

# Group works to sway ‘sanctuary cities’ bill

By Ana Ceballos  
The News Service of Florida

TALLAHASSEE — A hard-line group that wants to “defeat immigration anarchy” in Florida influenced the drafting of a Senate proposal that would ban so-called sanctuary cities, one of the legislative session’s most politically charged fights.

A bill sponsored by Sen. Joe Gruters, R-Sarasota, would give the attorney general authority to take action against local governments, an approach suggested in January by a lawyer for the group Floridians for Immigration Enforcement, according to emails obtained by The News Service of Florida.

In addition to the bill reflecting the suggestion about the attorney general, a Senate staff analysis also includes a controversial list provided by Floridians for Immigration Enforcement that labels 15 municipalities as “sanctuary cities” — or what the group calls “anarchy cities.”

Gruters’ office worked with David Caulkett, the organization’s vice president who also serves as a Florida adviser for another hard-line group, the Federation for American Immigration Reform, or FAIR.

Caulkett told the News Service of Florida that his group, which he says is an “anti-illegal immigration” activist group, worked closely with Gruters in the drafting of the bill (SB 168), but he refused to provide details on specific language discussed between the group and the senator.

“Of course we helped,” Caulkett told the News Service. “How influential we were? I don’t know. I can’t say.”

A glimpse of those discussions, however, can be seen in emails between the group and the senator’s office, including how the group warned Gruters that distributing the list of 15 municipalities could cause problems if spread widely.

“Per Senator Gruters’ request, the list of sanctuary cities in Florida, or as I call them Anarchy Cities, is attached... (Floridians for Immigration Enforcement) suggests you consider not widely distributing the list as that would just create problems,” Caulkett wrote to Joshua Barnhill, a staff member in Gruters’ office.

Gruters still shared the information, and it was included in a staff analysis of the bill, along with the research of another controversial group, the Center for Immigration Studies, or CIS. The move, as Caulkett predicted, caused problems in committee hearings.

“Do you know or did you know that CIS and FAIR are anti-immigrant hate groups?” Sen. Janet Cruz, D-Tampa, asked Gruters on March 12 during a committee meeting. “How did this happen in our analysis?”

“That’s the first time I have heard them characterized as anti-immigrant hate groups,” said Gruters, who doubles as chairman of the Republican Party of Florida.

The Southern Poverty Law Center website categorizes the Center for Immigration Studies and FAIR as a “hate groups” because John Tanton, who helped form the groups, has “expressed his wish that America remains a majority-white population: a goal to be achieved, presumably, by limiting the number of

non-whites who enter the country.”

Pushing back against that “hate group” label, the Center for Immigration Studies filed a lawsuit in January, arguing the organization has been damaged by the “conspiracy to falsely call it a hate group,” court records show. Caulkett told the News Service that the Southern Poverty Law Center is a “scumbag organization” and that it’s “laughable” to be labeled a “hate group.”

Gruters said Caulkett’s group “did not contribute anything toward the language that is in SB 168.”

But the group’s attorney in January suggested changing a provision that would have given authority to state attorneys to ensure local governments don’t limit cooperation with immigration authorities. The attorney made a recommendation to “drop State Attorneys so just the Attorney General handles prosecutions,” emails show. Gruters’ bill currently has the attorney general handling enforcement, which Attorney General Ashley Moody supports.

“We understand that the association of State Attorneys, FPAA (the Florida Prosecuting Attorneys Association), will oppose the bill as written,” Caulkett said in an email.

An effort by the group to have more language included in the bill, but Gruters’ staff put it through the bill drafting process. In a January email, Caulkett attached two bills to an email and asked to “get the bills into bill drafting ASAP.”

“Thanks for sending over, David. I put them both in bill drafting earlier this morning,” wrote Barnhill, the Gruters staff member, in a Jan. 23 email.

That language did not make into the bill.

When asked how involved the group was with the bill, Gruters told the News Service of Florida said it has no involvement, “other than as advocates.” Gruters said bill language was adjusted based on discussions with Senate Judiciary Chairman David Simmons, R-Altamonte Springs, and Pinellas County Sheriff Bob Gualtieri.

Anti-sanctuary city proposals in the House and Senate have sailed through committees this year. The Senate has moved faster than in previous years, when attempts to pass the measure failed. In the House, the bill now has only has to clear one more committee.

House sponsor Cord Byrd, R-Neptune Beach, said he has worked with Gruters and Gualtieri, adding there was “no coordination with outside groups” to amend the House bill (HB 527).

