



## Locked-in Eagles, Bills remain on top

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# Daily News

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Norriego Point Park is at the entrance to Destin harbor and is still under construction. TINA HARBUCK/THE DESTIN LOG

## DeSantis, Cabinet OK \$83M land buy from GOP donor

Gray Rohrer  
USA TODAY NETWORK - Florida

Gov. Ron DeSantis and the Florida Cabinet on Sept. 30 agreed to pay \$83.3 million for four acres of land in Destin, a Panhandle beach town – 10 times the price that the owner, a major Republican donor, paid for it.

The land purchase was one of several projects voted in one package. After the unanimous approval, however, Chief Financial Officer Blaise Ingoglia, said he objected to that approval.

But DeSantis noted the vote was already done: “Well, they’re all bundled so we’ll take that as a yes and your objection is noted.”

After the meeting, Ingoglia didn’t expand on his objections, merely repeating that he had “concerns.” Ingoglia has led efforts to pressure local governments to cut spending and cut property taxes in recent weeks.

DeSantis didn’t speak with reporters after the meeting.

**Louisiana businessman, a GOP donor, owned land at issue**

The land is owned by Pointe Mezzanine LLC and Pointe Resort LLC, two limited liability corporations controlled by Robert Guidry.

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Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis speaks at a Sept. 29 press conference at Emerson Alumni Hall on the University of Florida campus in Gainesville. ALAN YOUNGBLOOD/ GAINESVILLE SUN

## Forfeited bingo proceeds go to FL nonprofits

DeonTay Smith  
Panama City News Herald  
USA TODAY NETWORK

It has been a long process. But on Sept. 25, John P. Heekin, U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Florida, announced that more than \$2.8 million in bingo proceeds forfeited as part of a federal prosecution have been sent to 10 Okaloosa County charities.

According to a news release from the U.S. Attorney’s Office, the money going to charity stems from the convictions of Larry and Dixie Masino in 2018. As the Daily News reported at the time, the Masinos were convicted of operating an illegal gambling business and defrauding charities.

The charges related to the Marinos’ ownership and operation of Racetrack Bingo in Fort Walton Beach.

“Victims of crime too often suffer losses at the hands of criminals that cannot ever be restored, but my office is committed to taking action to ensure those offenders cannot reap or retain the benefits of their wrongdoing, and we will remit the proceeds of those forfeitures whenever possible to compensate victims to the greatest extent,” Heekin is quoted as saying in the release.

The release explained the prosecution this way:

“The Masinos made it appear that Racetrack Bingo was running charitable bingo when they were actually

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## Law seen as developer-friendly challenged by cities, counties

John Kennedy  
Capital Bureau  
USA TODAY NETWORK – FLORIDA

Calling a new state law the “largest incursion into local home rule authority” in Florida’s modern history, 23 cities and two counties have sued to overturn a measure which helps many developers by prohibiting local governments from enacting stricter planning requirements.

The lawsuit against state officials was filed Sept. 29 in Leon County Circuit Court to stop the provisions of SB 180, which was approved on the final day of the 2025 session. The counties suing are

Manatee and Orange. The almost two-dozen cities include Deltona, Delray Beach, Destin, Alachua, Stuart, Naples, Palm Beach, Jupiter and Fort Lauderdale.

Since signed by Gov. Ron DeSantis in June, the law has blocked local governments from enacting anything considered “restrictive or burdensome” to their comprehensive plans or land development codes.

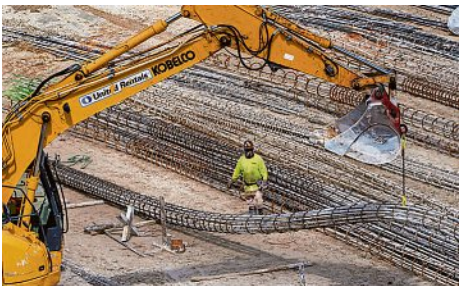
The law empowers development companies and even private citizens to sue local governments for changes to planning laws imposed since August 2024. It also keeps any stricter planning

provision off the books until at least October 2027.

Jamie Cole, a Fort Lauderdale attorney representing those governments suing, says the law has a host of constitutional flaws. But a central problem, according to the lawsuit, is that it runs roughshod over the home rule powers of cities and counties, as outlined in Florida’s 1968 constitution.

The law is “freezing all local land development regulations and comprehensive plans in place on August 1, 2024,” according to the suit.

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Developers have been given the upper hand in fights with cities and counties over growth because of a new law that prohibits “burdensome and restrictive” planning laws.

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