the originator and encourages lenders to repeatedly refinance home loans. The lender's ability to sell loans reduces the 17 incentive to ensure that the homeowner can afford the payments 18 19 of the loan. As long as there is sufficient equity in the 20 home, an abusive lender benefits even if the borrower is unable to make the payments and is forced to refinance. The 21 financing of high points and fees causes the loss of precious 22 23 equity in each refinancing and often leads to foreclosure. 24 (b) Abusive lending has threatened the viability of 25 many communities and caused decreases in home ownership. While 26 the marketplace appears to operate effectively for 27 conventional mortgages, too many homeowners find themselves 28 victims of overreaching lenders who provide loans with 29 unnecessarily high costs and terms that are unnecessary to secure repayment of the loan. The Legislature finds that as 30 competition and self-regulation have not eliminated the 31

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abusive terms from home-secured loans, the consumer protection 1 2 provisions of this act are necessary to encourage lending at 3 reasonable rates with reasonable terms. 4 Section 2. Definitions.--For purposes of this act: 5 (1) "Benchmark rate" means the interest rate which the 6 borrower can reduce by paying bona fide discount points. Such 7 rate shall not exceed the weekly average yield of United 8 States Treasury securities having a maturity of 5 years, on 9 the fifteenth day of the month immediately preceding the month in which the loan is made, plus 4 percentage points. 10 11 (2) "Bona fide discount points" means loan discount 12 points which are: 13 (a) Knowingly paid by the borrower. 14 (b) Paid for the express purpose of lowering the 15 benchmark rate. 16 (c) In fact reducing the interest rate or time-price 17 differential applicable to the loan from an interest rate which does not exceed the benchmark rate. 18 19 (d) Recouped within the first 4 years after the 20 scheduled loan payments. 21 22 For purposes of assessing compliance with paragraph (d), loan discount points will be considered to be recouped within the 23 24 first 4 years after the scheduled loan payments if the reduction in the interest rate that is achieved by the payment 25 26 of the loan discount points reduces the interest charged on 27 the scheduled payments such that the borrower's dollar amount 28 of savings in interest over the first 4 years is equal to or exceeds the dollar amount of loan discount points paid by the 29 30 borrower. 31

(3) "Borrower" means any natural person obligated to 1 2 repay the loan, including, but not limited to, a coborrower, 3 cosigner, or guarantor. 4 (4) "Creditor" means a person who extends consumer 5 credit that is subject to a finance charge or is payable by 6 written agreement in more than four installments, and to whom 7 the obligation is payable at any time. 8 (5) "High-cost home loan" means a home loan the terms 9 of which meet or exceed one or more of the thresholds defined 10 in subsection (9). (6) "Home loan" means a loan, including an open-ended 11 12 credit plan, other than a reverse mortgage transaction, where 13 the loan is secured by: 14 (a) A mortgage or deed of trust on real estate in this 15 state upon which there is located or there is to be located a 16 structure or structures designed principally for occupancy of from one to four families which is or will be occupied by a 17 borrower as the borrower's principal dwelling; or 18 19 (b) A security interest on a manufactured home which 20 is or will be occupied by a borrower as the borrower's principal dwelling, 21 22 23 and where the loan refinances an existing home loan or is a 24 subordinate lien following one or more existing loans, or 25 where the property securing the mortgage was, prior to the new 26 mortgage, owned free and clear by the borrower. 27 (7) "Points and fees" means: 28 (a)1. All items listed in 15 U.S.C. s. 1605(a)(1) 29 through (4), except interest or the time-price differential; 30 or 31

