



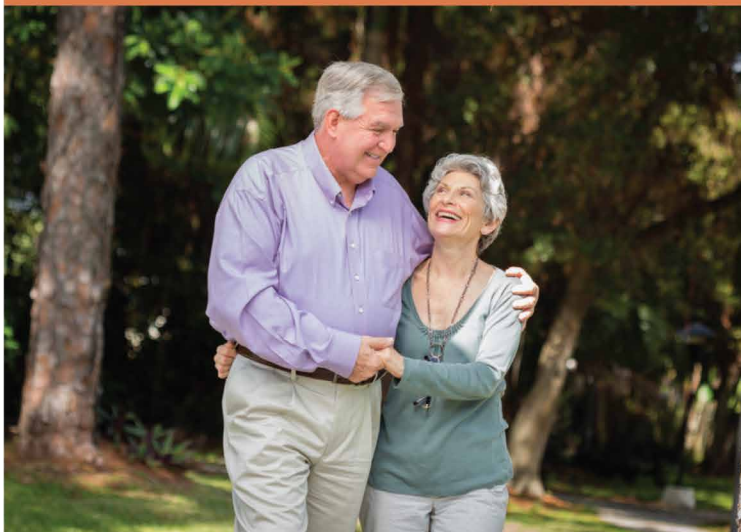
GALT MILE NEWS

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE GMCA
MAY 2019

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ELSS UPDATE

BATTLE OF THE BILLS

By Eric Berkowitz

Statehouse Representative Michael Grieco (D - Miami Beach), filed House Bill 647 (HB 647) on February 5, 2019, which empowers high-rise association homeowners to opt-out of any obligation "to retrofit a fire sprinkler system or other engineered life safety system..." by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the owners. Two weeks later, Senator Jason Pizzo (D - Miami) filed Senate Bill 1152 (SB 1152) on February 18, 2019, a companion bill in the other chamber. On March 1, 2019, Senator Gary Farmer (D - Fort Lauderdale) filed Senate Bill 1732 (SB 1732), which also allows association homeowners to forgo installing a \$multi-million ELSS with the approval of two-thirds of the voting interests.

However, the fire sprinkler associations and their hand puppets in the Fire Marshals union rallied to salvage a \$multi-billion windfall by recruiting legislative ringers to file opposing bills. Colluding with these "special interests", Senator Ed Hooper (R - Palm Harbor) filed Senate Bill 908 (SB 908) on February 8, 2019 - 3 days after Grieco filed his opt-out bill. Hooper's bill not only supports the mandate to retrofit fire sprinklers or an ELSS in Florida high-rise associations, it levies a \$500 per day penalty for impacted associations that fail to comply by December 31, 2022. Also, on February 8, 2019, Representative Byron Donalds (R - Hendry County) filed House Bill 723 (HB 723), a companion bill to Hooper's sell-out legislation.

ELSS Legislative Timeline

On March 6, 2019, HB 647 was approved in the House Business & Professions Subcommittee by a vote of 8 yeas vs. 7 nays. As described by LaMarca, on March 26, 2019, the bill was passed unanimously in the House Government Operations & Technology Appropriations Subcommittee - by a vote of 10 yeas vs. 0 nays. HB 647 is awaiting its final review by the House Commerce Committee. On March 19, 2019, Senator Pizzo's SB 1152 was overwhelmingly found favorable in the Senate Committee on Innovation, Industry, and Technology by a vote of 8 yeas vs. 1 nay, and forwarded to the Senate Committee on Community Affairs, the second of three vetting Committees in the Senate.

Not surprisingly, Donalds' bogus House bill is following the same Committee path as Grieco's HB 647. As such, after being approved by the House Business & Professions Subcommittee and the House Government Operations & Technology Appropriations Subcommittee, Donalds' HB 723 is awaiting review by the House Commerce Committee - like Grieco's HB 647. In the Senate, after Hooper's SB 908 was approved by the Senate Committee on Banking and Insurance, it was referred to the Senate Committee on Community Affairs, as was Pizzo's SB 1152 opt-out bill.

Committee Chair Acts to Kill Opt-Out Bill

Although the two bills should have been simultaneously vetted by the Senate Community Affairs Committee, on April 2, Committee Chair Senator Anitere Flores (R - Miami) placed Hooper's SB 908 on the agenda while blocking Pizzo's SB 1152 opt-out bill. After being approved by a vote of 4 Yeas vs. 1 Nay, SB 908 was referred to its final review in the Senate Committee on Rules. Ironically, Senator Pizzo also serves on the Community Affairs Committee, and Senator Farmer is Flores' Vice Chair. Despite their objections, Flores stonewalled the opt-out bill. Evidently, Flores places a higher priority on securing the ELSS windfall than protecting millions of cash-strapped Association homeowners, many of whom will be forced to relocate to avoid an unnecessary and expensive assessment.

Several actions are under consideration if Flores' subversive freeze can't be circumvented, and fatally strands the bill on the calendar. The opt-out bills can be refiled again next year, a legal action can be filed against fire marshals (and others) who exceeded their authority, or we can negotiate a compromise. Ellyn Bogdanoff and association officials are currently weighing the impacts of these - and other options.

To provide Ellyn Bogdanoff and supportive lawmakers with broad latitude in formulating a

strategic response, this message has largely been restrained and civil - and lacks the invective this issue richly deserves - given what's at stake - and the scam tactics implemented by the sprinkler associations and their uniformed lobbyists. The path our advocates choose to pursue, including its rationale (pros and cons), prospective pitfalls and the outcome will be detailed next month. Until then, please continue to help beat back this ELSS mandate by heeding the FACTSS updates, which are disseminated to every Galt Mile association.

FACTSS

Associations across Florida threatened with an onerous ELSS assessment coalesced to form the "Florida Association of Condominiums to Support Self-Determination" or FACTSS. Please visit the FACTSS website at <https://factss.org/>, where you can inform vetting committee members, legislative leaders and Governor Desantis of your support for House Bill 647 and Senate Bill 1152 - and your vehement opposition to Senate Bill 908

Continued on page5

Ellyn Bogdanoff



and House Bill 723 (bills filed to rip you off). Our choice is simple, either defuse this abrogation of our rights, or submit to regulatory extortion. In short, you are our not-so-secret weapon.

