

# **WORKSHOP**

## **Workshop on the 2014 State and Federal Legislative Priorities**

**Tuesday, December 10, 2013**

**1:30 – 3:00 p.m.**

**Leon County Board of County Commissioners' Chambers  
Leon County Courthouse, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor**

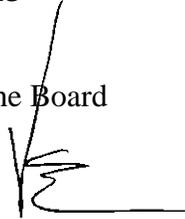
**Leon County  
Board of County Commissioners**

**Notes for Workshop**

# Leon County Board of County Commissioners

December 10, 2013

**To:** Honorable Chairman and Members of the Board

**From:** Vincent S. Long, County Administrator 

**Title:** Workshop on the 2014 State and Federal Legislative Priorities

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<b>County Administrator Review and Approval:</b>	Vincent S. Long, County Administrator
<b>Department/Division Review and Approval:</b>	Alan Rosenzweig, Deputy County Administrator Ken Morris, Director of Economic Development and Business Partnerships
<b>Lead Staff/ Project Team:</b>	Cristina Paredes, Intergovernmental Affairs and Special Projects Coordinator Josh Pascua, Management Analyst

**Fiscal Impact:**

This item does not have a fiscal impact. However, it recommends projects for appropriation requests at the state and federal levels, while the substantive efforts of the legislative program often seek to avoid cost shifts and unfunded mandates to the County.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Option #1: Approve the 2014 state and federal legislative priorities, as amended by the Board.

## **Report and Discussion**

### **Background:**

Historically, the Board has conducted a workshop with staff on legislative priorities to guide the County's lobbying efforts. In recent years, staff has utilized this forum to receive Board direction on and approval of priority legislative issues to guide the County's lobbying efforts at both the state and federal level.

In recent years, the Board directed staff to refine the County's substantive priorities only to the most pressing issues and to support the Florida Association of Counties (FAC) and National Association of Counties (NACo) in achieving their broader substantive initiatives. Consistent with years past, staff is seeking Board assent to the state and federal substantive and appropriations issues presented herein to be included in the County's 2014 State and Federal Legislative Priorities. Staff has identified seven appropriation requests for the 2014 state and federal legislative cycles (Attachment #1). Additionally, staff has provided five substantive priorities for the 2014 state legislative session (Attachment #2), and three federal substantive priorities for the second session of the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress (Attachment #3). The Board may wish to add and/or delete legislative priorities as deemed appropriate for the County's 2014 legislative issues.

This workshop seeks Board consideration of the state and federal legislative priorities to guide the County's lobbying efforts for the 2014 state legislative session and the second session of the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress. Upon Board approval, staff and the contract lobbying teams will pursue all of the legislative issues approved by the Board, and in so doing, place appropriate priority on the issues given the opportunities that arise during the legislative process.

### **Analysis:**

Rather than ask the Board to rank projects in priority order, staff is seeking Board assent to the state and federal substantive and appropriations issues presented herein to be included in the County's 2014 State and Federal Legislative Priorities. Upon Board approval, staff and the contract lobbying teams will pursue all of the legislative issues approved by the Board, and in so doing, place appropriate priority on the issues given the opportunities that arise during the legislative process. Notwithstanding this, staff will assign priority to any issue that the Board directs to receive a special level of attention in 2014. Staff would also welcome the addition or deletion of issues that the Board deems appropriate for the County's 2014 legislative efforts.

It is important to note that in addition to the specific Leon County issues identified herein by staff, much of the County's legislative efforts each session are focused on statewide issues in conjunction with FAC. FAC finalized their 2014 legislative program during their legislative conference on November 14, 2013 (Attachment #4). These issues are often times the most critical issues facing the County during the state legislative session.

For the past three years, the County has hosted ‘Community Legislative Dialogue’ meetings throughout session to engage our community and regional partners in identifying shared legislative priorities and interests. These meetings were well attended with representatives from higher education, the Leon County Delegation, the Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce, Big Bend Minority Chamber of Commerce, the City of Tallahassee, Leon County School Board, Constitutional Officers, Tallahassee Memorial Hospital, and several other community partners. The participants agreed that it was helpful to hear the priorities of other community partners. The Board will have an opportunity to communicate its legislative priorities when it hosts the Leon County Legislative Delegation. A meeting date has not yet been set but it is anticipated that the meeting will be held in January, prior to the start of the 2014 session. Staff will notify the Board of the date once it has been confirmed.

