

A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_ OR MUNICIPALITY OF \_\_\_\_\_ ADOPTING A CIVILITY PLEDGE TO BE USED BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ENGAGED IN PUBLIC DISCOURSE.

WHEREAS, in Florida the county and municipal governments feature elected legislative and representative bodies known as commissions and councils, and said bodies meet regularly in public in accordance with state public meeting laws to conduct business, govern collectively and administer as necessary; and

WHEREAS, these Constitutionally mandated responsibilities as local governments include their respective Home Rule powers and locally adopted ordinances to govern, and as such enumerate their types of meetings and details on the procedures for such sessions to occur; and

WHEREAS, such public meetings have upon occasion included unnecessary and improper displays of temper and other actions causing dismay to the elected officials, those citizens and residents in attendance and those observing via electronic means and have led to many solicitations for codes of conduct to be enacted to ensure an improved public meeting process for all involved; and

WHEREAS, elected officials, citizens and residents now routinely communicate and engage in public discourse via electronic communications such as social media posts and such public discourse has upon occasion included unnecessary and improper displays of temper and other actions causing dismay to the elected officials, citizens and residents; and

WHEREAS, one means for this improvement is a civility pledge, wherein the elected officials of the county or municipality enact the pledge toward one another, toward the public, and toward staff with an understanding that the public and staff will further abide by the same pledge and in doing so ensure a civil discourse at public meetings or when communicating via electronic means; and

WHEREAS, it is recommended that each Florida county and each Florida municipality enact a civility pledge if said government has not already done so, and that this policy provide that public discourse shall focus upon the governmental issues and not personal issues, that the pledge ensure that the elected officials treat one another with respect and courtesy and extend the same behavior and attitude toward citizens, residents and observers of such public discourse, and that said persons will extend that same behavior toward the officials and staff of the county or municipality; and

WHEREAS, that the result of this pledge and its enactment will be thoughtful debate and discussion of legislative issues facing Florida's counties and municipalities and that in setting this public example there will be more deliberative, thoughtful and issue-based consideration of the matters before these government bodies, and that better policies will result along with a more informed electorate.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE (county or municipality) of \_\_\_\_\_:

Section 1. That the (county or municipality) has adopted a civility pledge and through enacting it does commit to its full enforcement for all public discourse.

Section 2. That this civility pledge will be communicated to all those in attendance at public meetings including the officials, staff and audience, both physically in attendance and virtually.

Adopted in meeting assembled this \_\_\_\_ date of \_\_\_\_\_, 2021.

Signed:

Attest:

**PROPOSED CIVILITY PLEDGE**

“The council and staff of **NAME OF COUNTY or CITY/TOWN/VILLAGE** pledge to conduct all public discourse in a civil manner. The mayor/commission chair and all members council/commission will treat one another with courtesy and respect and ask the public to do the same toward the council/commission, each other and toward staff. We will be respectful of one another even when we disagree. We will direct all comments toward the issues. We will avoid personal attacks.