

Out of touch

Letter to the editor, [State Port Pilot](#), 08.28.24

The State Port Pilot included a letter to the editor on August 14 titled “Be thankful” by Brunswick County District 3 Commissioner Pat Sykes, who claimed to be “amazed” by statements about the legislative land grab of the Southport Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ). The fact that Sykes is amazed by constituents’ reaction shows how completely out of touch she is with the community she’s supposed to be serving.

Southport recently strengthened its Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), responding to citizen concerns about clear-cutting and high-density development. Developers saw this as an unacceptable threat to their profits. So, their public officials (follow the money) held a closed-door meeting with developers, without advance notice, nor public input, and declared the ETJ protections null and void.

Sykes mischaracterized this ETJ seizure as a “relinquishment,” claiming that “Relinquishing the ETJ has nothing to do with developers. It has everything to do with the citizens that live in the area.” There’s a vast difference between relinquishment and seizure, and it explains the fury of those she was elected to serve.

Sykes brags that she, Senator Bill Rabon, and Representative Charlie Miller have done plenty for Southport. That’s their job! We’re supposed to be thankful that she’s actually doing her job?

Ms. Sykes boasts, “Since Representative Miller and I are two people born and raised in Southport, and relinquishing the ETJ has nothing to do with developers but the citizens, I can state that we have worked exceptionally well and done our elected duties for our District over and above.” She ends by asserting that, “The citizens in this district need to be thankful for all that has been done and will be done.”

No, we’re anything but thankful. If Commissioner Sykes would sell out her beloved hometown to the developers who fund her campaign, she shouldn’t expect our gratitude. We’ll only feel thankful after November 5, when Bob Fulton, her opponent for District 3 Commissioner, sends her packing.

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