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Iconic Bond villain wages war against Florida homeowner's association's pickleball plans

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PUBLISHED: 01:51 EDT, 8 September 2025 | **UPDATED:** 01:57 EDT, 8 September 2025

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An actor who once squared off against [James Bond](#) is now battling his homeowners association in court over plans to build noisy pickleball courts steps away from residents' homes.

Robert Davi, 74, says if plans to install the courts are given the go ahead then peace will be shattered in his Florida neighborhood.

The ex-Bond villain has filed a lawsuit alongside his neighbors in Apollo Beach's upscale Andalusia community.

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The suit argues the HOA's decision to convert clay tennis courts into pickleball courts has sparked a neighborhood crisis - especially for military veterans living with PTSD.

The lawsuit, filed on August 15 by Davi and fellow residents of the exclusive neighborhood, accuses the HOA of prioritizing recreational trends over the well-being of homeowners who live just 100 to 200 feet from the proposed courts.

The suit claims the closeness of homes to the courts would be subjected to constant noise from the constant 'pong' sound of generated by the balls hitting the paddle during gameplay, which often begins at dawn and can continue for hours.

Davi, known for his booming voice and strong conservative views, has become the face of the fight and appeared before the Hillsborough County Commission mimicking the sport's signature 'pong, pong, pong' sound to drive home the impact.

'I could spend three minutes doing that. Would you like that next to your community?' Davi asked, challenging local leaders to act. 'We need you guys to step up. We need you to really put in an ordinance.'



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Robert Davi, an actor who once squared off against James Bond, is now battling his homeowners association in court over proposed pickleball courts



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Robert Davi is seen as villain Franz Sanchez in the 1989 James Bond film License to Kill

Although Davi made it clear he doesn't oppose the game itself, his message was delivered with flair in his signature gravelly voice - befitting a man whose film résumé also includes Die Hard and The Goonies.

Davi and fellow homeowners argue the noise generated by pickleball paddles striking polymer balls, which are distinctly louder than those used in tennis, would create an unbearable environment for those living close to the proposed courts.

Their case reflects a growing national backlash. Hillsborough Commissioner Josh Wostal noted during the meeting that at least 200 lawsuits have been filed across the country related to pickleball noise.

'I think that we've been way too generous about SB 180,' Wostal said, referring to a controversial new law that sharply limits local government authority over homeowner associations and land-use decisions.

Senate Bill 180, signed into law earlier this summer, prohibits local governments from imposing 'restrictive or burdensome' zoning changes or permitting rules without consent from developers.

'The state has the sole authority for the regulation of HOAs,' County Attorney Christine Beck explained. 'This board does not have that authority under [Florida](#) law.'

Wostal proposing a temporary moratorium on any new pickleball courts built within 250 feet of homes but the motion was narrowly defeated in a 4–3 vote.



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There is a growing national backlash against pickleball. At least 200 lawsuits have been filed across the country related to pickleball noise (file photo)



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The ex-Bond villain has filed a lawsuit alongside neighbors in Apollo Beach's upscale Andalucia community, arguing that the HOA's decision to convert clay tennis courts into pickleball courts has sparked a neighborhood crisis



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Davi, right, is seen taking on 007 played by Timothy Dalton, center, in the 1989 movie

'Listen, if I thought that we could actually do this under the law, I will be willing to go for the 600-foot limit,' said Commissioner Harry Cohen.

'The problem here is that I think this is an absolute direct violation of the Senate bill... and there are real consequences to getting in the way of it.'

Instead, the board unanimously approved Wostal's second motion, which directs county staff to research existing lawsuits and analyze potential sound ordinance options and distance thresholds for pickleball courts near residential areas.

'This tennis court pickleball initiative is basically turning your neighbors, into your enemies,' said Michael Wasielewski, a Vietnam veteran (with PTSD) who lives directly next to the courts to [WFLA](#).

'My concern is the acoustics associated with the game. My concern about it is the hours that they will be allowed to play that sport. It's early morning into the night.'

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