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2. All items required to be disclosed under s. 1 2 226.4(a) and (b) of Title 12 of the Code of Federal 3 Regulations, as amended from time to time, except interest or 4 the time-price differential. (b)1. All charges listed in 15 U.S.C. s. 1605(e); or 5 б 2. All charges for items listed under s. 226.4(c)(7) 7 of Title 12 of the Code of Federal Regulations, as amended 8 from time to time, but only if the lender receives direct or 9 indirect compensation in connection with the charge or the charge is paid to an affiliate of the lender. Otherwise, the 10 11 charges are not included within the meaning of the term 12 "points and fees." 13 (c) All compensation paid directly or indirectly to a 14 mortgage broker, including a broker that originates a loan in 15 its own name in a table-funded transaction. 16 (d) The cost of all premiums financed by the creditor, directly or indirectly, for any credit life, credit 17 disability, credit unemployment, or credit property insurance, 18 19 or any other life or health insurance, or any payments 20 financed by the creditor directly or indirectly for any debt cancellation or suspension agreement or contract, except that 21 insurance premiums calculated and paid on a monthly basis 22 shall not be considered financed by the creditor. 23 24 (e) The maximum prepayment fees and penalties that may be charged or collected under the terms of the loan documents. 25 26 (f) All prepayment fees or penalties that are charged the borrower if the loan refinances a previous loan made by 27 28 the same creditor or an affiliate of the creditor. 29 (g) For open-ended loans, the sum of the total fees charged at closing plus the maximum additional fees which can 30 31

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be charged pursuant to the loan documents during the term of 1 2 the loan. 3 (8) "Rate" means the interest rate charged on the home 4 loan based on an annual simple interest yield. 5 (9) "Threshold" means: 6 (a)1. "Rate threshold," which means: 7 a. For a first lien mortgage loan, the trigger rate 8 equals or exceeds 6 percentage points more than the weekly 9 average yield on 5-year United States Treasury securities; or 10 b. For a subordinate mortgage lien or a mortgage 11 secured solely by a security interest in a manufactured home, 12 the trigger rate equals or exceeds 8 percentage points more 13 than the weekly average yield on 5-year United States Treasury 14 securities. 15 2. The trigger rate is calculated as follows: 16 a. For fixed-rate loans in which the interest rate will not vary during the term of the loan, the trigger rate is 17 the rate as of the date of closing. 18 19 b. For loans in which the interest rate varies 20 according to an index, the trigger rate is the sum of the index rate as of the date of loan closing plus the maximum 21 margin permitted at any time under the loan agreement. 22 c. For all other loans in which the interest rate may 23 vary at any time during the term of the loan, the trigger rate 24 25 is the maximum rate that may be charged during the term of the 26 loan. 27 (b) "Total points and fees threshold," which means, 28 excluding up to two bona fide discount points: 29 1. For loans in which the total loan amount is \$30,000 or more, the total points and fees on the loan, paid by the 30 31

borrower at or before closing, exceed 3 percent of the total 1 2 loan amount; or 3 2. For loans in which the total loan amount is less than \$30,000, the total points and fees on the loan, paid by 4 5 the borrower at or before closing, exceed the lesser of \$900 б or 6 percent of the total loan amount. 7 (c) "Prepayment penalty threshold," which means the 8 home loan agreement permits the lender to charge or collect 9 payment penalties or penalties more than 30 months after the loan closing or which exceed, in the aggregate, more than 2 10 11 percent of the amount prepaid. 12 (10) "Total loan amount" means the principal of the 13 loan minus those points and fees as defined in subsection (7) that are included in the principal amount of the loan. For 14 open-ended loans, the total loan amount shall be calculated 15 16 using the total line of credit allowed under the home loan. 17 Section 3. Prohibited acts and practices for home 18 loans.--19 (1) INSURANCE AND DEBT CANCELLATION AGREEMENTS. -- No 20 creditor making a home loan shall finance, directly or indirectly, any credit life, credit disability, credit 21 22 unemployment, or credit property insurance, or any other life or health insurance, or any payments directly or indirectly 23 for any debt cancellation or suspension agreement or contract, 24 except that insurance premiums or debt cancellation or 25 26 suspension fees calculated and paid on a monthly basis shall 27 not be considered financed by the creditor. 28 (2) RECOMMENDATION OF DEFAULT. -- No creditor shall 29 recommend or encourage default on an existing loan or other debt prior to and in connection with the closing or planned 30 31

