

HRO, Major Threat To Small Business

The LGBT preferential rights [bill before City Council](#) is being peddled using disinformation and outright trickery. It is not the compromise promised by sponsors, but a far more dangerous and deceptive ordinance than ever proposed.

Scare Tactics Scam

Sponsors misleadingly claim the economy is weakened when LGBT laws are absent. Exactly the opposite has happened. The [Jacksonville Business Journal reports that](#), in the 12 months following rejection of the [2012 law](#), Jacksonville saw *“the greatest economic improvement [of any city] in the entire country”*, becoming *“the strongest economy in Florida”*, stronger than all HRO-adopting cities.

HRO backers claim deceptively that companies have bypassed Jacksonville, because it lacks this law. When asked to name one company which rejected Jacksonville, [bill sponsor Aaron Bowman](#) said *“I’m not at liberty to say”*. But, during [the 2016 ordinance debate](#), he confessed: *“The companies won’t tell us”*.

The same hoax resurfaced this year, but **Jax Chamber** spokesman Darnell [Smith rejected it](#): *“We can’t tell you that there’s ever been a situation in which they said to us: ‘We will not come here on this issue alone’ . . .”*

HROs cause feigned disharmony. Gay entrepreneur Jeff Morr of Miami [brought investment partners to Jacksonville](#) to trumpet its advantages, declaring [“people are very welcoming here”](#). But later he reversed himself to sway HRO passage.

Learn how Jacksonville is booming without an HRO at tinyurl.com/JaxEconomy.

Menace to Small Business

This law will inflict unnecessary lawsuits and government intrusion on business. One “rights” complaint could easily exceed \$20,000 in legal defense fees alone, producing financial ruin.

In addition, the “offender” could suffer fines or, until he complies, court-ordered incarceration, endangering his company’s survival.

- Further, the 15-employee exemption gives NO protection to any business — REGARDLESS OF SIZE — from the HRO’s public accommodation and bathroom, dressing and locker room provisions.
- Businesses must let men claiming womanhood use women’s facilities. And question-

ing whether a man’s female identity is *“consistent, uniform, and sincerely-held”* risks discrimination actions.



- Managers face personal and company liability for challenging men entering women’s and girls’ facilities, AND for any subsequent crime from letting the wrong man enter.
- Protected individuals may undertake any action, mannerism, appearance, gesture, language or attire, which they alone deem “expressions” of their lifestyles. Sponsors won’t reveal the ever-changing “expressions” which businesses must tolerate to avoid prosecution, making them sitting ducks for lawsuits.
- Businesses must police the Free Speech of employees and customers, or suffer costly discrimination complaints. Even using the wrong gender pronoun could be actionable.
- Businesses will be forced to participate in celebrating LGBT lifestyles regardless of the owners’ religious opposition.
- LGBTs will receive preferences in hiring, layoffs and housing disputes.

*“Most small businesses don’t want this law,” says [40-year Chamber member Bennett Brown](#), a banker: *“I’ve arranged loans for thousands of small businesses over 40 years, and most don’t want this.”**

Council Votes On Nonexistent Bill

Law sponsors haven’t informed the public that City Council will vote sight-unseen on an ordinance that won’t be written until many weeks later. If it’s enacted, city attorneys get unlimited power to write the final code to be inflicted on Jacksonville, [in a process called “finalization and codification . . . without further Council action”](#).

And, to disguise this 2017 HRO as “new” and “simple”, the bill scarcely mentions that 29 sections of existing code will change, without showing how — and it fails to resolve significant conflicts with existing laws.

This bill is the embodiment of fraud and trickery.

Voters are tired of being told they’re too ignorant to comprehend this fake “human rights” crisis, which is designed to gain LGBT power, victim status, special privilege and acceptance, and to suppress criticism — while curbing the rights of others.