Byrd’s bill includes tougher penalties for local governments that do not comply with federal immigration authorities, including allowing lawsuits against local governments if undocumented immigrants are freed and kill or injure people.

Sensing that Republican lawmakers, with the help of Gov. Ron DeSantis, are more receptive to cracking down on illegal immigration this year, Caulkett said he is hopeful Florida will “defeat immigration anarchy.”

“And please quote me on that, we are not fighting sanctuary cities, they are anarchy cities,” Caulkett said. “Not only do they disobey the law, but I question their loyalty to this country.”



Flight Engineer Anne McClain, shown on Jan. 18, was supposed to participate in a spacewalk Friday with newly arrived Christina Koch. But McClain pulled herself from the lineup because there's not enough time to get two mediums suits ready. Koch will go out with a male crewmate. [NASA VIA AP]

# NASA nixes first all-female spacewalk due to suit issue

By Marcia Dunn  
The Associated Press

CAPE CANAVERAL — NASA has nixed the first all-female spacewalk over a spacesuit sizing issue.

Astronaut Anne McClain was supposed to float out of the International Space Station this Friday with newly arrived Christina Koch, to replace old batteries. But McClain pulled herself from the lineup because there's not enough time to get two medium suits ready for them. Koch will go out with a male crewmate, Nick Hague.

NASA spokeswoman Brandi Dean said Tuesday that McClain trained before flight in both medium and large spacesuits. She wore a medium when she went out on her first spacewalk last Friday and was supposed to switch to a large this week. But after last week's spacewalk, she decided that a large would be too big.

It would have taken 12 hours to get another medium spacesuit ready and potentially compromised safety, according to Dean. These spacewalks are months late, and with cargo deliveries coming up, NASA wants to keep everything on track.

In 54 years of spacewalking, women have only gone outside with men. That's because men have always outnumbered women in space. As women continue to make up a greater percentage of the astronaut


corps, more gender records will be set and not just in spacewalking, Dean noted.

McClain, Koch and Hague are part of NASA's Astronaut Class of 2013, the only time there have been the same number of women accepted as men. NASA chose four women and four men that year.

Koch and Hague will continue the battery-swapping work that McClain and Hague began last Friday outside the space station. Old nickel-hydrogen batteries in the solar power grid are being replaced with new, powerful lithium-ion batteries.

McClain will get another shot at spacewalking April 8 when she ventures outside with Canadian astronaut David Saint-Jacques. There are six U.S. space-suit tops on the station — or hard upper torsos, as NASA calls them — with two considered spares. Both Hague and Saint-Jacques take large.

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING



**The Alachua County Development Review Committee will hold a public hearing Thursday, April 4, 2019 at 1:30 pm in the John R. “Jack” Durrance Auditorium, room 209, 12 S.E. 1st Street, Gainesville, Florida, to consider the following items:**

**Project 2018112601 - Preliminary and Final Development Plan and Exception from the Requirement to Connect to Sanitary Sewer Review - SmarterSpace Storage** - (three story approximately 98,450 sq. ft. storage facility with interior storage units and exterior boat/RV storage on approximately 3.39 acres) - Section 21-T10-R19 - Located on Tax Parcel Numbers 06885-000-000 and 06885-001-000 at 6589 SW Archer Road - JBrown Professional Group, Inc. - agents; Heavy Industrial Future Land Use Designation; Manufacturing and Processing Industrial (MP) Zoning District

**Project 2018082703 - Preliminary and Final Development Plan Review - Top Tier Planned Development Jonesville** - (approximately 10,400 sq. ft. non-residential building on approximately 4.00 acres) - Section 03-T10-R18 - Located on Tax Parcel Number 04344-005-005 at 425 SW 140<sup>th</sup> Terrace - Gmuier Engineering, LLC. - agents; Jonesville Activity Center and Office/Business Park Future Land Use Designation; Planned Development (PD) Zoning District, ZOM-07-17


**Project 2019020401 - Final Development Plan Review - Oakmont Planned Development SW 34th Road** - (proposed design and construction of the extension of SW 34<sup>th</sup> Road from SW 115<sup>th</sup> Terrance to SW 122<sup>nd</sup> Street on approximately 9.22 acres) - Section 13-T10-R18 - Located on a portion of Tax Parcel Number 04427-000-000 - Causseaux, Hewett and Walpole, Inc. - agents; Low Density Residential (1 to 4 dwelling units per acre) Use Future Land Use Designation; Planned Development (PD) Zoning District

All interested persons are invited to attend and be heard. Written comments may be filed with the Office of Planning and Development for consideration. In addition to any other comments, interested persons are invited to submit comments on whether the proposal will have a significant impact on the cost of housing.