It is important for the Board to be active participants in the legislative process by testifying on behalf of the County and working with the legislative delegation. Staff will continue to keep the Board involved in legislative issues through agenda items, resolutions, memorandum, “Call to Action” emails, as well as through the weekly *Capital Update* memoranda during session.

## **PROPOSED LEON COUNTY 2014 STATE & FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE SESSION:**

### **Appropriation Requests**

*(Please Note: For complete information on each, see Attachment #1)*

The Board’s practice of retaining professional contractual lobbying services, at both the state and federal levels, has been based primarily on increasing the County’s chances of obtaining legislative appropriations. Staff works throughout the year to identify County projects for which to submit state and federal appropriations requests. In recent years, the Legislature has not accepted Community Budget Issue Requests (CBIRs), which serve as the primary vehicle for state appropriations, due to the state’s severe budget constraints. However, a greater emphasis placed on grant programs through the executive branch and coordinating through state agencies helped fund a number of infrastructure projects during the previous session. Although an estimated budget surplus of \$846 million is projected, staff anticipates that the Legislature will not consider CBIRs in 2014 due to the fact that most of this additional revenue will be negated by tax-cutting plans and funding needs for programs such as Medicaid and public education. The Governor has announced that he plans to advance \$500 million in tax cuts during the 2014 session. In addition, Governor Scott has continued the practice of requesting that all state agencies submit a budget that reflects a 5% cut in funding for the next fiscal year.

Due to the continued revenue challenges at the state level, staff has refined the Board’s top appropriation requests to avoid unrealistic expectations for securing funding for local projects. The 2014 appropriation requests identified herein include costly capital projects ranging from transportation projects and infrastructure improvements. In order to maximize the chances for state and federal funds, the County will seek to partner with the City on several projects important to the community including improvements to Capital Circle Southwest.

In previous years, the County has had tremendous success in obtaining grants for its parks and library programs through the legislative appropriations process. Last year, one of the appropriation requests of the County was funding to develop the for the America's First Christmas site into a tourism destination. Staff contacted the Florida Department of State in order to discuss details regarding our legislative request for the 2014 session. During this conversation, staff learned that there will not be an appropriation request submitted this session. Instead, the Florida Department of State will focus on obtaining funding to renovate the Collins historical Governor's mansion at The Grove, located just between Midtown and Downtown.

The following are the proposed Leon County 2014 State and Federal appropriation requests (Attachment #1):

Capital Circle Southwest \$119.1 million

- Segment 1 (Orange Avenue to Springhill Road) \$65.4 million
- Segment 2 (Springhill Road to Crawfordville Road) \$53.7 million

Woodville Highway \$26.6 million

- Right of Way Acquisition and Construction from Capital Circle to Paul Russell Road

EMS Healthcare Innovation Challenge Grant \$920,241

- Tele-Medicine

Entrepreneurial Excellence Program (EEP) \$650,000

- Support the Economic Development Council's request for funding for EEP's operational costs (three years).

Woodville Sewer \$500,000

- Design of Woodville Sewer System

Lake Talquin International Rowing Training Center \$150,000

- Support the Tallahassee International Rowing Association request for funding for the rowing equipment and infrastructure for a training center for the 2017 World Rowing Championships in Sarasota, Florida

Daniel B. Chaires Park \$95,000

- Park Renovations (Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP) Grant)

**Please Note: For complete information on each issue, please see Attachment #1**

## **PROPOSED LEON COUNTY 2014 STATE LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

### **Policy Requests**

*(Please Note: For complete information on each, see Attachment #2)*

The 2014 legislative session will begin on March 4, 2014, and is scheduled to conclude on May 2, 2014. Like most legislation, much of the County's legislative efforts are incremental and focused on issues that are built upon throughout several sessions. However, each year staff evaluates the trends and issues affecting all County programs and services to identify potential policy or substantive legislative issues. Significant substantive issues that have been identified for County participation range from maintaining the County's home rule authority to the protection of state workforce. The state's current fiscal challenges and efforts to further reduce state government are likely to dominate the Legislature's time this year. It will be important for the lobbying team to monitor the budgetary and programmatic decisions made by the Legislature to determine their impact, if any, on local governments in the form of cost shifts or unfunded mandates.

