

ASSIGNMENT OF BENEFITS REFORM

Time is Now to Address Assignment of Benefits Fraud

Last night, [I addressed the Citizens Property Insurance Corporation](#) at their public rate hearing about a growing storm that could become catastrophic if the Florida Legislature continues to ignore it.

For the last few years, the state has seen an increasing amount of fraud relating to assignment of benefits (AOB). Lawyers that advertise on TV and shady contractors are misusing AOB to assume complete control over homeowners' insurance benefits, inflate the cost of repairs and file unnecessary lawsuits. This has led to rising insurance rates, in some areas as much as a 10-15 percent increase.

Sadly, consumers are the ones left holding the bill – literally. Just 10 years ago, there were only 405 AOB-related lawsuits in Florida. Today, **there are more than 28,000**— a startling number that doesn't bode well for Florida's reputation as a "judicial hellhole."

Meanwhile, lawyers that advertise on TV and shady contractors continue to pad their wallets on the backs of hard-working Floridians.

This can't be allowed to continue. In fact, just last week, [newly appointed CFO Jimmy Patronis called AOB a "Category 5 hurricane."](#)

Unfortunately, not everyone believes what we do. The room was filled with those who prefer the status quo, including Senate Banking and Insurance Chair Antire Flores (R-Miami). "I will put everyone here on notice...I am going to be pursuing legislation and looking at legislation to, unfortunately, for the Office of Insurance Regulation, limits some of the authority that you all have in approving items like [managed repair programs], unless they come with some sort of insurance [decrease]," said Flores. She added that the Legislature might look at freezing insurance rates like they did 10 years ago, which ultimately led several insurers to stop writing insurance policies in Florida.

We must enact serious AOB reform during the 2018 Legislative Session, as failing to do so will hurt not just Floridians but the state's financial health. I'm asking the Florida Legislature to rein in AOB abuse and protect consumers. [You can join me in doing so by signing the Consumer Protection Petition.](#)

Let's end this fraud once and for all.

Stop AOB Fraud, Sign the Petition

Sign the [Consumer Protection Petition](#) to put Floridians ahead of special interests and shady actors.