

**APPEALS COURT RULES AGAINST CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG
ON SUNSHINE LAW VIOLATION**

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St. Petersburg, FL – A Florida appeals court ruled that the City of St. Petersburg violated Florida’s Sunshine Law when it reached a decision to amend a city ordinance at a meeting that was not open to the public. The Sunshine Law protects the right of the public to be present and heard during all phases of decision-making by government boards and commissions.

The court sided with Rev. Bruce Wright, who initiated this lawsuit. Wright felt vindicated by the court’s ruling, saying, “I am pleased the City’s secret dealings are laid bare in this decision. The City’s failure to hold a public debate about this ordinance is undemocratic to its core.”

Wright was represented in this lawsuit by Southern Legal Counsel, a Florida statewide nonprofit public interest law firm. Kirsten Anderson, lead attorney for the case, said, “This decision is a great victory for government in the sunshine. We will continue to fight to protect the public’s right to government that is transparent and accountable to the people.”

The First Amendment Foundation, Florida’s premier Sunshine Law organization, filed an amicus brief in support of Wright’s case before the appeals court.

Read a copy of the court’s decision [here](#).

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[Southern Legal Counsel \(SLC\)](#) is a Florida statewide nonprofit public interest law firm committed to the ideal of equal justice for all and the attainment of basic civil and human rights. It works to make this ideal a reality by providing legal representation to individuals and groups who would otherwise not have access to the justice system and whose cases may bring about systemic reform.