

DeGovernor vs. The Mouse: Mickey Seems to be Winning in a TKO!



By Kat Stansell

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Most Floridians are familiar with the ongoing sparring match between Ron DeSantis and Disney. What most don't know is where it stands and how it got there.

As has been publicized with much fanfare, DeSantis introduced what became known as the "Don't Say Gay" bill, HB1557, which limited early education (only k-3, mind you...) teachings on sexual orientation and gender identity including school "health care" in Florida schools, giving parents rights of information, and notification. [You can see the full House bill here.](#)

It is a decent bill, which restores parental rights to be able to knowledgeably participate in the content of their children's education. Most Florida residents were glad to see it, and gave Tallahassee kudos for it. Disney and liberals denounced the bill strongly. Of course.



The nearly simultaneous Senate Bill, SB4-C is what I think ignited the existing dry tinder of disagreements. Florida Senate Bill, SB4-C provided for the dissolution of any independent special district which had been established prior to the Florida Constitution of 1968. There were six. What did one have to do with the other? Here's what.

One of those six special districts to be abolished was the Reedy Creek Independent District, which had governed Disney= since 1967, allowing Disney to handle its own power, water, sewer, road and fire services, along with other issues of governance such as funding. Law enforcement was contracted with the Orange County Sheriff.

If the District were dissolved, all those services would have to be taken over by the counties of Orange and Osceola wherein

the Reedy Creek/Disney development is located. Reedy Creek's bond debt would also, by law, become the burden of the property owners in those counties. The RCID's annual financial statement for 2021 shows that the district carried a long-term bond debt of \$997,215,801, [according to ClickOrlando.com](https://www.clickorlando.com/news/2022/01/11/reedy-creek-district-financial-statement-2021/).

The same fate would, of course, be visited on the residents of the other five special districts which were dissolved under the same legislation:

- ◆ Hamilton Co Development Authority
- ◆ Franklin Co East Pt. Water and Sewer District
- ◆ Bradford Co, Development Authority
- ◆ Marion Co. Law Library District
- ◆ Broward Co. Sunshine Drainage District

None, however, was the house of the Mouse, so their issues though similar were smaller.

The stated rationale behind the Republican sponsored bill was that it would allow local governments to "exercise their home-rule powers" for the first time since the Florida Constitution was written in 1968. (Did they ask for that?? Had that been a burning issue for years? Yeah. NO.) The financial managers of the counties weren't thrilled, and were obviously concerned about the "very big impact" which the dissolution of the Districts, especially Reedy Creek, would have on their taxpayers.

Governor DeSantis, apparently tone deaf to this issue, went ahead with his plans to pass the legislation and replace the members of the Reedy Creek Board with well-healed cronies of his own choosing.

Some people in Florida and across the country may have kept up with all of this, to this point. Here's where it has gone from there.

These House and Senate bills were not technically related.

However, I believe that “Don’t Say Gay” (HB1557) got the child users/abusers all upset, then came the threat to file down all of the Mouse King’s fangs. (SB4-C) THAT was a step too far for the Disney side. So, they pulled a fast, but very likely legal move, on their foes.

On Feb. 8, 2023, the day before the new Board appointed by DeGov was to take control, the existing Reedy Creek Board, as yet still controlled by Disney, signed a long-term (30+-year) development agreement which drastically limits any control over the District that could be exercised by the new board. Here is what was in that RCID development agreement.

Disney no longer needs board approval to build high density (think of the impact on traffic and services of all kinds) and/or high rise structures of ANY height (think NYC); limitations would come only from the FAA. The corporation can also sell/assign rights for development, to anyone. Just as a last poke at Tallahassee, the same agreement bans the new board from using Disney’s name or any of its characters in any way.

As reported by CNBC on 3/29/23, “the agreement (also) includes a royal clause that dates back to 1692 in Britain and would extend its term limit for decades.” “The declaration shall continue in effect until 21 years after the death of the last survivor of the descendants of King Charles III...”, the current King of England. ([This is British law to eliminate/buffer against the concept of perpetuities.](#))

This agreement, made by the original RCID board on Feb. 8, was not discovered until Feb. 27, 2023, when DeGov replaced all of the Disney board members with his chosen supporters. This fact alone speaks to the incompetence, ignorance or perfidy of Tallahassee. Take your pick. I think it’s bits of all three. One of the new Board members said, “This essentially makes Disney the government.”

Disney maintains that “all agreements signed between Disney and the District were appropriate,...discussed and approved in open forums for which notice was given, in compliance with Florida’s Sunshine Law.” DeSantis and his reps had no comment for CNBC, when this was reported (link above) on “Squawk Box” on March 29, ’23.

How did DeGov and his gang miss this??? Discussed in open, announced forums? It is inconceivable and unconscionable. I’m guessing they’re going to spend a lot of Florida taxpayers’ money to get out of this mess, if they can.

As of now, the case of Mickey v. Ronnie et. al, is in the Florida Supreme Court. The new DeSantis-appointed board has retained “[multiple financial and legal firms to conduct audits and investigate](#).” They have agreed to hire “lawyers that have extensive experience with protracted litigation against Fortune 500 companies.” I can only imagine what THOSE guys cost.

No legal work comes cheap, and the expenses involved in this case will come directly out of the Florida taxpayer’s pocket for however long this will take to settle.



Whatever the final result of this litigation, it should never have happened, had Tallahassee been alert. The fact that the Governor v. the Mouse has made it onto the legal battlefield tells me that the Florida Legislature wasn’t paying attention they way they should. I believe that they had more pressing things to which to give

their attention.

Perhaps it was the legislation which freed the Governor to run

for POTUS then return to office should he fail on the national scene. Or, maybe it was slipping in legislation helping Ron DeSantis to seal – aka, hide – all of his travel and visitor records.= Maybe it was SB 7050 which mandates the use of machines in Florida elections, just as Florida's Kris Jurski of the-peoples-audit.org, was uncovering hundreds of thousands of voter roll irregularities made possible only by machines. Any challenges to election results by citizens, like Jurski, were made illegal. Important stuff, if you are the Florida legislature. Way more important than hanging unlimited legal expenses around the neck of already burdened citizens.

Hmmmm...lots to take their attention away from the tricky little rodent, and his "mischief" (the term for a group of mice—does it get any better than that?!? lol) It was a busy spring term in Tallahassee.

To the few who still think their governor did great things vs. Disney, you owe it to yourself and your families to fully understand the reality of this situation.

I believe that the legislature of Florida – or ANY state – owes more and better to the people they represent, and it is high time for the citizens of the Sunshine State to stand tall and apply the sun screen of knowledge, so they do not get burned. Again.

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