



611980

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate

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House

Senator Rouson moved the following:

**Senate Amendment (with title amendment)**

Delete lines 88 - 92

and insert:

That elected and appointed officers of local governments in this state should take appropriate actions to avoid giving the impression that they in any way condone the Cuban government's tyranny and cruel oppression of its people.

===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

And the title is amended as follows:



611980

12 Delete lines 3 - 84

13 and insert:

14 government while encouraging the elected and appointed  
15 officials of local governments in this state to take  
16 appropriate actions when meeting with Cuban officials  
17 who represent a government with a history of brutality  
18 to avoid giving the impression of condoning the Cuban  
19 government's tyranny and cruel oppression of its  
20 people.

21

22 WHEREAS, on January 1, 1959, Fidel Castro and his guerilla  
23 army overthrew dictator Fulgencio Batista's government in  
24 Havana, Cuba, and on February 16, 1959, Fidel Castro was sworn  
25 in as Cuba's prime minister, and

26 WHEREAS, after flirting with building relationships with  
27 the United States and other nations, the Cuban government in  
28 1960 officially became an ally of the former Union of Soviet  
29 Socialist Republics (Soviet Union), with Fidel Castro officially  
30 announcing the alliance on March 1, 1961, and

31 WHEREAS, Cuba's relationship with the Soviet Union, a  
32 country founded on communist principles that saw the closing of  
33 churches and schools indoctrinating school-age children,  
34 continued until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, which  
35 began the "Special Period" of financial and political crisis in  
36 Cuba, and

37 WHEREAS, Fidel Castro engaged, and the regime continues to  
38 engage, in abominable human rights violations, including the  
39 execution or indefinite detainment of many persons opposing the  
40 regime, and



611980

41 WHEREAS, on February 24, 2008, Fidel Castro handed over the  
42 reins of the Cuban government to his brother, Raul Castro, who  
43 was elected president by the National Assembly, and today,  
44 Miguel Diaz-Canel, who succeeded Raul Castro as president in  
45 2018, serves in that capacity and as secretary of the Central  
46 Committee of the Cuban Communist Party, and

47 WHEREAS, on January 12, 2021, the United States Government  
48 officially listed Cuba as a state sponsor of terrorism alongside  
49 Iran, North Korea, and Syria, and

50 WHEREAS, the United States Secretary of State has  
51 determined that Cuba repeatedly provided support for acts of  
52 international terrorism, and

53 WHEREAS, on July 11, 2021, a series of protests against the  
54 Cuban regime erupted on the island, marking the first time in 60  
55 years that ordinary Cubans dared to publicly rise up against  
56 their government over its political oppression, including the  
57 arrests of thousands who were never heard from again, food  
58 shortages, rising prices of goods and commodities, the lack of  
59 access to medicines, and unreliable electricity, and

60 WHEREAS, Cubans all over the world joined their compatriots  
61 in protests against the oppressive and tyrannical Cuban  
62 government, shouting, "¡Patria y vida!" appropriating and  
63 changing Fidel Castro's slogan of "Patria o muerte," made famous  
64 during his takeover of Cuba, and

65 WHEREAS, on March 3, 2023, a group of Cuban officials, led  
66 by Cuban Ambassador Lianys Torres Rivera, had a dinner meeting  
67 with local Tampa officials and business leaders at an upscale  
68 Tampa restaurant, and

69 WHEREAS, as word spread of the meeting, a protest erupted



611980

70 at the restaurant, with outraged protestors confronting the  
71 ambassador and her delegation, shouting at them and demanding to  
72 know why tens of thousands of Cubans are being held as political  
73 prisoners by their own government in violation of human rights  
74 laws, and

75 WHEREAS, the Cuban delegation requested this meeting to  
76 discuss travel restrictions and remittances to the island  
77 nation, and

78 WHEREAS, the Cuban delegation and those in the meeting were  
79 attempting to open the door to establishing cultural and  
80 business ties with the United States in areas of this state  
81 willing to entertain such exploratory discussions, and

82 WHEREAS, it may be important for local officials and  
83 business leaders in this state to meet with representatives of  
84 foreign governments to give them the opportunity to make their  
85 case for improved relations and to foster better understanding  
86 of their positions, which at times may require face-to-face  
87 meetings to allow them to explore the possibility of forming  
88 future relationships, NOW, THEREFORE,