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closing of a home loan that refinances all or any portion of 1 2 such existing loan or debt. (3) LATE PAYMENT FEES.--No creditor may charge a late 3 4 payment fee except as provided in this subsection: 5 (a) A late payment fee may not be in excess of 4 6 percent of the amount of the payment past due. 7 (b) A late payment fee may only be assessed for a 8 payment past due for 15 days or more. (c) A late payment fee may not be charged more than 9 10 once with respect to a single late payment. If a late payment fee is deducted from a payment made on the loan and such 11 12 deduction causes a subsequent default on a subsequent payment, 13 no late payment fee may be imposed for such default. If a 14 late payment fee has been imposed once with respect to a 15 particular late payment, no such fee shall be imposed with 16 respect to any future payment which would have been timely and sufficient, but for the previous default. 17 (d) A late payment fee may not be charged unless the 18 19 creditor notifies the borrower within 45 days following the 20 date the payment was due that a late payment fee has been imposed for a particular late payment. No late payment fee may 21 be collected from any borrower if the borrower informs the 22 23 creditor that nonpayment of an installment is in dispute and 24 presents proof of payment within 45 days after receipt of the 25 creditor's notice of the late payment fee. 26 (e) A creditor shall treat each and every payment as 27 posted on the same date as it was received by the creditor, 28 servicer, or creditor's agent, or at the address provided to 29 the borrower by the creditor, servicer, or the creditor's agent for making payments. 30 31

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1	(4) CALL PROVISIONNo home loan may contain a
2	provision that permits the creditor, in its sole discretion,
3	to call or accelerate the indebtedness. This provision does
4	not prohibit acceleration of the loan in good faith due to the
5	borrower's failure to abide by the material terms of the loan.
6	(5) FEE FOR BALANCENo creditor may charge a fee for
7	informing or transmitting to any person the balance due to pay
8	off a home loan or to provide a release upon prepayment.
9	Payoff balances shall be provided within a reasonable time but
10	in any event no more than 7 business days after the request.
11	Section 4. Limitations and prohibited acts and
12	practices for high-cost home loansA high-cost home loan
13	shall be subject to the following additional limitations and
14	prohibited acts and practices:
15	(1) FINANCING OF FEES OR CHARGESNo creditor making
16	a high-cost home loan shall directly or indirectly finance any
17	points or fees.
18	
10	(2) PREPAYMENT PENALTIES LIMITEDNo prepayment fees
10 19	(2) PREPAYMENT PENALTIES LIMITED No prepayment fees or penalties shall be included in the loan documents for a
19	or penalties shall be included in the loan documents for a
19 20	or penalties shall be included in the loan documents for a high-cost home loan or charged the borrower which exceed in
19 20 21	or penalties shall be included in the loan documents for a high-cost home loan or charged the borrower which exceed in the aggregate:
19 20 21 22	or penalties shall be included in the loan documents for a high-cost home loan or charged the borrower which exceed in the aggregate: (a) In the first 12 months after the loan closing,
19 20 21 22 23	or penalties shall be included in the loan documents for a high-cost home loan or charged the borrower which exceed in the aggregate: (a) In the first 12 months after the loan closing, more than 2 percent of the amount prepaid; or
19 20 21 22 23 24	or penalties shall be included in the loan documents for a high-cost home loan or charged the borrower which exceed in the aggregate: (a) In the first 12 months after the loan closing, more than 2 percent of the amount prepaid; or (b) In the second 12 months after the loan closing,
19 20 21 22 23 24 25	or penalties shall be included in the loan documents for a high-cost home loan or charged the borrower which exceed in the aggregate: (a) In the first 12 months after the loan closing, more than 2 percent of the amount prepaid; or (b) In the second 12 months after the loan closing,
19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26	or penalties shall be included in the loan documents for a high-cost home loan or charged the borrower which exceed in the aggregate: (a) In the first 12 months after the loan closing, more than 2 percent of the amount prepaid; or (b) In the second 12 months after the loan closing, more than 1 percent of the amount prepaid.
19 20 21 23 24 25 26 27	or penalties shall be included in the loan documents for a high-cost home loan or charged the borrower which exceed in the aggregate: (a) In the first 12 months after the loan closing, more than 2 percent of the amount prepaid; or (b) In the second 12 months after the loan closing, more than 1 percent of the amount prepaid. No prepayment penalty shall be contracted for after the second
19 20 21 23 24 25 26 27 28	or penalties shall be included in the loan documents for a high-cost home loan or charged the borrower which exceed in the aggregate: (a) In the first 12 months after the loan closing, more than 2 percent of the amount prepaid; or (b) In the second 12 months after the loan closing, more than 1 percent of the amount prepaid. No prepayment penalty shall be contracted for after the second year following the loan closing.
19 20 21 23 24 25 26 27 28 29	or penalties shall be included in the loan documents for a high-cost home loan or charged the borrower which exceed in the aggregate: (a) In the first 12 months after the loan closing, more than 2 percent of the amount prepaid; or (b) In the second 12 months after the loan closing, more than 1 percent of the amount prepaid. No prepayment penalty shall be contracted for after the second year following the loan closing. (3) BALLOON PAYMENTNo high-cost home loan may

