



Talking to Business Owners/Leaders Speech

Replace “city” if you are a town or village.

As the **TITLE** of **NAME OF CITY**, I am proud to represent us.

While I’m here as a representative of **NAME OF CITY**, the question is, how do people like me know the best policies and practices for our unique community? The answer is: By staying connected to the drivers of the local economy – members of the business community.

I cannot overstate how important it is for me to create relationships and stay engaged with you, learning what is important to you. Allow me to use my role as **TITLE** to bring us together.

You are the ones who employ our residents and drive our economy. You are the ones who provide the products and services that allow our **CITY** to prosper. You bring in tax dollars and elevate the quality of life for our citizens.

We need to know what is important to you, and as one of your elected leaders, I will make these a priority. My door is always open. We can accomplish great things working together to achieve shared goals.

Not everyone is on our team, however. Right now, at **this** very moment, there is a power play taking place behind the scenes at the state Capitol.

A movement that **threatens** our **constitutional right to govern ourselves**, a movement to quiet our voices here in **CITY NAME**, to tell **us** that **they** are better equipped to make decisions for **our** community ...

It’s called **Home Rule**.

Yes, **our** right of Home Rule, to govern ourselves is under attack. You may already be feeling the effects ...

Many of you have called **CITY** hall asking for our help because [include a business concern that you cannot fully address because of a preemption. It might be determining where cell towers (5G small cells) are installed and what they look like; regulating ride-sharing apps; calling for more regulations on firearms, especially with the recent tragic events in our state; etc.]

We decide how our **local** tax dollars are used ... More police officers ... Better transportation ... More programs to serve our youth. Shouldn’t we also decide the policies we want to govern those programs?



We must work together to ensure that the state doesn't take away our constitutional right of Home Rule to govern ourselves. What makes our cities and its businesses strong is the ability to adopt ordinances and enact programs effectively and efficiently in response to our needs. We do not need permission from the state. We already have it!

We've had this right for 50 years. 50 years of local decision making. 50 years of Florida's cities crafting our own laws specifically tailored to our own unique needs. One size fits all doesn't fit us.

Home Rule is our cherished concept, supported by an overwhelming majority of Florida citizens. It is the foundation for local governments as we create fair, effective and responsive policies for our communities. However, in the last few years, the state has increasingly sought to take away this right from us.

We have an ally in this fight.

Since 1922, the Florida League of Cities has been the united voice for Florida's municipal governments. The League is dedicated to serving the needs of Florida's cities. The cornerstone of this organization is to protect and promote local self-government, our right to Home Rule.

I will fight to protect Home Rule, and so will the League, but we can't do it alone. We need you on our team.

To pledge your support to protect local self-government.

To take a stand and tell state lawmakers "get out of our backyard." ...

Share this message with your friends and family. Post it on social media. Talk about it at your kid's sporting events and on Sunday mornings ...

We shop local, we work local, we live local ... so **we** should decide local.

[A specific call to action should be added here. We recommend starting with a call to sign-up at www.WeLiveLocalFL.com to learn more about Home Rule and access exclusive advocacy materials designed for residents. Other action steps should be determined by when the speech is given. If months away from session, it could be asking the audience to sign a general petition against legislators taking away local authority. If near or during session, it might be to oppose a bill that preempts local control and providing the audience with information about the bill and the names/contact information of their representative and senator.]

I welcome and encourage suggestions and questions from you, our business owners and my neighbors.

I look forward to a successful year working with you. Thank you for being here!