Throughout this past session, the Capitol Alliance Group worked to advance the Board's legislative priorities. For example, Capitol Alliance Group, along with our community partners, lobbied successfully to secure pay raises for our state workers - the first in several years. The Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce estimates that the state employee raises will result in a \$22 million dollar economic impact for the Leon County community. Capitol Alliance Group also partnered with the Florida State University to advance legislation regarding the dissolution of the Tallahassee-Leon County Civic Center Authority (Authority), another top priority for the Board. This legislation was passed and signed into law.

In addition to the substantive issues identified by the County, staff works daily with FAC and the Florida Association for Intergovernmental Relations (FAIR) to identify developing issues that effect counties during the session's quick pace. In many cases, the County joins FAC and FAIR members to advocate for or against initiatives that would substantially impact counties (*Please note: FAIR members are representatives of local governments from across the state.*) Please find below a refined listing of the proposed Leon County 2014 state legislative policy requests. Each request provides a brief overview of the issue and indicates the specific recommended legislative action:

#### **Protection of State Workforce**

Issue: State workers comprise a substantial percentage of Leon County's population contributing to our community, economy and diversity. Protecting the jobs of these workers from privatization and advocating for fair wages has always been a top priority of the Board during the legislative cycle.

As stated previously, after significant lobbying from the County and our community partners, the FY13/14 state budget included an increase in state employee salaries, though it also eliminated nearly 3,400 positions throughout the state. This pay increase is the first in seven years for state workers. On October 1, 2013, state workers earning less than \$40,000 a year received a \$1,400 raise and those who earn more than \$40,000 received a \$1,000 raise.

In addition, merit based bonuses of up to \$600 were given to 35 percent of the state employees. Law enforcement officers also saw an increase in pay. A five percent increase was given to those law enforcement officers with five years or more experience and a three percent increase will go to those with five years or less. Teachers also saw a salary increase in the FY13/14 budget. Each school district received a share of \$480 million for school employee raises. The Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce estimates that the state employee raises will result in a \$22 million dollar economic impact for the Leon County community.

There have been attempts in the past few sessions to cap the state's total spending on employee health insurance and in effect increase in health insurance premiums of state employees. The FY13/14 state budget did not increase state employee health insurance premiums, which remain at \$50 per month for individual coverage and \$180 per month for family coverage for most employees.

It is anticipated that the Legislature will once again pursue legislation reforming the Florida Retirement System (FRS). This is a top priority of Florida House Speaker Will Weatherford who would like to close the defined benefit enrollment option to new employees and require them to join the investment plan. FRS is the primary retirement plan for public servant employees, 80% of which are county government agencies, district school boards, community colleges, and universities. Currently, only one bill has been filed regarding FRS reform. Senate Bill 184 would provide compulsory membership in FRS investment plan for employees in the Elected Officers' Class or Senior Management Service Class enrolled on or after July 1, 2014.

Action: Oppose any additional reductions to state employee benefits and encourage the Legislature to study the economic impact of FRS reform and health insurance reform.

### **Communication Service Tax**

Issue: The Communication Service Tax (CST) is a tax on the retail sales of communications services, which include voice, data, audio, video and any other information including cable (video) services. Internet access, as defined by the Internet Tax Freedom Act, email services, and prepaid calling arrangements (cards and cellphones) are not included and account for approximately 25% to 40% of all wireless phones. The proceeds from the tax are transferred to county and municipal governments, the Public Education Capital Outlay and Debt Service Trust Fund, and the state's General Revenue Fund. Since CST revenue funds the Public Education Capital Outlay program, the CST is also an issue for the County's community partners like Leon County Schools, Florida State University, Florida A&M University, and Tallahassee Community College.

A county or municipality may choose to levy the CST by ordinance. Currently, Leon County levies a CST 6.02% within the unincorporated areas of the County. The City of Tallahassee's rate is applied to those individuals who live within the city limits and is levied at 6.90%. For the past seven fiscal years, the revenues from the CST have declined by an average of 2% or a total of 11.5%.

In 2012, the Legislature created the CST Workgroup to propose solutions to the problems associated with the CST. The Workgroup recommended that the best approach in addressing CST issues would be a holistic replacement of the CST by repealing the tax and bringing all communications services under an increased sales and use tax. According to the Workgroup, this option would modernize the current tax structure, streamline the administrative system, and remove competitive advantages without reducing local government revenues. Under the CST Workgroup's proposal, the Department of Revenue (DOR) estimated that the state sales tax rate would need to be adjusted from 6% to 6.34% in order to offset the repeal of the current CST structure. Despite the proposal being revenue neutral, legislators were resistive to the idea of raising the state sales tax citing that it would hurt retailers. Legislation that included the Workgroup's recommendation was not filed in either chamber.