Post Script

On April 18, 2019, after being vetted by the House Commerce Committee, HB 647 was approved by a vote of 19 Yeas vs. 1 Nay and sent to the full House, where House Speaker José Oliva can schedule a floor vote. At the hearing, Rep. Grieco characterized the retrofit requirement as "a \$4 billion unfunded mandate." In describing how the demands of certain Fire Marshals to install fire sprinklers in associations that legally opted out violate State law, association advocate Bogdanoff testified "Statute trumps the fire code." Fortunately, Commerce Committee Chair Rep. Mike LaRosa (R – St. Cloud) omitted Donalds' skewed HB 723 from the roster, leaving it stranded on the calendar (turnabout is fair play). This war of nerves may end when the session concludes on May 3 (Sine Die), although the Governor has 15 days to alter the fate of enrolled bills sent to his desk.

Please continue to help beat back this ELSS mandate by heeding the FACTSS updates, which are disseminated to every Galt Mile association.

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EDITOR'S COMMENTARY:

Heather Moraitis' MARCH 2019 Newsletter

By Eric Berkowitz

In her March 2019 Newsletter, District 1 City Commissioner Heather Moraitis describes her recent efforts to allay constituent fears about ongoing water utility billing anomalies, and explains how the City plans to mitigate those concerns. Moraitis also provides online access to information about the recently voter-approved Parks and Police bonds and City Charter changes; reviews an ordinance that prohibits electric scooter on the Barrier Island during Spring Break - enforced by enhanced police oversight; thanks those who participated in the Annual Broward County Waterway Cleanup on March 2nd; and recruits District 1 volunteers to serve on their choice of several municipal Advisory Boards.

Water Bill Roller Coaster

For months, inexplicably high Fort Lauderdale water bills have prompted heated complaints by angry residents. Throughout city neighborhoods, water bills suddenly began skyrocketing and receding on a monthly basis. Bills that varied seasonally between \$200 - \$300 jumped to \$800 - or more. When reported to the City, ratepayers were typically given a primer about how the water rates are calculated and some speculative causes for the disparate charges. Sight unseen, the high bills were generally blamed on leaking toilets, leaking faucets, abusive overutilization by houseguests or irrigation system irregularities (i.e. cracks in the water lines, broken or missing sprinkler heads, poorly timed irrigation settings, etc.). However, leaky toilets and broken irrigation lines didn't explain why entire neighborhoods were simultaneously afflicted with sky-high bills.

To dampen the growing frustration of her District 1 constituents, City Commissioner Heather Moraitis conscripted some water utility officials and scheduled a March 4th public meeting to discuss high water bills at the Beach Community Center. Primarily from the Coral Ridge and Imperial Point neighborhoods, many attendees testified that their water usage had been fairly consistent when their bills suddenly trebled or quadrupled. Some added that their fixtures and water lines are free of leaks, obviating the standard staffer rationale for billing spikes.

Seemingly confident that the large bills weren't the result of corrupted invoicing protocols, Water Department officials detailed how the bills are configured and asked the complainants to apply for individual review assessments, promising to unravel this dilemma by investigating the factors that impact each case. City official Shannon Vezina exhorted, "What everyone needs us to do is contact us on an individual basis, so we can look at it on an account-by-account basis. We can look through their account history, and if needed, take further steps to investigate a cause."

Unfortunately, since the meeting failed to either resolve or explain the billing anomalies, it also failed to dispel the concerns Moraitis hoped to address. Still confused and angry after the meeting, attending resident Kevin Rubin expressed his frustration, exclaiming "Everybody says the same thing. 'Oh, we'll get back to you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you,' but nothing." Resident concerns were exacerbated by an anticipated large jump in water and sewer rates. Funded by dedicated bond issues, the City has embarked on a massive effort to implement extensive improvements to long-neglected water and sewer infrastructure. The municipal water and sewer utility will service the debt by passing the cost to ratepayers.

A Galt Mile Twist

While concerned about impending citywide rate increases and roller coaster invoicing, Galt Mile residents face another inequity. For a decade, the City has been charging multi-family homeowners more than single family homeowners for identical water and sewer usage. Although City officials have promised to eliminate this billing disparity, the water rate study commissioned by the City for this purpose is being crafted by Mike Burton of Burton and Associates (acquired by Stantec in 2016) - the same company that created the billing disparity in 2009.

At a preliminary meeting scheduled by former City Commissioner Bruce Roberts to clear the air, Burton held that his original skewed rate proposal was appropriate, and how multi-family homeowners should pay more for water usage, claiming that factors such as line maintenance justify the disparity. Since the cost of maintaining the single water and wastewater lines to a 200-unit condominium is a tiny fraction of the cost for servicing the water and sewer lines to 200 individual single-family homes, Burton's argument didn't resonate with City officials or Galt Mile representatives. Former Commissioner Roberts and then Assistant City Manager Chris Lagerbloom conceded that the formula is inequitable - and should be corrected.

At interim meetings convened to review Burton's progress in leveling the playing field, although Burton demonstrated revised rate tiers and block usage rates that were finally made equal, he inserted a new variable in the billing formula disguised as technical housekeeping. Instead of closing the gap, this "base charge" cloaked a premium added to the bills of multi-family water and sewer customers. The tactic was caught and rejected by Galt Mile officials, and Burton returned to the drawing board.

*Hopefully, when the rate study is completed and submitted for Commission approval in April, it won't contain any of Burton's embedded surprises - but don't bet on it. More to come... Read Commissioner Heather Moraitis' March 2019 newsletter elsewhere in this edition. - [editor]**



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From the Desk of Commissioner HEATHER MORAITIS

By Heather Moraitis

On March 4, I held a community meeting in District 1 to listen to concerns about inconsistent water bills and high water bills. We are currently working with 63 neighbors to address individual water bill concerns. Citywide, we will implement the following action plan:

- We will audit water meter reading citywide. This will be conducted by a nationally known and independent auditing firm. The commission will vote on the independent water meter reading audit to be performed by KPMG on Tuesday, March 19. If the commission approves this audit, the work will begin promptly.
- We will test and replace meters upon request by residents.
- We will meet with the water meter reader contractor (Bermex) to address concerns.
- We will expedite permits for an irrigation water meter.
- We will move to digital water meters starting as soon as this year.