All persons are advised that, if they decide to appeal any decision made at this public hearing or meeting, they will need a record of the proceedings and, for such purpose, they may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

If you have a disability and need an accommodation in order to participate in a program or service of the Growth Management Department, please contact the Growth Management Department at 352-374-5249 at least 2 business days prior to the event, TDD users, please call 711 (Florida Relay Service). Printed materials are available in alternate format upon request.

**General Information:** Staff Reports on the above item will be available on Friday of the week preceding the meeting at the Office of Planning and Development: 10 S.W. 2nd Avenue, 3rd Floor, Gainesville, FL 32601. For further information call (352) 374-5249.



**Notice of Funding Availability  
Alachua County Department of  
Community Support Services  
State Housing Initiatives  
Partnership (SHIP)  
Program State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2018-2019  
Funding Cycle:**

The Alachua County Department of Community Support Services will make available ~~\$227,866.00.~~ in SHIP SFY 2017 -2018 an additional ~~\$388,860.40~~ funding totaling ~~\$616,726.40~~ for the Home Repair and Special Needs Programs. Program payments are made on a reimbursement basis.

**Down Payment Assistance**  
Applications are available through a SHIP certified Lender beginning October 1, 2019 and ending June 30, 2020, or earlier, until funds are exhausted. The certified lenders list is available on-line and at the Alachua County Community Support Services Department. Down Payment Assistance funding will be available to eligible first time homebuyers. Available amount of award will be tiered as reflected.

Up to 50% of the area median income, up to \$15,000. Up to 80% of the area median income, up to \$10,000. Up to 120% of the area median income, up to \$5,000.
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**Home Repair Program**  
Funding of ~~\$185,000.00~~ is available to affordable housing providers to provide not-for-profit agencies or quasi-governmental agencies home repairs to very low and low-income households in Alachua County. Twenty percent of funding must be use for Special needs as defined in 420.0004(13), F.S.

Applications for funding are available beginning May 1, 2019 and are due by 1:00 p.m. on May 30, 2019 at 218 SE 24th St., Gainesville, FL. 32641. All funds must be expended by May 31, 2020.

**Rental Assistance Program**  
\$120,000.00 will be provided to the local Rental Assistance Program which provides funding to pay rental security and utility deposits as well as ongoing monthly rent subsidies on behalf of eligible very-low and extremely-low income persons and/or households within Alachua County. Eligible utility deposits include only provider-mandated deposits for water, sewer, electricity, and gas. Eligible rent subsidies are not to exceed 12 months’ rent for households with at least one adult who is a person with special needs as defined by Florida Statutes in s.420.0004 or a person who is homeless as defined in s.420.621 when the person initially qualified for a rent subsidy. Rental Assistance funds may also be used to pay reasonable project delivery costs associated with strategy implementation such as inspection fees to ensure the unit meets Section 8 Housing Quality Standards or HUD Habitability Standards.” The maximum grant award is \$6,000.00 per household.

For additional information, please call the Alachua County Social Services office at 352-264-6750.

**Rental Development**  
\$100,000.00 will be provided to developers of affordable rental units that are awarded construction financing through other state or federal housing programs to construct or rehabilitate affordable units in Alachua County. In cases where a developer is proposing over 50 units the maximum award if \$50,000. If less than 50 units and includes Special Needs unites the maximum award if \$100,000.00

Applications for funding are available beginning May 1, 2019 and are due by 1:00 p.m. on May 30, 2019 at 218 SE 24th St., Gainesville, FL. 32641. All funds must be expended by May 31, 2020.

If accommodations are needed for persons with disabilities, please contact the Alachua County Equal Opportunity Office at (352) 374-5275 (voice) or (352) 374-5284 (TDD) or 711 Relay Friendly.

For general information, visit our website at <http://www.alachuacounty.us/depts/css/house/pages/housing.aspx> or contact James Shaw at the Alachua County Community Support Services Department at 352 337-6284.

**ALACHUA COUNTY IS A FAIR HOUSING/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/DISABILITY ACCESS JURISDICTION**

<sup>1</sup>Income limits published by the Florida Housing Finance Corporation SHIP Program  
GF-GH049259