



Florida Action Committee, Inc.
P.O. Box 470932
Lake Monroe, FL 32747-0932
www.floridaactioncommittee.org

December 13, 2017

Miami-Dade County
Public Safety and Health Committee (PSHC)
Attn: Daysha McBride
Stephen P. Clark Government Center
111 NW 1st Street, 2nd Floor Commission Chambers
Miami, Florida 33128

SENT VIA EMAIL
dmcbrid@miamidade.gov

**RE: STATEMENT IN OPPOSITION OF THE PROPOSED
AMENDMENT TO SECTION 21-286 OF THE COUNTY CODE**

Dear Ms. McBride:

I respectfully request this letter be submitted to the members of the Public Safety and Health Committee in anticipation of today's meeting and be made part of the public record.

The Florida Action Committee (FAC) is a not-for-profit public safety advocacy organization. Our concern is both for the individuals who were legislated into homelessness and forced to live there, as well as the community in those areas in which they are clustered. Our membership comprises your constituents and citizens of Florida in other Counties, who have an interest in the above-referenced Amendment.

On August 25th, this organization wrote to the County Commissioners concerning the homeless encampment on NW 71st Street and 36th Court in Miami. Last month we wrote to the Commissioners in opposition of this proposed amendment.

Today, we write to reinforce our position on this matter and to ensure that our concerns are brought to the Committee's attention.

Roughly one-third of sex offenders on probation are homeless and more than one-quarter those not on probation are also homeless. These alarming statistics are the direct cause of the Miami-Dade County Sex Offender Residency Restrictions (SORR), which has excluded these individuals from living in most of the County.

The overwhelming majority of the four-hundred plus individuals who are homeless would have someplace to live but-for the SORR. Undoubtedly, the overwhelming majority of the two-hundred-fifty plus individuals who are living without shelter or running water along the railroad tracks at NW 71st Street and 36th Court would not be there, but-for the SORR leaving that location as the only place for them to go. Most, in fact, were directed there by their probation officers!

As previously stated, if the proposed amendment passes, these individuals will be stuck between a rock and a hard place. Either they stay in the area and risk arrest for violating 21-286, or they leave that designated location and risk arrest for violating the County's SORR. In either case, to merely exist they have no choice but to violate a law, subject themselves to arrest and potential violation of probation.

It is inequitable to remove a protection afforded the homeless, all because an individual is forced to live someplace involuntarily and bear a designation they are saddled with involuntarily.

The proposed amendment will not solve any problems, only create new and more complicated ones. The County's Sex Offender Residency Restriction (SORR), which legislates these individuals into homelessness, will now, further, legislate these individuals into law-breaking.

After over a decade of not achieving it's intended objective, numerous studies proving it counter-productive and creating significant unintended consequences, it is time the County repealed its SORR!

We implore you to reject the proposed amendment to 21-286 and take steps to repeal the SORR!

Sincerely,

s/

Gail Colletta, President

The Florida Action Committee, Inc.