



Talking to Citizens Speech

Please replace “Utopia” with the name of your city, town or village.

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

Why UTOPIA?

What is it about our CITY that makes it the place we **choose** to call home, that we **love** to call home?

For me, it’s the [include a few attributes of your city, such as vacation-worthy beaches or other attractions; festivals and special events that bring the community together; a lively downtown where people live, work and play; hiking and biking trails; the city’s natural beauty; charm during the holiday season; friendliness of residents, etc.]

But, it’s also the things that sometimes **aren’t** as visible...

Like our clean streets and sidewalks...

The men and women working night shifts to keep our neighborhoods safe...

The conveniences of everyday life – like dependable trash pickup, clean water at the turn of a faucet or litter-free parks to enjoy our leisure time.

We don’t talk about **these** things enough. We don’t focus on the everyday moments that shape our community.

Life is made up of moments, and today – I’m here to talk about a defining moment for all of us.

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 UTOPIA, to tell **us** that **they** are better equipped to make decisions for **our** community...

It’s called **Home Rule**.

Yes, **our** right to Home Rule, to govern ourselves and have citizen-centered solutions is under attack. And, if that sounds harsh, it’s because it is.

You may already be starting to feel the effects...





Many of you have called CITY hall asking for our help because [include a resident concern that you cannot fully address because of a preemption. It might be regulating smoking in public parks; controlling where medical marijuana dispensaries are located; determining where cell towers (5G small cells) are installed and what they look like; vacation rentals taking over your neighborhood; more regulations on firearms, especially with the recent tragic events in our state; the regulation of plastic bags, etc.]

You asked for our help. We understand there is an important need ... but our hands are tied. The state Legislature has taken away much of our ability to assist you with NAME OF ISSUE.

We fight hard each legislative session for the ability to assist you, but we are fighting against special interests, and many of them don't even live in Florida. They don't come to UTOPIA to improve our quality of life or create jobs. They come to make money.

We decide how our **local** tax dollars are used... More police officers... Better transportation... More programs to serve our senior citizens and our youth. Shouldn't we, as residents, also decide the policies we want to govern those programs? Shouldn't we be able to set our own priorities in UTOPIA without distant politicians hamstringing our ability to see them through?

Now – more than ever, Home Rule – **our ability to govern ourselves, to chart our own course, to choose our own destiny is in jeopardy.** If we don't protect this ability, state lawmakers will continue to chisel away at it until we are left with nothing.

It is happening in the halls of the Florida Capitol. **They** are taking away **our** ability to make UTOPIA the best it can be. Why? Because big dollar corporations are joining together to **deprive us of** our ability to make UTOPIA the best it can be. You can be sure that INCLUDE NAME OF PREEMPTION FROM ABOVE is just one example.

These corporations want to create one-size-fits-all policies that will handcuff our communities and suggest that we don't know what works best in our hometowns.

These companies want to make this state a big cookie cutter piece of land – where we pay no attention to the unique differences that are so clear to us who live here... Miami is not Mount Dora. UTOPIA **is not Umatilla.** [Pick the name of a city that begins with the same first letter as your city.]

So, we have an opportunity today. We have a choice to make.

Do we want to relinquish our right to oversee UTOPIA? (NO).

Do we believe that state politicians making their decisions in Tallahassee know what works best in our neighborhoods? (NO.)

Then, we need to do something about it.

We need each and every one of you to **pay close attention to this movement.** ...

To pledge your support to protect Home Rule.

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 play local, we **live** local... so **we** should decide local.

We have too much at stake to put our heads in the sand and not have our voices heard.

These are our streets, our trees, our parks and libraries... our neighborhoods.

We, the people of **UTOPIA**, have something very precious to fight for...something worthwhile to protect. Do not forget that **we have the power to govern ourselves**. **We** have a **constitutional right** to make decisions for our community. We do. You... And me...

I love being your **INSERT YOUR TITLE HERE**. I love this **CITY**. Let's join together so that special interests don't hijack our hometown.

[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 will 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, questions and feedback from you, my neighbors.

Thank you for being here and joining with me to protect our **UTOPIA**.

