

Support for commissioners on Live Local Act Stance

Opinion in Sarasota Herald-Tribune July 24, 2026

In April, the Sarasota County commissioners unanimously and courageously acted to protect our community from unintended consequences of Tallahassee's Live Local Act.

Our commissioners deserve credit for defending our community and doing their jobs – not to be sued personally.

We support affordable housing for working families, but the Live Local Act is being used as a wrecking ball.

By mandating administrative approvals and bypassing public hearings and home-rule, the Live Local Act allows high-density developments to ignore existing zoning density and infrastructure limitations – and to threaten existing neighborhoods and the Celery Fields' wildlife habitat.

Twisting a flawed 2025 legislative 'fix,' developers filed 17 applications for high-density projects on Sarasota's rural and residential lands – from Siesta Key to more than 700 acres at Verna Road.

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Examples include 864 units in 65-foot-tall buildings by the Celery Fields and 2,250 units on Tatum Ridge Golf Course.

The county commission's April decision drew a line in the sand; it determined that the Live Local Act does not apply to our rural and residential lands. This action triggered four lawsuits by developers against the county, including one suing individual commissioners personally.

We stand firmly behind our commissioners as they defend local planning rights, protect our communities and fight for Sarasota County in court.

This letter was signed by the following local organizations:

- The Sarasota Audubon Society, Inc.
- Sarasota County Council of Neighborhood Associations, Inc. (CONA)
- Big Waters Land Trust
- Protect Siesta Key Inc.
- Stay Tatum Ridge United Association Inc. (StayTRU)
- Keep the Country Inc.
- Sarasota East-Enders for Responsible Development Inc. (SEERD)