Currently, a bill has been proposed for the 2014 session which would reduce the state's collection of CST by 2%. As mention previously, Governor Scott has announced that he plans to advance \$500 million in tax cuts during the 2014 session. The revenue estimating conference anticipates that this proposed reduction would result \$255 million less in state CST collections. In turn, the FAC estimates a \$35 million impact to local governments.

Action: Support legislation that is revenue neutral; simplifies administration and collection of the current tax; enhances the stability and reliability as an important revenue source for local government; and provides the opportunity for market-based growth.

### **Internet Sales Tax**

Issue: Under current law, individuals who buy goods online are supposed to send the sales tax to the state on their own, but that provision is largely unheeded and not enforced. Economists estimate the state loses out on about \$400 million in revenue each year the tax goes uncollected. Purchases from these stores are not subject to sales tax due to the fact that they are not physically located in the state of Florida. Currently, it is the responsibility of the purchaser to file with the Department of Revenue the amount of sales tax they owe from internet purchases, something few people actually do. The inability to collect an internet sales tax puts local 'brick-and-mortar' businesses in Florida at a disadvantage compared to out-of-state online retailers.

Legislation regarding the implementation of an internet sales tax has been considered in the State Legislature and is currently being considered in Congress. This spring the United States Senate passed the Market Fairness Act with bipartisan support. This bill is expected to face challenges as it reaches the U.S. House. If Congress declines to pass internet sales tax legislation, Florida could join the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement, an interstate compact of twenty-four states that encourages merchants in one member state to collect and submit another member state's sales taxes.

There is resistance in the Florida Legislature to any legislation that could be perceived as increasing taxes. Enforcing the collection of the sales tax on internet purchases is seen by the Governor and some members of the Legislature as a tax increase. The Governor and several legislators are advocating for a "revenue neutral" approach to the collection of this tax.

Action: Support legislation that promotes an equitable competitive environment between 'brick and mortar' businesses and remote businesses establishments operating in Florida.

### **Library Aid**

Issue: Florida's State Aid to Libraries Grant Program, managed by the Florida Department of State's Division of Library and Information Services, has been the cornerstone of public library support in Florida since 1963, and is recognized as a national model. In the last 10 years, State Aid to public libraries has been reduced by 33% to \$22,298,834 for the current year FY 2013.

Florida library systems rely on State Aid grant funding to assist library users with economic development resources to small businesses and job seekers; access to the internet, government services, and a vast array of online services and products and; education and reading. Libraries are transitioning from traditional libraries to community hubs which function as learning environments to better serve their communities. Libraries are extending all their services to the Web while at the same time allowing citizens to develop new businesses, to teach early reading skills, to provide safe environments for children and teens, to develop new skills to become a better fit for today's workplace, and to find greater civic engagement.

Last year, the Leon County library system received \$165,913 in state aid. The library system uses State Aid grant funding to assist with purchasing circulating library materials for County residents.

Action: Support state aid grant funding for public library programs.

### **Florida Association of Counties (FAC) Issues**

**Issue:** FAC represents 67 counties before the Florida Legislature on issues that have broad statewide appeal, such as the opposition of unfunded mandates or cost shifts to counties (such as the \$90 million DJJ cost shift that was passed in 2005 and the \$146 million in Medicaid retrospective reconciliation and billing system changes passed in 2012), growth management, annexation, revenue-sharing, and water management issues. FAC finalized their 2014 legislative program during their legislative conference on November 14, 2013.

**Action:** Support the 2014 FAC legislative program unless specific issues conflict with Leon County's interests.

### **Community Legislative Dialogue Meetings**

For the past three years, the County has hosted 'Community Legislative Dialogue' meetings throughout session to engage our community and regional partners in identifying shared legislative priorities and interests. Last year, the Board designated Commissioner Desloge to host these meetings given his role with FAC. A total of three roundtable discussions were held with our community partners and surrounding counties. The meetings were held before session, in the middle of session, and at the end of session. All three meetings were well attended and the participants agreed that it was helpful to hear the priorities of other community partners.

