
From the Haters: More Trumpian than Trump

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It's not an original title, although it may be so low—because it's not up to par—from Marco Rubio, with whom he discussed Donald Trump's Republican nomination in 2016.

It's not difficult to understand that it refers to Ron DeSantis, the current Florida governor, who, before the cruel mess he created and managed to get approved a few hours ago (called a political triumph), had already shown that he is more Trumpian than Trump, by taking office on the far right, proposing anti-immigration measures, and denying medical and healthcare to people in the LGBT community.

At the time, DeSantis was being financially supported by Elon Musk, who had yet to rise to the top of the billionaire ladder, so he never lacked money, something essential in that hodgepodge of democracy they call the United States for any electoral aspiration, from the candidacy for mayor or council member to the presidential race, accompanied by attractive looks (there's no such thing as not being pretty, as Pacho Alonso sang) or charisma with lots of money, or both.

While his other partner in the haters' club, Trump's current foreign minister, is devoted to creating splits and repressive policies in Latin America, primarily against rebels in Cuba and Venezuela, Western media outlets, not suspected of being altruistic but rather pro-Western, such as Microsoft News, The Associated Press, Infobae, and Deutsche Welle, among others, concede that DeSantis has become the most hated figure by undocumented immigrants in Florida, but also by numerous business owners who depend on that labor force.

Commentators like Miel Rosas (her signature) in a Miami outlet say that Trump, despite his conflicting and divisive narrative, never went so far during his administration. Of course, he did implement other measures, but in many cases his rhetoric was more impactful than his actions. In DeSantis' case, his actions have undermined the protection and dignity of people, but despite this, he has received a lot of support in a state heavily permeated by the far right, a propaganda of lies that spans 24 hours a day and where fear to dissent rules. Don't doubt that, along with Musk and, of course, Rubio, he will aspire to win the Republican presidential nomination in four years.

AP's Rebecca Blackwell noted that DeSantis is proud of having passed the toughest immigration legislation in the nation, stating that "Florida will be a safer state," and that it should serve as a model for other states, establishing a 67-county cooperation agreement with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and ordering all law enforcement agencies—state police, sheriffs, and municipal police—to cooperate with federal immigration agents without exception.

The law also includes higher penalties for misdemeanors and mandatory capital punishment (without a jury) in cases of first-degree murder or statutory rape.

This is one of the most striking aspects of the new law: the mandatory application of the death penalty to undocumented immigrants who have committed first-degree murder or statutory rape. ACLU attorney Kara Gross told ABC News that there's "legal precedent establishing that mandatory death penalty laws are unconstitutional." This refers to the 1976 Supreme Court ruling, based on a North Carolina case, that automatic death sentences violate the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution, which prohibits cruel and unusual punishment. One of the bill's sponsors, Republican State Senator Randy Fine, openly acknowledged that the law will face a legal challenge, but hopes the Supreme Court will "change its mind" on the matter.

Another example: petty theft in the state is punishable by up to one year in prison and a \$1,000 fine. If this crime is committed by an undocumented immigrant, it will now be punishable by up to five years in prison and a \$5,000 fine. The measures also create a new state crime: entering Florida after entering the country without authorization. "Don't come to Florida illegally. That's the premise," stated State Representative Lawrence McClure.

Immigrant rights organizations have expressed their total rejection of the legislation, accusing it of violating the principle of equal protection under the law, protected in the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution. How can it be justified that the penalty for a crime increases depending on whether the accused is a citizen, resident, or illegal immigrant? they argue.

In this regard, the executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Florida (ACLU), Bacardi Jackson, stated in a statement that no government should promote an extreme political agenda that harms the well-being of all. "[Donald] Trump's mass deportation agenda will result in people, including U.S. citizens and people with protected status, being detained or arrested simply because of the color of their skin or their accent," she denounced. "By forcing Florida law enforcement to participate in this cruel agenda, the right to due process and other basic legal rights afforded to all people in the United States are at risk," she added.

As previously mentioned, the concern also extends to local business owners in sectors such as agriculture, construction, and hospitality, who employ large numbers of immigrants and fear that the implementation of the new legislation will affect the availability of employees in these key industries for the state's economy.

The new law mandates the creation of a state immigration czar to force local authorities to support federal authorities in President Trump's mass deportation plan. The person appointed to this task was Larry Keefe, a longtime ally of Governor DeSantis, who in 2022 played a key role in planning the controversial flights that brought Venezuelan migrants to Martha's Vineyard. "This is a perfect job," Keefe said after his appointment. From now on, he will oversee a budget of more than \$200 million in grants aimed at strengthening immigration security in Florida.

In the past, some Florida counties adopted sanctuary city policies that limited their police officers' cooperation with ICE. With the new law in place, all state and local agencies are required to cooperate in enforcing federal immigration laws. Officials who defy the regulations could be removed from office and fined up to \$5,000. The state attorney general can also sue local governments that do not comply.

Local police can now make arrests without a judge's approval.

The law also has implications for the payment of university tuition to undocumented students. They will no longer be treated as residents and will have to pay as foreigners. Many will see their bills triple and will face the difficulty of continuing their studies for economic reasons. This provision includes Dreamers, beneficiaries of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), who will now also pay more.

In short, Florida is groggy, thanks to Ron DeSantis' blows.

Translated by Amikal Labañino / CubaSí Translation Staff