does not apply when the payment schedule is adjusted to the 1 2 seasonal or irregular income of the borrower. 3 (4) NEGATIVE AMORTIZATION. -- No high-cost home loan may 4 include payment terms under which the outstanding principal 5 balance will increase at any time over the course of the loan б because the regular periodic payments do not cover the full 7 amount of interest due. 8 (5) INCREASED INTEREST RATE. -- No high-cost home loan 9 may contain a provision that increases the interest rate after 10 default. This provision does not apply to interest rate 11 changes in a variable rate loan otherwise consistent with the 12 provisions of the loan documents, provided the change in the 13 interest rate is not triggered by the event of default or the acceleration of the indebtedness. 14 15 (6) ADVANCE PAYMENTS. -- No high-cost home loan may 16 include terms under which more than two periodic payments required under the loan are consolidated and paid in advance 17 from the loan proceeds provided to the borrower. 18 19 (7) MANDATORY ARBITRATION CLAUSE. -- No high-cost home 20 loan may be subject to a mandatory arbitration clause that limits in any way the right of the borrower to seek relief 21 22 through the judicial process for any claims and defenses the 23 borrower may have against the creditor, broker, or other party 24 involved in the loan transaction. 25 (8) LENDING WITHOUT HOMEOWNERSHIP COUNSELING. -- A 26 creditor may not make a high-cost home loan without first 27 receiving certification from a counselor approved by the 28 United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, a state housing financing agency, or the regulatory agency which 29 has jurisdiction over the creditor that the borrower has 30 31

1 received counseling on the advisability of the loan 2 transaction. 3 (9) LENDING WITHOUT DUE REGARD TO REPAYMENT ABILITY.--A creditor may not make a high-cost home loan 4 5 without due regard to repayment ability. A creditor who б follows the debt-to-income ratio listed in 38 C.F.R. s. 7 36.4337(c)(1) and as defined in 38 C.F.R. s. 36.4337(d) and 8 follows the residual income guidelines established in 38 9 C.F.R. s. 36.4337(e) and VA Form 26-6393 shall benefit from a rebuttable presumption that the creditor made the loan with 10 11 due regard to repayment ability. 12 (10) HOME IMPROVEMENT CONTRACTS. -- A creditor may not 13 pay a contractor under a home improvement contract from the 14 proceeds of a high-cost home loan unless: 15 (a) The creditor is presented with a signed and dated 16 completion certificate showing that the home improvements have 17 been completed. (b) The instrument is payable to the borrower or 18 jointly to the borrower and the contractor or, at the election 19 20 of the borrower, through a third-party escrow agent in accordance with terms established in a written agreement 21 22 signed by the borrower, the creditor, and the contractor prior to the disbursement. 23 24 (11) MODIFICATION OR DEFERRAL FEES.--A creditor may 25 not charge a borrower any fees or other charges to modify, 26 renew, extend, or amend a high-cost home loan or to defer any 27 payment due under the terms of a high-cost home loan. 28 (12) JUDICIAL FORECLOSURE OR DETERMINATION. -- Any 29 creditor making a high-cost home loan that has the legal right to foreclose shall use the judicial foreclosure procedures of 30 the state in which the property securing the loan is located. 31 11

