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February 28, 2019

The Honorable Ed Hooper  
The Florida Senate  
404 South Monroe Street, Room 326 SOB  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100

Re: CS/SB 248 Exemption/Home Addresses

Dear Senator Hooper:

We are writing to express our opposition to CS/SB 248, providing a definition of “home address” for the purpose of the home address exemptions for various government officials and employees provided in s. 119.07(4)(d), F.S. As defined in the bill, “home address” is broadly defined to include not only the physical address, but a mailing address, street address, parcel identification number, plot identification number, legal property description, neighborhood name and lot number, GPS coordinates, and other property descriptive information that may reveal a home address. Despite the bill’s title, the definition would apply to *all* home address exemptions under s. 119.07(4)(d) – currently, there are about three dozen home address exemptions in that specific statutory provision.

This information is of critical importance to the business community, particularly title companies and realtors. In addition, investigative reporting teams, using property descriptions, have discovered that homes owned by public officials are being used for illegal purposes, including drug houses. To say this information is important to the public’s ability to oversee its government and hold it accountable is an understatement. Property records are not only public records; property records are also official records and an exemption of this magnitude is simply unwarranted. For this reason, we respectfully suggest that CS/SB 248 be withdrawn from consideration.

We appreciate your attention to our concerns, Senator Hooper. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Barbara A. Petersen, President

Cc: The Honorable Kevin Rader, Vice Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee