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## Palm Beach County coalition pushes legislative change to waive state impact fees for affordable developments

By JENNIFER SORENTRUE

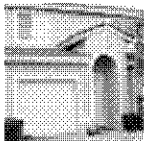
Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

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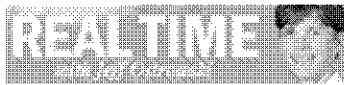
A coalition of business and community leaders has proposed a change to state law that would allow cities and counties to waive the fees tacked onto the price of a new home as long as the development is deemed "affordable."

The Housing Leadership Council of Palm Beach County says the proposed legislation could help replenish the state's stock of affordable homes by reducing costs to builders.

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In Palm Beach County, developers pay about \$10,000 in impact fees to the county to build a moderately-sized, single-family home, according to the group. The fees are used to pay for the roads, parks and services needed to support the new development.

The council has asked local lawmakers and county leaders to support its proposal. The group is scheduled to appear before the county's legislative delegation at a meeting Friday.

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"Several builders have identified the high amount of impact fees as a major impediment to the construction of new affordable/workforce housing in Palm Beach County," the group wrote in a memo to local lawmakers.

Current rules allow local officials to exempt a developer from the fees only if the county or city pays them instead from another funding source, the council said.

Under the proposed legislation, local governments would have the option to waive the fees for affordable housing, but would not be required to do so. If they chose to waive them, the governments would not be forced to build the roads immediately.

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