The borrower shall have the right to assert in such proceeding 1 2 the nonexistence of a default and any other claim or defense to acceleration and foreclosure, including any based on any 3 violations of this act, though no such claim or defense shall 4 5 be deemed a compulsory counterclaim. 6 (13) FLIPPING.--No creditor may engage in flipping a 7 high-cost home loan. The term "flipping" means making a home 8 loan to a borrower that refinances an existing home loan when 9 the new loan does not have reasonable, tangible, net benefits to the borrower considering all of the circumstances, 10 including, but not limited to, the terms of both the new and 11 12 refinanced loans, the cost of the new loan, and the borrower's 13 circumstances. In addition, the following home loan refinancing conditions shall be presumed to be flipping: 14 15 (a) The primary tangible benefit to the borrower is an 16 interest rate lower than any interest rate on debts satisfied or refinanced in connection with the home loan and it will 17 take more than 4 years for the borrower to recoup the costs of 18 19 the points and fees and other closing costs through savings 20 resulting from the lower interest rate. (b) The new loan refinances an existing home loan that 21 is a special mortgage which is originated, subsidized, or 22 guaranteed by or through a state, tribal, or local government, 23 24 or nonprofit organization, which bears a below-market interest 25 rate at the time the loan was originated or has nonstandard 26 payment terms beneficial to the borrower, such as payments 27 that vary with income or are limited to a percentage of 28 income, or where no payments are required under specified conditions and where, as a result of the refinancing, the 29 borrower will lose one or more of the benefits of the special 30 mortgage. 31

1 Section 5. Right to cure .--(1) RIGHT TO REINSTATE. -- If a creditor asserts that 2 3 grounds for acceleration exist and requires the payment in 4 full of all sums secured by the security instrument, the 5 borrower, or anyone authorized to act on the borrower's 6 behalf, shall have the right at any time, up to the time title 7 is transferred by means of foreclosure, by judicial proceeding 8 and sale or otherwise, to cure the default and reinstate the 9 home loan by tendering the amount or performance as specified in this section. Cure of default as provided in this section 10 shall reinstate the borrower to the same position as if the 11 12 default had not occurred and shall nullify, as of the date of 13 the cure, any acceleration of any obligation under the 14 security instrument or note arising from the default. 15 (2) GROUNDS FOR REINSTATEMENT.--Before any action 16 filed to foreclose upon the home or other action is taken to seize or transfer ownership of the home, a notice of the right 17 to cure the default must be delivered to the borrower 18 19 informing the borrower: 20 Of the nature of default claimed on the home loan (a) and of the borrower's right to cure the default by paying the 21 22 sum of money required to cure the default, provided a creditor 23 or servicer may not refuse to accept any partial payment made 24 or tendered in response to such notice. If the amount 25 necessary to cure the default will change during the 30-day 26 period after the effective date of the notice due to the application of a daily interest rate or the addition of late 27 28 payment fees, as allowed by this act, the notice shall give 29 sufficient information to enable the borrower to calculate the amount at any point during the 30-day period. 30 31

