

PRESS RELEASE

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He Made DeSantis Rewrite the Book Ban Law. **Next up? The Surrender of Pensacola.**

Broward and Lauderdale got demand letters. Now Pensacola.

This is a statewide campaign —
and the activist running it has beaten DeSantis before.
Badly.

“Pensacola surrendered to the Spanish in 1559. Now, thanks to Tallahassee, they’re about to surrender to the DEI police. I didn’t write this law. I’m merely the comeuppance.”

– Chaz Stevens, CLE Faculty

DEERFIELD BEACH, FL, March 12, 2026 — Chaz Stevens, the Florida constitutional stress tester whose Bible ban challenge forced Governor DeSantis to rewrite the state’s own book-restriction law in 2024 — with DeSantis’s office naming Stevens by name as the sole reason the change was needed — has served a formal demand letter on Pensacola City Attorney Andy Cobb targeting the City’s decades-long support for the Fiesta of Five Flags, one of the oldest heritage festivals in Florida. It is the third such letter, to municipalities across the state, in two days. Attorneys for Broward County and City of Fort Lauderdale received similar documents.

“Last time I broke one of Gov. Mexcal’s laws, his office called me out by name — then signed a bill fixing the problem I’d created,” Stevens said. “This is not a one-city operation. Demand letters to Broward and Lauderdale. Pensacola’s sitting in their Inbox. Like Janet Reno and her red pickup, I’m working my way across the Sunshine state, one heritage festival at a time, applying the precise text of a law the Legislature apparently never read. This isn’t my first rodeo. It isn’t even my first Ron Cuervo rodeo. Hopefully, this time, Ron’s not wearing assless chaps.”

The Law Nobody Read

SB 1134, passed by the Florida Legislature on March 10, 2026 and effective January 1, 2027, prohibits municipalities from funding, promoting, or taking official action in support of “programming or activities designed or implemented with reference to race, color, sex, ethnicity, gender identity, or sexual orientation.” Existing resolutions, policies, and funding instruments inconsistent with the statute are automatically void on that date. Officials who knowingly continue prohibited conduct face misfeasance and malfeasance charges. Any city resident may sue for declaratory relief, an injunction, and damages.

The statute’s only carveouts protect federal holidays, Florida state holidays, and patriotic observances listed in specific federal code sections. I checked, and Lauderdale’s St. Patrick’s Day Parade has gone missing in action. Forget the Greek Festival and Caribbean Heritage Month at a city rec center. The Legislature built a law with no carveout for the things its own supporters love.

Case in point? The Fiesta of Five Flags in Pensacola.

The Pensacola Problem

Fiesta Pensacola's own mission statement describes the event as a celebration of "Native American, African, Latin, European and Asian" heritage — "each adding to the richness of our shared heritage." Under § 166.04971(1)(b)(3), that is the statute's trigger, supplied verbatim by the organizer.

"The City Attorney is going to tell me the event is open to everyone, so it's not preferential treatment," Stevens said. "I've heard that argument. I've already written the response. The statute has three independent triggers. Subsection 3 prohibits programming 'designed with reference to ethnicity.' Full stop. No restricted access required. Fiesta Pensacola's own website supplies the ethnic reference. I'm just the mailman."

"Will we now refer to the Fiesta of Five Flags as 'The Annual Gathering of People Celebrating Five Completely Random Historical Governments That Definitely Have Nothing To Do With Spanish, French, or British Ethnicity Whatsoever?'"

"Also, don't blame me. I didn't write the rules. I'm just the field test. Play stupid games, win stupid prizes. And in this case, the prize is me — the human version of the unlubed dildo of consequences."

The City's exposure goes beyond a permit. The Mayor of Pensacola participates annually in the official "Surrender of the City" ceremony — a formal municipal act performed in service of a program organized around national origin and ethnic heritage. The City absorbs police, fire, and sanitation costs. The Downtown Pensacola Improvement Board has made direct payments to the organization. Visit Pensacola promotes the event on publicly supported platforms.

"The Mayor literally surrenders the city every year in a ceremony celebrating five colonial powers, including the Spanish," Stevens said. "Pensacola surrendered to the Spanish in 1559. Now, thanks to Tallahassee, they're about to do it again — this time to a DEI statute they voted for. I'd find that funnier if it weren't also true."

A Statewide Campaign

Stevens has simultaneously served demand letters on Broward County, and also Fort Lauderdale. Lauderdale's city attorney, Shari McCartney, received an eight-custodian omnibus public records request targeting the St. Patrick's Day Parade, the Las Olas Greek Festival, and Juneteenth programming at City facilities. The Pensacola demand

letter is the third in what Stevens describes as a systematic tour of Florida’s heritage festival landscape.

“Every city in Florida with a heritage festival, an ethnic heritage month proclamation, an island cultural event at a city park, or a Juneteenth program at a local rec center is in the same position,” Stevens said. “The only question is which city gets the letter next. I have a list. It’s not short. No need to check it twice. Gonna be naughty, and not nice.”

“For the record — I’m pro-DEI. Pro-Fiesta. Pro-Surrendering to the Spaniards. Very pro-cheap mexcal. Pro-all of it,” Stevens said. “I didn’t pass this silly law. I’m merely the human version of the unlubed dildo of consequences. When the going gets stupid, I’m usually the first to go in.”

Stevens’ methodology is familiar to Florida officials. In 2022, he filed Bible ban challenges in all 63 Florida school districts. He had legal standing in one. The national media coverage was not limited to that one district. In 2024, DeSantis signed legislation scaling back the book-restriction law, with his office citing Stevens by name as the reason. Stevens describes the SB 1134 campaign as “the same play, different statute.”

“Same game plan. Same Constitution. Same result, eventually,” Stevens said. “Like my successful Bible Ban effort, here again I seek the precise application of State law, be it silly or not. Governor Monte Alban should have me over for lunch and queso fundido. I’m the only person in Florida taking his laws seriously.”

“This train wreck is coming to your hometown, courtesy of the Malicious Compliance Express.”

About Chaz Stevens

Chaz Stevens is a Florida-based civic activist, municipal governance consultant, and IMLA CLE Faculty member with a 30-year track record of pro se federal First Amendment litigation and constitutional stress-testing of public forum neutrality. In 2024, DeSantis’s office named Stevens as the sole example cited when the Governor signed legislation scaling back the state’s book-restriction law — a law Stevens had broken by filing Bible ban challenges in dozens of school districts. His work has generated national media coverage including The Daily Show, The Colbert Report,

NPR, Fortune, and the Associated Press. He is the founder of REVOLT Insights (revolt.training), which provides *Lindke v. Freed* social media liability audits and First Amendment compliance consulting to municipalities nationwide.

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