Committee on Community Affairs

CS/HB 403 — Home-based Businesses

by Commerce Committee and Rep. Giallombardo and others (CS/CS/SB 266 by Rules Committee; Community Affairs Committee; and Senators Perry and Baxley)

CS/HB 403 preempts areas of regulation for home-based businesses to the state. It forbids counties and municipalities from enacting or enforcing any ordinance, regulation, or policy or take any action to license or otherwise regulate a home-based business in violation of the bill provisions. Currently, local governments regulate business activities conducted on residential property through ordinances that address "home occupations." The bill's restrictions on local government home-based business regulations would cause existing local government ordinances inconsistent with the bill's prohibitions to become null and void by operation of law.

The bill provides that a home-based business may operate in an area zoned for residential use and may not be prohibited, restricted, regulated, or licensed in a manner different from other businesses in a local government's jurisdiction otherwise provided by the bill.

The bill includes criteria that home-based businesses must meet to operate in an area zoned for residential use. To be considered a home-based business under the bill, a business must meet the following criteria:

- The activities of the home-based business must be secondary to the property's use as a residential dwelling.
- The business employees who work at the residential dwelling must also reside in the residential dwelling, except that up to two employees or independent contractors who do not reside at the residential dwelling may work at the business.
- Parking related to the business activities of the home-based business must comply with local zoning requirements. The business may not generate a need for parking greater in volume than a similar residence where no business is conducted. Local governments may regulate the parking or storage of heavy equipment at the business which is visible from the street.
- As viewed from the street, the residential property must be consistent with the uses of the residential areas surrounding the property. Any external modifications to a home-based business must conform to the residential character and architectural aesthetics of the neighborhood. The home-based business may not conduct retail transactions at a structure other than the residential dwelling; however, incidental business uses and activities may be conducted at the residential property.
- All business activities must comply with any relevant local or state regulations concerning signage and equipment or processes that create noise, vibration, heat, smoke, dust, glare, fumes, or noxious odors. However, such regulations on a business, absent signage, may not be more stringent than those that apply to a residence where no business is conducted.
- All business activities must comply with any relevant local, state, and federal regulations concerning the use, storage, or disposal of hazardous materials. However, such regulations on a business may not be more stringent than those that apply to a residence where no business is conducted.

This summary is provided for information only and does not represent the opinion of any Senator, Senate Officer, or Senate Office.

Any adversely affected current or prospective home-based business owner may recover reasonable attorney fees and costs incurred instituting or defending a legal action concerning the validity of a local government's home-based business regulations.

The bill does not supersede any current or future declaration of condominium adopted pursuant to ch. 718, F.S., cooperative document adopted pursuant to ch. 719, F.S., or declaration of covenants adopted pursuant to ch. 720, F.S. In addition, the bill does not supersede any local laws, ordinances, or regulations related to transient public lodging establishments that are not otherwise preempted under ch. 509, F.S.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2021.
Vote: Senate 19-18; House 77-41

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