



# WE LIVE *Local*

## Tips for Talking About Home Rule with... **RESIDENTS**

It is tough for everyday people to have our voices heard by a state government that is miles away and meets infrequently. This is precisely why local government is so effective! But in today's climate of state interference, it is more important than ever to engage as many local residents as possible in the statewide fight to protect and respect Home Rule. Business owners, community leaders and everyday residents are all tremendous assets. We must prepare ourselves and our neighbors to take a stand to support the right to self-govern.

**1. PROVIDE LOCAL EXAMPLES.** What issues have our council successfully addressed in the recent past? What solutions are we working on now that our neighborhoods care about the most? How are special interests driving state policy development instead of local interests? And what are the negative impacts of those proposals on our community? Localizing the issues gives us a reason to become passionate advocates for Home Rule.

**2. IDENTIFY AND UTILIZE INFLUENCERS.** Messengers matter. When recruiting more voices to get involved, be sure to share the message with likely advocates. Reinforce that local decision-making is the best way to resolve local challenges, and share this information with neighbors. When we engage the right business, civic and religious leaders and community activists, the message of protecting Home Rule will resonate throughout our city.

**3. START SMALL.** One of the easiest ways to overwhelm an advocate is to demand too much action too early. Start by offering easy ways to get involved: Sign up at [WeLiveLocalFL.com](http://WeLiveLocalFL.com) for more information, share a message on social media, take a pledge. Then up the ante with more involved actions: Craft an individual message to a specific legislator, make a personal phone call or meet face-to-face with a state lawmaker in his/her office or committee.

**4. STAY IN TOUCH.** Too often we call on each other only when we want action. And too often the sparse communications results in missed messages. Just like we must cultivate relationships with state lawmakers year-round, so too with each other. Always provide immediate follow-up whenever you issue a call to action – even the simple stuff. Highlight responses in digital communications, via social media and during council meetings.



### WHERE TO FIND KEY LEADERS IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Ask to speak at meetings or events hosted by:

- ▼ Chambers of Commerce
- ▼ Civic groups like Kiwanis or Rotary
- ▼ Faith-based organizations
- ▼ Home Owners Associations and neighborhood organizations
- ▼ Senior centers

Or host your own:

- ▼ Coffee with a Commissioner
- ▼ Morning Walk with the Mayor

These are all great ways to connect with each other on issues that celebrate our ability to solve local problems and spur innovation.