We have commissioned a water rate study and the commission will discuss water rates in April. You are invited to attend this meeting to share your concerns. The date for this commission

meeting will be shared when the date is published. I will explore all options with the commission to reduce your water bill. Please know that the water and sewer infrastructure bond to replace aging infrastructure is contingent upon certain pledged revenues. The debt service for this bond is paid for from the water and sewer utility.

The Commission has committed to a 4 year plan to stop the Return on Investment (ROI) from the water and sewer fund transferred into the general fund. This is the second year we have reduced the ROI to the general fund. By 2021, all of the ROI previously taken will stay in the water and sewer fund to help offset the costs for the water and sewer infrastructure projects.

Please visit the webpage created to keep you updated and informed at www.fortlauderdale.gov/district1water. I have included all of the handouts that were shared at our initial meeting. A link to the commission conference meeting discussing your concerns is also on this web page.

This action plan will be expanded until we solve the problems you are facing. Please email any additional questions you may have and we will get back to you promptly.

GUIDE TO UTILITY BILLING IN THE CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

The City of Fort Lauderdale is committed to providing high quality water services to meet the needs of our community. Please see information below regarding the utility billing rate structure and some common topics regarding utility accounts.

UTILITY BILLING RATES EFFECTIVE OCT. 1, 2018

Utility billing rates are tiered based on usage. To promote conservation and protect our resources, billing rates increase as the amount of water consumption increases. Utility billing rates increase 5% annually per City ordinance, effective October 1st each year.

	TIER	CONSUMPTION (gallons/month)	RATE	SIZE OF METER
SINGLE FAMILY Water	Tier 1	0 – 3,000	\$2.32	
	Tier 2	4,000 – 8,000	\$5.12	
	Tier 3	9,000 – 12,000	\$6.41	
	Tier 4	13,000 – 20,000	\$8.64	
	Tier 5	Over > 20,000	\$12.54	
SINGLE FAMILY Sewer	Tier 1	0 – 1,000	\$4.10	
	Tier 2	4,000 – 20,000	\$9.06	
	Tier 3	Over > 20,000	n/a	
SEPARATE SPRINKLER METER	Tier 1	0 – 12,000	\$6.41	5/8"
	Tier 2	13,000 – 20,000	\$8.64	5/8"
	Tier 3	Over > 20,000	\$12.54	5/8"
	Tier 1	0 – 18,000	\$6.41	3/4"
	Tier 2	19,000 – 30,000	\$8.64	3/4"
	Tier 3	Over > 30,000	\$12.54	3/4"
	Tier 1	0 – 30,000	\$6.41	1"
	Tier 2	31,000 – 50,000	\$8.64	1"
	Tier 3	Over > 50,000	\$12.54	1"
	Tier 1	0 – 60,000	\$6.41	1.5"
	Tier 2	61,000 – 100,000	\$8.64	1.5"
	Tier 3	Over > 100,000	\$12.54	1.5"
	Tier 1	0 – 95,000	\$6.41	2"
	Tier 2	97,000 – 160,000	\$8.64	2"
	Tier 3	Over > 160,000	\$12.54	2"

Irrigation Meter Installation Rates

Some neighbors chose to add a separate irrigation meter for sprinkler systems or pools to eliminate sewer costs and reduce their overall utility bill. Below please see rates to add additional meters by meter size:

5/8"	3/4"
Meter: \$1,161.80	Meter: \$1,207.28
Deposit: \$70	Deposit: \$85
Set Fee: \$35	Set Fee: \$35
TOTAL: \$1266.80	TOTAL: \$1327.28
1"	1.5"
Meter: \$1,295.60	Meter: \$2,098.56
Deposit: \$140	Deposit: \$300
Set Fee: \$35	Set Fee: \$35
TOTAL: \$1470.60	TOTAL: \$2433.56

2"
Meter: \$2,665.20
Deposit: \$775
Set Fee: \$35
TOTAL: \$3475.20

Unusual Consumption on Utility Bills

Sometimes neighbors receive a utility bill that shows higher water consumption than their typical monthly usage. High increases in consumption can cause the billing rate to move up to the next tier, which will also result in higher fees and taxes. If neighbors notice unusual consumption on their utility bill, they should check for leaks on their property and contact the City at 954-828-5150 so we can investigate the cause.

Possible Causes of Unusual Consumption

Running or leaking toilet; leaking faucet; house guests; Irrigation systems with cracks in the line, detached sprinkler head, or set too high; if property is empty, someone may be using outside spigots.

How To Check for a Leak

Sometimes, neighbors can identify a small leak by checking the following places on their property:

- Pressure relief valve on the hot water tank
- Remove the tops off toilet tanks and listen for running water
- The water line running from the meter to the house
- All hose bibs in the house
- All hoses, taps, and drips in the irrigation system
- All shower heads
- Swimming pool

What To Do If You Find a Leak

If a certified plumber locates a leak on your property, you may be eligible for a leak credit adjustment. An adjustment request form can be found on the City website: utilitybilling.fortlauderdale.gov

What To Do If You Don't Find a Leak

If you receive a bill with unusual consumption, and a plumber can certify that there is not a leak on your property, you may be eligible for an unusual consumption credit. Forms can be found on the City website: utilitybilling.fortlauderdale.gov

How To Contact Us

If you have questions or concerns regarding your City of Fort Lauderdale utility account, please contact Utility Billing at 954-828-5150 or utilitybilling@fortlauderdale.gov



Electric Scooters Prohibited on Ft Lauderdale Beach During Spring Break (March 1 - April 7)

Between March 1 and April 7, 2019, electric or motorized scooters, and any other forms of dockless mobility, will be prohibited on the barrier island, per City of Fort Lauderdale Ordinance C-19-03, Sec. 8-55.5. The boundaries of the barrier island include the beach property, and up to the westernmost bank of the Intracoastal Waterway to the west, South-east 17th Street to the south, and Northeast 42nd Court to the north.

The Fort Lauderdale Police Department will be monitoring Spring Break activities to ensure that all City ordinances are followed. The City of Fort Lauderdale looks forward to a safe and fun-filled Spring Break!

Apply Today to Serve on a District 1 Advisory Board

The following boards are available to serve on for District 1:

- Cemetery System Board of Trustees
- Community Appearance Board
- Education Advisory Board
- Fire-Rescue Facilities Bond Issue Blue Ribbon Committee

If you are interested, please apply online .

