

Citizens



FOR THE PRESERVATION OF ST. AUGUSTINE, INC.

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CPSA POSITION STATEMENT

Citizens for the Preservation of St. Augustine (CPSA) voices opposition to House Bill 1037 and Senate Bill 1348

February 1, 2012

Citizens for the Preservation of St. Augustine (CPSA) hereby voice our strong opposition to House Bill 1037 and Senate Bill 1348, both titled Coordination Between Schools and Local Governments. These bills would redefine the relationship between the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind (FSDB) and the City of St. Augustine as pertaining to the purchase and development of properties by the school within city limits.

CPSA is a citizen's action group that came together to collectively address the unique issues that continue to confront the residents of historic St. Augustine. When we formed in 2003, our mission was to illuminate preservation issues within the community and to give structure to preservation activism. Since that time we have created programs to educate and inform residents and visitors and use any funds raised to support local preservation projects.

One of our most featured neighborhoods has been Nelmar Terrace, highlighting the celebrated and unique residential architecture as well as the bad community behavior on the part of FSDB. Visit our website <http://www.cpsa-staug.org> and reference the *2004 Threatened Historic Places* campaign and the *2010 Know Your City* tour which both featured FSDB issues. These campaigns illustrate that the struggle between FSDB and the City of St. Augustine is contentious and ongoing due to the school's lack of cooperation.

It is a great concern that FSDB might gain eminent domain and immunity from local codes with no accountability to the City of St. Augustine. Local neighborhood matter should not be legislated at the state level.

CPSA has written letters to the urge our state legislators to kill this misguided legislation. We also have a citizen's alert posted on our website to encourage and assist individuals in the community to voice their opinion as well.

Guiding Principals: Residents should become educated and involved in the process of our local government • CPSA provides an independent monitor of government actions • Preservation means more than saving and restoring buildings; It refers to the quality of life for the residents of St. Augustine • Resident interests should be balanced with business and institutional interests • The mass and scale of buildings and street layout contribute to numerous historic designations and are important to preserve St. Augustine's unique qualities • A Historic Preservation Plan should guide the enforcement of existing ordinances and development of new ones to protect the historic heritage of St. Augustine.