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(b) Of the date by which the borrower shall cure the 1 2 default to avoid acceleration and initiation of foreclosure or other action to seize the home, which date shall not be less 3 4 than 30 days after the date the notice is effective, and the 5 name and address and telephone number of a person to whom the 6 payment or tender shall be made. 7 (c) That if the borrower does not cure the default by 8 the date specified, the creditor may take steps to terminate 9 the borrower's ownership of the property by requiring payment in full of the home loan and commencing a foreclosure 10 11 proceeding or other action to seize the home. 12 (d) Of the name and address of the creditor and the 13 telephone number of a representative of the creditor who the 14 borrower may contact if the borrower disagrees with the 15 creditor's assertion that a default has occurred or the 16 correctness of the creditor's calculation of the amount 17 required to cure the default. (3) FEES.--To cure a default under this section, a 18 borrower shall not be required to pay any charge, fee, or 19 20 penalty attributable to the exercise of the right to cure a default as provided for in this section, other than the fees 21 22 specifically allowed by this section. The borrower shall not be liable for any attorney fees relating to the borrower's 23 default that are incurred by the lender prior to or during the 24 25 30-day period set forth in paragraph (2)(b), nor for any such 26 fees in excess of \$100 that are incurred by the lender after 27 the expiration of the 30-day period but prior to the time the 28 lender files a foreclosure action or takes other action to seize or transfer ownership of the home. After the lender 29 files a foreclosure action or takes other action to seize or 30 transfer ownership of the home, the borrower shall only be 31

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liable for attorney fees that are reasonable and actually 1 2 incurred by the lender, based on a reasonable hourly rate and 3 a reasonable number of hours. 4 (4) ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INSTRUMENT.--If a default 5 is cured prior to the initiation of any action to foreclose or 6 to seize the home, the creditor shall not institute the 7 foreclosure proceeding or other action for that default. If a 8 default is cured after the initiation of any action to 9 foreclose, the creditor shall take such steps as are necessary 10 to terminate the foreclosure proceeding or other action. Any creditor making a home loan who has the legal right to 11 12 foreclose must use the judicial foreclosure procedures of the 13 state wherein the property securing the loan is located. The 14 borrower shall have the right to assert in a judicial foreclosure proceeding or other action the nonexistence of a 15 16 default and any other claim or defense to acceleration and 17 foreclosure, including any based on violations of this act, though no such claim or defense shall be deemed a compulsory 18 19 counterclaim. 20 Section 6. Preservation and enforcement of claims and defenses; subterfuge. --21 22 (1) CLAIMS AGAINST SELLERS. -- Notwithstanding any other 23 provision of law, if a home loan has been made, arranged, or 24 assigned by a person selling a manufactured home or home 25 improvements to the dwelling of a borrower, the borrower may 26 assert all affirmative claims and any defenses that the 27 borrower may have against the seller or home improvement 28 contractor against the lender or any assignee, holder, or 29 servicer in any capacity. (2) LIABILITY OF ASSIGNEES AND OTHER HOLDERS IN 30 HIGH-COST HOME LOANS .-- Notwithstanding any other provision of 31

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law, the remedies provided in this section apply to the 1 2 creditor and any director, officer, employee, or controlling stockholder of, or agent for, a creditor who personally 3 participates in the making or approving of a high-cost home 4 5 loan and to any other persons to whom this act applies and who б violate any requirement of this act. Any person who purchases 7 or is otherwise assigned a high-cost home loan shall be 8 subject to all affirmative claims and any defenses with 9 respect to the loan that the borrower could assert against the original creditor or broker of the loan. 10 11 (3) LIABILITY OF ASSIGNEES IN FORECLOSURE 12 ACTION.--Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a 13 borrower in default more than 60 days or in foreclosure may 14 assert a violation of this act by way of offset: 15 (a) As an original action; 16 (b) As a defense or counterclaim to an action to 17 collect amounts owed; or (c) To obtain possession of the home secured by the 18 19 home loan. 20 (4) SUBTERFUGE. -- Any person who in bad faith attempts to avoid the application of this act by: 21 22 (a) Dividing any loan transaction into separate parts 23 for such purpose; or 24 (b) Any other such subterfuge with the intent of evading the provisions of this act 25 26 27 commits a violation of this act. 28 Section 7. Enforcement. --29 (1) CIV<u>IL.--</u> 30 31