Feel free to contact our office or Erica Franceschi at EFranceschi@fortlauderdale.gov or 954-828-5288 for any questions.

EDITOR'S COMMENTARY

State Rep. Chip LaMarca's MARCH 2019 Newsletter

By Eric Berkowitz

**In his two March updates, District 93 Statehouse Representative Chip LaMarca opens on March 18, 2019, with an affirmation of support for the right of association homeowners to decide how to best protect their homes and families, a right afforded to every other Florida homeowner. LaMarca explains that Association homeowners should be empowered to vote for or against the installation of a costly Engineered Life-Safety System (ELSS); applauds the Broward Days event in Tallahassee for promoting County interests; supports legislation that enables counties and municipalities to create community redevelopment agencies with dedicated funding constraints; advocates a bill that requires fiscal transparency and accountability by local governments and approves legislation that enhances oversight over spending by state higher education institutions.*

LaMarca's referenced CRA and local government funding accountability bills respond to a longstanding Florida tradition by local politicians to fraudulently barter, pilfer and otherwise misuse taxpayer dollars. The higher education oversight legislation was prompted by more recent developments.

Late last year, House investigators discovered that the University of Central Florida (UCF) misused \$48 million in State funds allocated to educational operations to complete on-campus building projects. The floodgates then opened. Months later, the University of South Florida (USF) announced having misspent \$6.4 million in state funds on the construction of a new building. When the University of Florida (UF) was also implicated, lawmakers viewed the violations as systemic – triggering legislation to enforce spending constraints and tighten State oversight.

In a March 29, 2019 follow-up message, LaMarca summarizes constituent feedback about the questionable ELSS retrofit mandate, and details his rationale for supporting Opt-out bills in the House and Senate. Read the below March 2019 LaMarca Letters. Elsewhere in this edition, read a legislative update about the campaign to oppose the ELSS mandate – and defend the right of association homeowners to self-determination.



Session Kicked-off

There are many important issues moving through the legislature, which I have not had an opportunity to vote on yet, one being HB 647 in regards to emergency life safety systems, or ELSS. I am supportive of giving the residents of ours and other communities the ability to choose how best to keep their homes protected and safe from possible catastrophes, which include natural disasters, fires and events caused by failure of existing mechanical systems. I have always maintained that the safety of our residents comes first, and have committed to working with the professionals tasked with the protection of our people on coming together to find a solution to this important issue.

THE LaMarca Letter

Broward Days

This past week was Broward Days in the Capitol. Broward Days is a two day event in Tallahassee where Broward residents, non-profit organizations, and locally elected officials come to advocate for important issues and educate legislators from other areas of Florida on all things Broward. Broward Days was capped off with a great evening event that featured Gov. DeSantis' Chief of Staff and Broward resident Shane Strum, Florida Speaker of the House Jose Oliva, and another Broward resident, Nikki Fried, Commissioner of Agriculture & Consumer Services.

Year round, Broward Days is led by Candice Ericks, of Tripp Scott Ericks, and is building a think-tank in different policy areas impacting Broward County and its diverse residents, businesses, and organizations. If you would like more information on this great organization and advocacy group, please visit www.BrowardDays.com.

Community Redevelopment Agencies

I filed the Community Redevelopment Act, which authorizes counties and municipalities to create community redevelopment agencies (CRAs) as a means of redeveloping slums and blighted areas. A county or municipality may create a CRA upon the adoption of a finding of necessity and a finding that a CRA is necessary for carrying out the community redevelopment goals embodied by the Act. The bill requires that money in the redevelopment trust fund may only be used pursuant to an annual budget adopted by the board of commissioners and only for those purposes specified in law.

This bill ensures that CRAs are held accountable for using funds appropriately and has passed favorably in the Local, Federal & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee, and also the Ways & Means Committee. In recent years, there have been several reported instances of questionable CRA spending in Florida, and this bill would reign in that wasteful spending of tax payer dollars. Government must be transparent to taxpayers and accountable for decisions affecting the public.

Continued on page 11

Local Government Fiscal Transparency

Important local government information should be up-to-date and easily accessible to all Floridians, to ensure transparency and accountability.

HB 15 aims to ensure local governments are responsible, transparent, and accountable with taxpayer dollars, which will help give Floridians confidence in their government. The bill would promote and enhance local government fiscal transparency. This bill requires easy public access to local government governing boards' voting records related to tax increases and issuance of tax-supported debt. Requires easy on-line access to property tax TRIM notices and a four-year history of property tax rates and amounts at the parcel level. HB 15 requires local governments to conduct and consider a debt affordability analysis prior to approving the issuance of new, long-term tax-supported debt.

This bill would also increase local government fiscal transparency by focusing on helping citizens gain access to important information so they can be more engaged on important government decisions. This bill recently passed favorably in the Local, Federal & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee.

Higher Education Transparency

This bill gives the Chief Financial Officer, Senate president, Speaker of the House, or board members opportunities to investigate allegations of waste, fraud or financial mismanagement by a state university or its board of trustees. The bill increases oversight over state higher education institutions to ensure they are acting in accordance with state law. Public access to records relating to certain university documents would also be required. This legislation passed favorably in the Higher Education & Career Readiness Subcommittee.

"Pebbles the Penguin"

Thanks to the Florida Aquarium, we were honored to have Pebbles the Penguin stop by the HD93 office in the Capitol to meet with the team!

On March 29, 2019, Rep. LaMarca offered the following second March Report

UPDATE: HB 647 ELSS Engineered Life Safety Systems

You have spoken, and we listened. My office has heard from over 1,000 residents, not only from Broward County, but from all over the state of Florida. I have read hundreds of emails and have taken numerous phone calls from interested Floridians over the last few weeks about this important bill.

I understand that adding these engineered life safety systems (ELSS) could potentially place an extreme financial burden on those of you in certain condominium buildings. While your safety is obviously a priority to me, these regulations could place an undue hardship on the citizens of Broward County and the rest of the state. This bill allows the individual residents of each building to have the freedom to choose, as an association, to opt-out of the requirement for the installation of additional ELSS systems.

