

Meaningful, Comprehensive Property Tax Reform Now!

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Latin Builders Association **Constructive News**

Our monthly eNewsletter is dedicated to helping our members advance professionally and improve in their practice.

+ UPCOMING EVENTS

Fishing Tournament

Where: Bimini Bay Resort, Bimini Island in the Bahamas
When: Wednesday, July 11, through Sunday, July 15, 2007
Reservations/Information: Please contact 305-446-5989,
Fax: 305-446-0901 or email to events@latinbuilders.org



Picture: 2006 Fishing Tournament

+ PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

June 2007 - No. 28

Hello,



Meaningful, Comprehensive Property Tax Reform Now!

We were elated when we heard Speaker Marco Rubio take a firm and courageous stance to reduce property taxes at our March luncheon. The LBA members and community leaders that were present were energized at the prospect of seeing this historic and long overdue reform of property taxes. We were asked by Speaker Rubio to take a stance on this issue and make our voices heard. We did so, mobilizing our members and organizing a bus convoy that took hundreds of citizens to Tallahassee.

The prospect of meaningful property tax reform from Tallahassee now seems elusive. Local governments are spending millions of taxpayer dollars to pay lobbyists to derail any chance of significant property tax reform. A review of state records shows that during the first three months of this year, cities, counties, and school boards spent at least \$1.7 million, and perhaps as much as \$4.3 million, retaining lobbyists to influence the Legislature.

The Tallahassee politicians are embroiled in an ill-fated attempt to make everyone happy. I fear that at the end of the day (or special session) lobbyists and local government bureaucrats will be much happier than the average citizen.

During the run-up in housing values from 2000 to 2005, many local governments failed to respond with adequate rate cuts. Instead, they just spent more, and as a result, angry homeowners are paying dramatically higher property tax bills. Local government is using scare tactics over the potential loss of vital services. In reality, they are sidestepping the real issue. They collected more money than ever and spent it without a visible improvement in social services.

**Citizens for Property Tax Reform
*Meaningful, comprehensive tax reform now!***

A group of concerned citizens has organized itself in a bold protest of this "politics as usual" approach. The group called Citizens for Property Tax Reform will collect signatures to propose a constitutional amendment that would bring the property-tax issue to the ballot. This organization is chaired by Bernie Navarro. "This is too critical an issue for us to sit back and watch it get diluted through Tallahassee's 'sausage-making' political process, where what comes out at the end is unrecognizable from what went in at the beginning", said Bernie Navarro at a recent press conference.



Bernie Navarro

The plan titled "30-40-50" would provide significant relief from rising property taxes. Seniors would pay 30% of their assessed tax bill, or a 70% savings. Homestead property owners would pay 40% of their assessed tax bill, or a 60% savings. Lastly, owners of second homes, investment homes, and commercial properties would pay 50% of their assessed tax bill, or a 50% savings.

The LBA has been involved in meetings in Miami and Tallahassee since the beginning of session in search of a solution to the property tax crisis. On May 22nd, representatives from the LBA and other community organizations gathered in the LBA offices to discuss the Senate's position on the property tax issue with several senators, without a positive outcome.

Many seniors do not have the luxury to sit around and wait and hope for the right outcome because they are on the verge of losing their homes.

"Patience is usually a virtue, but this is one issue I hope we are impatient about..." said Speaker Marco Rubio. We agree. That is why we must support the Citizens for Property Tax Reform initiative. This is the only way to ensure meaningful, comprehensive property tax reform.

May God Bless You Always,



**Osvaldo Vento, Jr.
President
Latin Builders Association**

+ WHAT WE SHOULD KNOW

More Americans Become Landlords as Rents Rise

By Jeff D. Opdyke from The Wall Street Journal Online

With home prices retreating from fever-pitch highs, a new breed of real-estate investor is eclipsing the speculator: the landlord.

More Americans are hanging out "for rent" signs. Some were forced into the business after buying investment houses or condos at top dollar during boom times that they now can't sell. But many are discovering their inner landlord on purpose, often buying properties well below prices from a year or two ago. [More...](#)

+ MONTHLY MEETING

June Luncheon

Speaker: Joe Bailey, CEO of Dolphins Enterprises / Miami Dolphins

Where: Hotel Sofitel, 5800 Blue Lagoon Dr, Miami, 33126. [Map](#).

When: Friday, June 29, 2007

Time: Cocktails 12:00 noon, Lunch 1:00 pm

Cost: \$65.00 member, \$90.00 non-member

Reservations/Information: Please contact 305-446-5989, Fax: 305-446-0901 or email to events@latinbuilders.org

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Description: Our concentration is on methods to protect your assets from an "Out of Control" tort legal system. With the changes in "Mold Liability" and liability insurance changes, everything that you've spent a lifetime of work to save is subject to a civil award.

When: Tuesday, July 10th, 2007

Time: 9:30 am - 3:00 pm

Investment: \$60 Members, \$90 Non-Members

For reservations: Please call The Continuing Education Academy at (305) 804-9897

+ LBA TV



▷ [Play May Luncheon Video](#)

▷ [Play April Luncheon Video](#)

+ DIRECTOR'S SPOTLIGHT



Anthony Seijas

Anthony Seijas is the Dade County Division President of Lennar Homes, Inc. Seijas' responsibilities includes accountability for the overall profit/loss performance record of the Dade County division, as well as overseeing the Sales, Construction, and Accounting Departments. [Complete bio...](#)

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Latin Builders Association, Inc is an energetic, non-profit organization that encompasses a vast array of individuals and companies related to South Florida's vibrant construction industry. Since its establishment in 1971, Latin Builders Association has embodied the interests of builders, developers, contractors, architects, engineers, plumbers, electricians and tradesmen associated with the business of construction, striving to provide a vital forum for discussion, networking, training/development, and representation at the local and state level.

[Mercy T. Navarro](#)

**Director of Operations
Tel. 305.446.5989
782 N.W. Le Jeune Rd.
Suite 450
Miami, Florida 33126**

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