

Statement
on
New Statewide Florida Legislation Threatens Local Preservation Laws

Society of Architectural Historians
Heritage Conservation Committee

The Society of Architectural Historians (SAH), the oldest and largest scholarly organization devoted to studying the history of the built environment, strongly opposes the recently approved Florida “Resiliency and Safe Structures Act,” passed in April 2024 by the Florida House (HB1317) and Senate (SB1346)

Florida legislators believe d local preservation boards had grown too powerful , to the detriment of property owners, resulting in this new law . This law allows owners to demolish buildings in high- risk coastal flood zones when local officials determine the building or structure to be unsafe . In instances where the local government has jurisdiction, it also allows owners to demolish buildings in the same zones if the buildings do not conform to the base flood elevation requirements set forth by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The challenge is that few, if any, historic buildings meet FEMA’s current standards .

The law targets oceanfront buildings along the so -called coastal construction control line, a border created to delineate how close developers can build to the coast. In Miami Beach, the endangered historic properties are concentrated among the Miami Modernist (MiMo)-style resorts along Collins Avenue in the Mid Beach and North Beach neighborhoods. These include the Faena, Casablanca, Carillon, Sherry Frontenac, and Edison hotels, as well as a handful of Art Deco buildings in the South- of-- TJ -0.025 Tc 0.025 Tw [(m)-21.1 (ay)]T.