For these reasons I was honored to vote in favor of this bill when it came in front of the Government Operations & Technology Appropriations Subcommittee on Tuesday. I believe that residents should be able to make decisions about their own community. This bill is now on its way to its last committee stop here in the Florida House of Representatives. However, the Senate companions still have more to go.

I urge you to call our Senator, Gary Farmer's office at 850-487-5034, and urge him to support SB 1152 and SB 1732 and request a hearing for these important bills. Without the movement from the Senate bills, we will not be able implement this crucial piece of legislation.

Best Wishes,

CHIP LAMARCA
Florida House District 93

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MAY/JUNE

SUN	MON	TUE	WED
			1 Dinner at the Square: Can Sea Level Rise Be Stopped? Funky Buddha Brewery, Oakland Pk 6:45 to 8:30 p.m. Info.: 954-201-7518 8th Annual Magnolia Luncheon Broward County Convention Center 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Info.: 954-453-3731
5 SunTrust Sunday Jazz Brunch Riverwalk 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info.: 954-396-3622 Wings for Life World Run 2019 BB&T Center, Sunrise 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. Info.: https://www.wingsforlifeworldrun.com	6 GMCA Presidents Council Meeting Regency South 7 to 9 p.m. Commissioner Heather Moraitis: Pre-Agenda Meeting Broward Health Imperial Point, AUD A&B 6 p.m. Info.: 954-828-5033	7 Fort Lauderdale City Commission Meeting City Hall, 6 p.m. "Birdies for Birch" Golf Tournament Lago Mar Country Club, Plantation Noon Registration; 1 p.m. Shotgun Start Info.: 954-566-0660	8 BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: 954-547-4063
12 Dancing By the Sea The Beach Pavilion 5 to 7 p.m. Info.: www.lbtsevents.com	13 Phil Smith '69 Invitational Golf Tournament- Coral Ridge Country Club 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Info.: 561-297-4621	14	15 BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: 954-547-4063 Fort Lauderdale Career Fair Marriott Fort Lauderdale North 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info.: 877-561-5627
19	20 Commissioner Heather Moraitis: Pre-Agenda Meeting Broward Health Imperial Point, AUD A&B 6 p.m. Info.: 954-828-5033	21 Fort Lauderdale City Commission Meeting City Hall, 6 p.m. Light Up The Night The Addison Boca Raton 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Info.: 954-979-7124	22 BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: 954-547-4063 Spring Business Expo Broward County Convention Center 4 to 8 p.m. Info.: 954-838-9644
26 Festival Yachad - Israeli Dance Festival Broward Center 7 p.m. Tix.: www.ticketmaster.com Dancing By the Sea The Beach Pavilion 5 to 7 p.m. Info.: www.lbtsevents.com	27 Memorial Day 5K Classic Weston Town Center 7:15 a.m. Info.: raceinfo@memorialday5kclassic.com Memorial Day Ceremony Jaco Pastorius Park 11 a.m. Info.: 954-630-4507	28	29 BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: 954-547-4063

MAY 4: 7th Annual Harbor Lights Gala, The Ritz Carlton Fort Lauderdale, 6 to 10 p.m., Info.: 954-252-3072

MAY 4: "Pantone Color of the Year" Exhibit, Broward Art Guild, 6:30 to 9 p.m., Info.: 954-537-3370

MAY 4: The Indigo Girls, Parker Playhouse, Tix.: www.ticketmaster.com

MAY 4: 5th Annual Run for the Angels 5K, Pompano Beach Airpark, 7:30 to 9 a.m., Info.: (800) 352-4256

MAY 5: Farmer's Market, El Prado Park, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Info.: 561-714-2745

MAY 10: First Friday Jazz Jams, ArtServe, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., Info.: 954-524-0805

MAY 10-12: Rolling Loud Festival 2019, Miami, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., Info.: 305-240-4573

MAY 17: 8th Annual Fort Lauderdale Transportation Summit, Broward Center for the Performing Arts (Huizenga Pavilion), 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., Info.: 954-828-4826

MAY 17: 23rd Annual SEFAA Volleyball Tournament, Fort Lauderdale Beach (1100 Seabreeze Blvd.), 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Info.: 561-274-4849

MAY 18: 22nd Annual Hospice Regatta, Coral Ridge Yacht Club, 11 a.m., Info.: 954-315-6788

MAY 18: Oakland Park Citywide Yard Sale, Jaco Pastorius Park, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., Info.: 954-630-4507

MAY 18: 6th Annual FISP Hugs for Hope 5k Run/Walk, Markham Park, 7:30 a.m., Info.: 954-384-0344

MAY 18: 28th Annual Island City Canoe Race, Colohatchee Boat Ramp (Wilton Manors), 10 a.m., Info.: 954-390-2130