(a) Any violation of this act is a deceptive and 1 2 unfair trade practice and constitutes a violation of part II of chapter 501, Florida Statutes. 3 4 (b) Any person found by a preponderance of the evidence to have violated any provision of this act shall be 5 6 liable to the borrower for: 7 1. Actual damages, including consequential and 8 incidental damages; however, the borrower shall not be 9 required to demonstrate reliance in order to receive actual 10 damages. 11 2. Statutory damages equal to the finance charges 12 agreed to in the home loan agreement, plus 10 percent of the 13 amount financed. 14 3. Punitive damages, when the violation was malicious 15 or reckless. 4. Costs and reasonable attorney's fees. 16 (c) A borrower may be granted injunctive, declaratory, 17 18 and such other equitable relief as the court deems appropriate 19 in an action to enforce compliance with this act. 20 (d) Any intentional violation of this act or any rule adopted under this act renders the home loan agreement void, 21 22 and the creditor shall have no right to collect, receive, or 23 retain any principal, interest, or other charges whatsoever 24 with respect to the loan and the borrower may recover any 25 payments made under the agreement. 26 (e) The right of rescission granted under 15 U.S.C. 27 ss. 1601 et seq. for violations of that law and all other 28 remedies provided under this act shall be available to a 29 borrower at any time during the term of the home loan by way of recoupment against a party foreclosing on the loan or 30 collecting on the loan. 31

1	(f) The remedies provided in this section are not
2	intended to be the exclusive remedies available to a borrower,
3	nor must the borrower exhaust any administrative remedies
4	provided under this act or any other applicable law before
5	proceeding under this section.
6	(2) CRIMINAL Any person, including a member, an
7	officer, and a director of the creditor, who knowingly
8	violates this act commits a misdemeanor of the first degree,
9	punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083, Florida
10	Statutes.
11	(3) CORRECTIONS AND UNINTENTIONAL VIOLATIONSA
12	creditor in a home loan who, when acting in good faith, fails
13	to comply with the provisions of this act shall not be deemed
14	to have violated this act if the creditor establishes that:
15	(a) Within 30 days after the loan closing, and prior
16	to receiving any notice from the borrower of the compliance
17	failure, the creditor has made appropriate restitution to the
18	borrower and appropriate adjustments are made to the loan; or
19	(b) Within 60 days after the loan closing and prior to
20	receiving any notice from the borrower of the compliance
21	failure, which compliance failure was not intentional and
22	resulted from a bona fide error notwithstanding the
23	maintenance of procedures reasonably adapted to avoid such
24	errors, the borrower has been notified of the compliance
25	failure, appropriate restitution has been made to the
26	borrower, and appropriate adjustments are made to the loan.
27	Bona fide errors shall include, but not be limited to,
28	clerical, calculation, computer malfunction and programming,
29	and printing errors. An error of legal judgment with respect
30	to a person's obligations under this section is not a bona
31	fide error.

1 (4) CUMULATIVE.--The remedies provided in this section 2 are cumulative. 3 Section 8. Construction. -- This act shall be liberally 4 construed to effectuate the purpose of protecting the homes 5 and the equity of individual borrowers. This act shall be 6 construed as a consumer protection law for all purposes. 7 Section 9. Rights in addition to other laws.--The 8 rights conferred by this section are independent of and in 9 addition to any other rights under other laws. 10 Section 10. Applicability.--The law of the state in 11 which the property is located shall be applied to all 12 transactions governed by this act. This act shall apply to all 13 loans made or entered into after the effective date of this 14 act. Severability.--The provisions of this act 15 Section 11. 16 shall be severable, and if any phrase, clause, sentence, or 17 provision is declared to be invalid or is preempted by federal law or regulation, the validity of the remainder of this act 18 shall not be affected thereby. If any provision of this act is 19 20 declared to be inapplicable to any specific category, type, or kind of loan or points and fees, the provisions of this act 21 shall nonetheless continue to apply with respect to all other 22 23 loans and points and fees. Section 12. This act shall take effect upon becoming a 24 25 law. 26 27 28 HOUSE SUMMARY 29 Creates the "Florida Home Loan Protection Act" to prevent abusive mortgage lending practices and situations and to protect homeowners entering into and complying with mortgage contracts or agreements. See bill for details. 30 31

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