ONE SOURCE FOR COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

THU

FRI

SAT

<p>2 SunFest (Through 5/5) Intracoastal Waterway (along Flagler Dr from Banyan Blvd to Lakeview Ave, WPB) Info.: 561-659-5980</p> <p>8th Annual Arc Broward Delish 2019 The Galleria at Fort Lauderdale 7 to 10 p.m. Info.: 954-746-9400 ext. 2209</p>	<p>3 Antiques Festival (Through 5/5) South Florida Fairgrounds, WPB Info.: 941-697-7475</p> <p>Friday Night SoundWaves Performer: Gypsy Lane Ft Lauderdale Beach Hub (Las Olas & A1A) 6 to 9 p.m. Info.: fridaynightsoundwaves.com</p>	<p>4 Ft. Lauderdale Take Steps Walk Huizenga Plaza 4 p.m. Info.: 561- 218-2929 x1</p> <p>2019 Fort Lauderdale Air Show (Through 5/5) Fort Lauderdale Beach 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Info.: 321-395-3110</p>
<p>9</p> <p>7th Annual Red Hot & In Style – LGBTQ 2232 Wilton Dr, Wilton Manors 7 to 10 p.m. Info.: 954-564-3512</p>	<p>10 Michelle Obama BB&T Center, 7 p.m. Info.: https://www.thebbtcenter.com</p> <p>Friday Night SoundWaves Performer: Shauna Sweeney Ft Lauderdale Beach Hub (Las Olas & A1A) 6 to 9 p.m. Info.: fridaynightsoundwaves.com</p>	<p>11 AARLCC-CON: Sci-Fi & Comic Convention African-American Research Library and Cultural Center 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Info.: 954-357-6190</p> <p>4th Annual Waterway Soirée Bahia Mar Marina 5 to 10 p.m. Info.: 954-728-1019</p>
<p>16</p> <p>G.M.C.A. Advisory Board Meeting Nick's Italian Restaurant, 11 a.m.</p>	<p>17 Friday Night SoundWaves Performer: Big Harvest Ft Lauderdale Beach Hub (Las Olas & A1A) 6 to 9 p.m. Info.: fridaynightsoundwaves.com</p> <p>22nd Annual Redland Int'l Orchid Festival (Through 5/19) Fruit & Spice Park (24801 SW 187th Ave.), Homestead Info.: info@redlandorchidfest.org</p>	<p>18 The Color Run Huizenga Plaza 7:30 to 10:30 a.m. Info.: goriverwalk.com</p> <p>3rd Annual Ocean Brews & Blues Festival Main Beach Parking Lot (149 SE 21st Ave.), Deerfield Beach 3 to 8 p.m. Info.: 954-480-4429</p>
<p>23</p>	<p>24 Friday Night SoundWaves Performer: The Heavy Pets Ft Lauderdale Beach Hub (Las Olas & A1A) 6 to 9 p.m. Info.: fridaynightsoundwaves.com</p> <p>Ft. Lauderdale Spring Home Design And Remodeling Show (Through 5/27) Broward County Convention Center Info.: 305-667-9299</p>	<p>25 KidzFest (Through 5/27) Flamingo Gardens 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Info.: 954-473-2955</p> <p>22nd Annual Downtown Delray Beach Craft Festival (Through 5/26) The Delray Beach Tennis Center Info.: 561-924-6801</p>
<p>30</p>	<p>31 Antiques Festival (Through 6/2) South Florida Fairgrounds, WPB Info.: 941-697-7475</p> <p>Friday Night SoundWaves Performer: Mr. Nice Guy Ft Lauderdale Beach Hub (Las Olas & A1A) 6 to 9 p.m. Info.: fridaynightsoundwaves.com</p>	<p>1</p> <p>Dance Dimensions: Shall We Dance? Broward Center Tix.: www.ticketmaster.com</p>

THE FUN CONTINUES !

JUNE 3

20th Annual Culinary Creations Dinner
Kravis Center (The Cohen Pavillion)
6:30 p.m.: Hors D'Oeuvres; 7:30 p.m.: Dinner
Info.: 561-494-0515

JUNE 5-9

Hukilau Polynesian Festival
Hyatt Regency Pier 66
Noon to 4 p.m.
Info.: 754-900-TIKI

JUNE 7

First Friday Jazz Jams
ArtServe
7:30 to 9:30 p.m.
Info.: 954-524-0805

JUNE 8-9

Dig The Beach Volleyball Fort Lauderdale
Fort Lauderdale Beach (1100 Seabreeze Blvd.)
7 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Info.: 561-241-3801

JUNE 8-9

Intergalactic Bead & Jewelry Show
South Florida Fair Grounds
Info.: 1-888-729-6904

JUNE 14

Summer Nights
Jaco Pastorius Park
Movie: Cars 3
6:30 to 10 p.m.
Info.: 954-630-4507

JUNE 15

Father's Day Fishing Tournament
Royal Palm Park
7 to 10 a.m.
Info.: 954-630-4507

FOR A COMPLETE LISTING OF EVENTS, GO TO THE CALENDAR AT WWW.GALTMILE.COM

First Saturday of Every Month: Beach Cleanup, Commercial Blvd. & the Beach LBTS (Meet at Pavilion), 9 to 9:30 a.m., Info.: 954-776-1000

First Saturday of Every Month: North Beach Art Walk, 3280 NE 32nd St, 7 to 11 p.m., Info.: 954-537-3370

Second Saturday of Every Month: Beach Sweep, Fort Lauderdale Beach Hub, 300 S. Fort Lauderdale Beach Blvd., 7 to 11 a.m., Info.: 954-709-3197

Second Saturday of Every Month: Burlock Coast Farmer's Market, Burlock Coast at the The Ritz-Carlton, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Info.: myfortlauderdalebeach.com

Second Tuesday of Every Month: Orchid Greenhouse Tours, Bonnet House, 11 a.m. to Noon, Info.: 954-703-2606

Mondays: Food Trucks at Artspark, 5:30 to 10 p.m., Youngs Circle in Hollywood

Fridays (through May): Friday Night Music, El Mar Drive between Village Grille/Pump and 101 Ocean, 6:30 to 10:30 p.m., Info.: www.lbtsevents.com

Sundays: Tour-the River Ghost Tour, Stranahan House & Water Taxi, 7:30 p.m., Tix.: 954-524-4736

Sundays: Las Olas Sunday Market, 333 East Las Olas Blvd. & SE 4th Ave., 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Info.: 954-426-8436

Sundays (through May): Farmer's Market at El Prado Park, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Info.: 561-714-2745

Saturdays: Saturday Night Under the South Florida Stars, Fox Astronomical Observatory at Markham Park, Sunset to Midnight, Info.: 954-384-0442

Tuesday & Thursdays (Through April): Seaside Yoga and Meditation, El Prado Park, 7 to 8 a.m., Info.: 954-850-7361 (weather permitting)

EDITOR'S COMMENTARY:

Lamar Fisher's JANUARY 2019 Newsletter

By Eric Berkowitz

**In his March 2019 Newsletter, District 4 Broward Commissioner Lamar Fisher rolls out a Spring Break welcome mat for thousands of visiting collegians who annually spend three weeks dodging police arrest for using cocaine, fighting, and smoking weed on the Fort Lauderdale beach while drowning in tequila, vodka and beer; reviews turtle-safe lighting alternatives that effectively mitigate the adverse impacts of illuminating the beach during sea turtle nesting season; lists Property Tax payment options prior to the April 1 due date, cites the availability of MERGE Virtual Reality Headsets and the MERGE Cube in certain Broward County Libraries, observing how products initially designed for entertainment have become pioneering educational tools.*

The Three-Week Bender

Beginning in the 1930s, Fort Lauderdale exerted a hypnotic draw on a seasonal swarm of collegiate locusts who annually transformed the beach area into a hedonistic sewer bed. This eerie phenomenon later prompted the City Commission to enact Fort Lauderdale's Beach Rules 7.4 - a litany of safety measures and 7.5, which aspires to "eliminate nuisance activity on the beach and provide patrons with a pleasant environment in which to recreate" - and applies to a five-mile swath of public beach.

When a panhandling prohibition in the Beach rule was unsuccessfully challenged by ACLU superstars Beverly A. Pohl and Bruce S. Rogow for violating the First and Fourteenth Amendment rights of the homeless, it fueled a misconception - that the Beach Rules were drafted to shield beachgoing locals and vulnerable tourists from overly aggressive vagrants demanding a handout.

In fact, it targeted an army of scantily clad college students who annually overran the beach immersed in a drunken stupor during a month-long orgy. Teenagers who ran out of money in the first 24 hours of a three-week psychotic break financed the balance of their bender and the trip home by begging on the beach, stealing from one another or selling any loose furnishings stripped from decaying beachside lodgings. According to former Assistant City Manager Bud Bentley, "It was meant to crack down on rowdy Spring Break kids. You had kids out of control panhandling. How do you think they got home? They came and blew all their money on alcohol and girls." The Homeless were collateral damage.

Spring Break Bucks vs. Tourism Economy

An intermittently enforced "Zero Tolerance" policy clogged the courts with a parade of semi-conscious kids charged with drug possession or Disorderly Conduct; Mom and Dad typically made bail and if necessary - restitution. A dispute arose between officials focused on replacing the March mania with conventional tourism and those who sought to preserve both income streams.

Event enthusiasm temporarily waned after February 24, 1987, when Fort Lauderdale Mayor Bob Cox appeared on ABC's Good Morning America and told five

million viewers that Fort Lauderdale was out of the Spring Break business. This hardline policy softened as the beachfront economy suffered a meltdown. When it appeared that Fort Lauderdale would lose its Spring Break franchise to Daytona Beach, enforcement was adjusted to protect the City's share of Florida's annual \$1 billion Spring Break windfall. By comparison, conventional tourism plumped local coffers with \$15 billion last year. The seedy after dark venues of decades past - like the But-ton, the Candy Store, and Penrod's have since been replaced by Sway and America's Backyard.

Galt Beach Burnout

More recently, attempts by Mounted Police and beefed up patrols to bottle up the debauchery along the public beach proved futile, as the chaos spread to adjacent coastal communities. Following a March 16, 2017 blowout at the Ocean Sky Resort by 500 Spring Break students, the Galt Mile beach from The Galleon to Ocean Club was left covered with hundreds of aluminum cans, tarps, yards of crushed Styrofoam, plastic bags, condoms, food containers, glass bottles, and a 100-foot slip & slide. The next morning, after a half dozen unconscious kids were carted off by EMTs, a horrified SOS Clean Up crew bagged 850 lbs. of garbage.

Major Dana Swisher plans and manages the City's annual Spring Break policing operations. Working the beach near Las Olas Boulevard in March, 2018, Swisher detailed his dilemma, "We're looking for compliance, we're looking to provide somewhat of an orderly environment for them to enjoy themselves in. The thing that is always the catalyst to create issues is alcohol - alcohol is always a big issue when you have a lot of college kids together."

As fast as patrol officers emptied confiscated bottles of hooch into the sand, they were replaced. So were the drugs sniffed out by K-9s. Each day, about 20 kids were arrested for weed or cocaine. Horses were used to break up a steady stream of fights on the beach, as the combatants were arrested and charged with disorderly conduct. Unable to stem the tide of vodka, tequila and drugs, FLPD tried to protect the kids and keep a lid on the damage.

Blight or Blessing?

*2019 is fulfilling forecasts of larger Spring Break crowds. A recent TripAdvisor report rated Fort Lauderdale beach among the top 10 destination beaches and the City was named the second most popular domestic destination by travel club AAA. Analyzing flight data, CheapOair.com also ranked Fort Lauderdale as the number 2 spring break hot spot in the nation. Orlando is first, Miami 4th and Tampa number 7. The top 5 international destinations are Cancun, London, Paris, Dublin and Barcelona. Disparately characterized as a blight and a blessing, like it or not, spring break has evolved into a Fort Lauderdale signature event. Read Commissioner Lamar Fisher's March 2019 Newsletter elsewhere in this edition. - [editor]**



BROWARD COMMISSIONER

LAMAR FISHER

MARCH 2019 UPDATE

natural light from the moon and stars to orient back to the water. Unfortunately, artificial lighting near the beach can disrupt this process and cause turtles to become disoriented. To reduce the amount of artificial lighting reaching the beach in Broward, local coastal municipalities enforce lighting ordinances during sea turtle nesting season, March 1st - October 31st. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation (FWC) Commission has established the following criteria for "sea turtle-friendly" lighting; keep fixtures low, keep fixtures shielded from the beach; and have long wavelength bulbs.

If you live or have a business by the beach you can visit the links below, which provide resources for "sea turtle-friendly" lighting.

- The FWC Criteria for "Sea Turtle-Friendly" Lighting
- Local Coastal Municipalities Lighting Ordinances
- The FWC List of Certified Fixtures

For more information, please visit Broward.org/NaturalResources/BeachandMarine/SeaTurtles.

Property Taxes Due

Your 2018 Property taxes are due by April 1st, 2019 and the County's Tax Collector's Office will once again offer Express Drop-Off Service for tax payments on Friday, March 29th and Monday, April 1st from 10AM to 4PM at the rear entrance on Brickell Avenue of the County's Main Government Center, 115 S. Andrews Avenue in Fort Lauderdale.

- To submit tax payments by Express Drop-Off service on March 29th and April 1st:
- Payments must be made by check only (personal or certified), no cash or credit card payments can be made at the Express Drop-Off. All checks must be in US Funds, issued by a US Bank Account.
 - Payments must be for current 2018 tax bills only. No delinquent tax payments can be accepted.
 - You must have your 2018 current tax bill with you. Your bill will be stamped and returned to you as proof of your payment receipt.
 - Only full payment of the March amount due will be accepted. No partial payments can be accepted.

To submit payments before the Express Drop-Off service dates property tax payments can be made by the following methods:

- Online payments at broward.county-taxes.com
- Using your bank's Online Bill Pay Service
- Mailing a check payable to Broward County Tax Collector, Processing Center, P.O. Box 849375, Hollywood, FL 33084-9375
- In person at the Broward County Tax & License Office, Governmental Center, 115 S. Andrews Ave., Room A-100, Fort Lauderdale, 8:30AM to 5PM, Monday through Friday; all forms of payment are accepted
- At any Wells Fargo Bank Branch located in Broward County

For more information, call 311 or 954-831-4000, or visit Broward.org/RecordsTaxesTreasury.

Continued on page 16

Dear Residents,

It is an honor and privilege to be your voice and to represent you, the citizens of our coastal communities from Deerfield Beach to Fort Lauderdale. As your County Commissioner, I look forward to continuing to improve our resident's quality of life by focusing on several key issues in our community. Here are some recent headlines from around the County.

Spring Break

It is Spring Break in our beautiful District 4 communities and as you may have already noticed hundreds of tourists are enjoying our beautiful spring weather this month. Florida is one of the most popular spring break vacation destinations in the United States, and there's more than just warm weather and white sand. I happily welcome all visitors to our community this month to enjoy the many different activities Broward County has to offer.

As tourists and residents enjoy the amenities of our community, I encourage you to recognize all the helpful and courteous hospitality industry employees', including; valets, life-guards, housekeepers, taxi drivers, servers, baggage handlers and all the amazing people in the hospitality industry. Tourism in Broward County creates new jobs and contributes to our economic vitality. Approximately 14 million people a year visit Broward County and spend \$11.4 billion in the local economy. Our 26 miles of beaches generate more than \$548 million annually in economic activity. I want to thank all the visitors and residents (staycationers) that help contribute to Broward County's economy.

Sea Turtle Nesting Season

March 1st was the official start of the sea turtle nesting season in Broward County. During this season, adult females emerge from the ocean at night to lay their nests and use

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Lamar...Continued

Broward County Libraries

Library customers can now borrow MERGE Virtual Reality Headsets in District 4 at the Deerfield Beach Percy White Branch Library, located at 837 E Hillsboro Blvd, Deerfield Beach, FL 33441 and at the Pompano Beach Library, located at 50 W Atlantic Boulevard, Pompano Beach, FL 33060. Broward County Library and MERGE, the leader in augmented and virtual reality learning products, now let library customers check out and take-home MERGE AR/VR (Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality) Headsets for use in conjunction with the MERGE Cube. The MERGE Cubes and MERGE Headsets bring 3D content to life and users can access over 300 kid-safe VR and 360 video experiences from sources such as NASA, National Geographic, Disney Google and even your Android or iOS smartphones. The MERGE Headsets are available at 9 Broward County Library locations as part of a unique pilot program. For more information on all the wonderful things going on in our Broward County Libraries, please visit Broward.org/library.

Once again, I'd like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve you as your County Commissioner. Please sign up at Broward.org/Commission/District4 to receive email updates from our office. You can also follow me on Twitter and like my Facebook page. If there is anything that we can do to assist you with your vision for a better Broward, please do not hesitate to contact our office at 954-357-7004 or by email at LFisher@broward.org.

Best regards,

Lamar P. Fisher
County Commissioner
District 4

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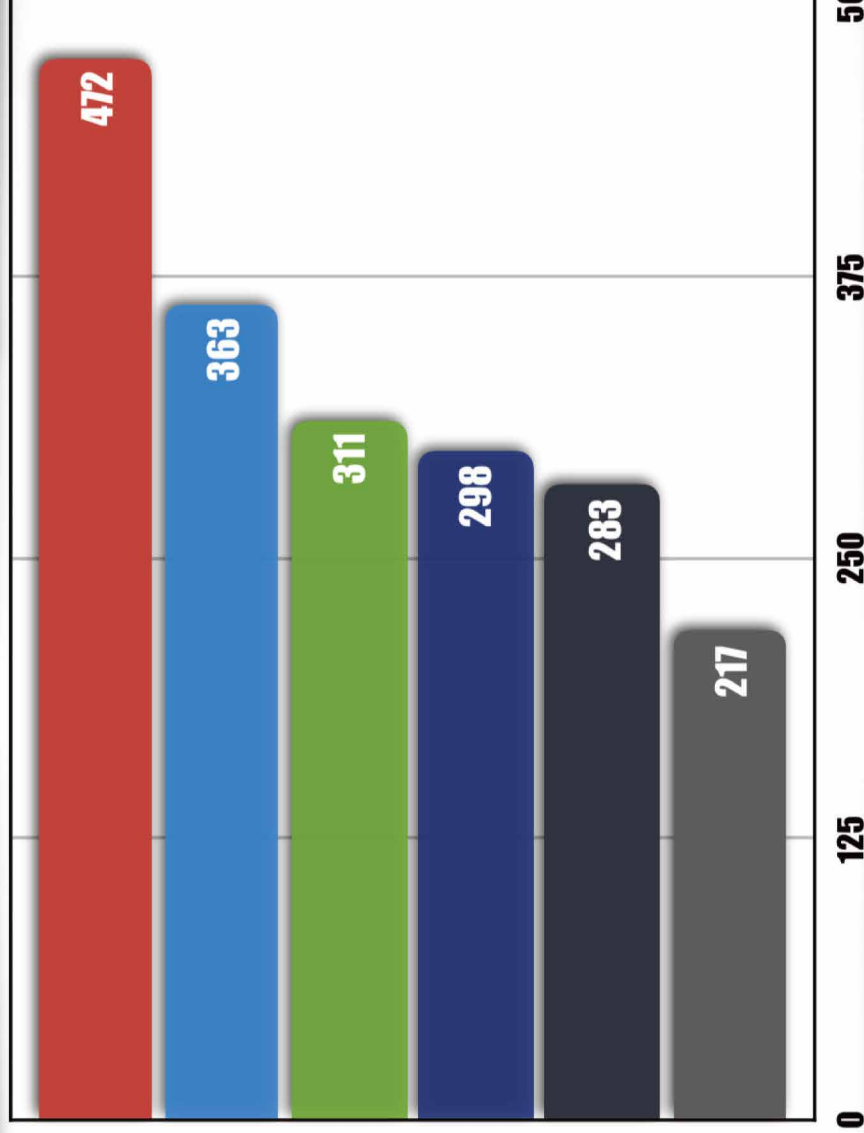
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