During the June 18, 2013 meeting, the Board again designated Commissioner Desloge to host the 'Community Legislative Dialogue' meeting in preparation for the 2014 legislative session. The first meeting was held September 24, 2013 to discuss the effects of legislation passed during the 2013 session and to discuss priorities for the 2014 session due to the fact that legislative committees convened in late September this year. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 4, 2013. The mid-session and end of session meetings will take place on April 1<sup>st</sup> and May 14<sup>th</sup> respectively. All meetings will begin at 7:30 a.m. and will be held in the Leon County Commission Chambers.

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**FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE ISSUES:**

*(Please Note: For complete information on each, see Attachment #3)*

The Board's practice has been to focus the County's federal legislative program on appropriations issues but has added specific substantive issues from time to time. Most substantive issues that the County has at the federal level are coordinated through the County's National Association of Counties (NACO) representation. At the Board's request, the federal appropriation requests have been combined with the state appropriation requests (Page #4 of the Analysis Section).

Patton Boggs has worked closely with staff on a select few federal policy issues and priorities that have been identified by the Board. Patton Boggs has been instrumental in the County's efforts to utilize the Federal Correctional Institution open space area adjacent to Town Brown Park for Little League baseball fields. In 2012, Congressman Southerland introduced legislation concerning land conveyance from the Bureau of Prisons to Leon County for use for additional recreational space at Tom Brown Park. However, the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress adjourned before H.R. 4151, Land Conveyance Legislation for Tom Brown Park, could be passed. When the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress convened, H.R. 4151 died in Committee. New legislation to convey FCI land to the County has not yet been filed as Patton Boggs and County staff continues to communicate with Department of Justice on this issue.

The County has also sought assistance from Patton Boggs to educate the Leon County Federal Delegation on the County's concerns regarding the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permit that was issued for the Grady County, Georgia Dam project and its impact on the water quality and quantity in North Florida. Subsequently, Congressman Southerland has become engaged in this issue and is actively working with the County to express concerns to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regarding the Grady County Dam project. The Corps of Engineers has granted Leon County the substance of the relief being sought and did so in a fashion which actually provides a greater volume of recharge water to Lake Iamonia than initially requested. Action will be needed over the next several months to follow-up on the details of the plan Grady County prepares and submits to the Corps for approval to carry out this provision, in order to assure the provision provides in practice the protection the Corps permit condition requires.

Staff has prepared three federal policy requests for the second session of the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress and to provide direction to the County's federal lobbying team:

**Federal Correctional Institution Property**

Issue: On June 14, 2011, the Board authorized Commissioner Desloge to reach out to the Federal Correctional Institution (FCI) for usage of open space adjacent to the FCI facility for Little League baseball fields. The open space is adjacent to Tom Brown Park. The initial response from the Federal Bureau of Prisons indicated that it did not have the authority to grant the County's request. On September 20, 2011, Commissioner Desloge and staff met with FCI Warden Taylor to familiarize him with the County's proposal. At that time, Warden Taylor agreed to support the County's efforts to gain authorization for the use of the property.

On March 7, 2012, Congressman Southerland introduced legislation concerning land conveyance from the Bureau of Prisons to Leon County for use for additional recreational space at Tom Brown Park. Congressman Crenshaw agreed to co-sponsor the bill. During that time, the House Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security received pushback with regard to the legislation from the U.S. Bureau of Prisons' headquarters in Washington, D.C as the land has not been discharged as 'surplus' property.

On January 3, 2013, the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress adjourned before H.R. 4151, Land Conveyance Legislation for Tom Brown Park, could be passed. When the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress convened, H.R. 4151 died in Committee. New legislation to convey FCI land to the County has not yet been filed.

The County hosted Congressman Southerland on August 20, 2013 for an in-person look at the Tom Brown Park/FCI properties and to discuss the issue of potential County use of the FCI land. The County and the Congressman met with the new FCI warden, Vick Flournoy. Under the direction of the new warden, FCI objects to the County's use of the undeveloped land that lies adjacent to the Tom Brown Park.

Action: Continue to work with Patton Boggs to secure the usage of property at the Federal Correctional Institution facility for the purpose of constructing baseball fields.

#### **Veterans Affairs National Veterans Cemetery**

Issue: In November 2012, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that it purchased land for a new national cemetery in Leon County. The VA purchased a 250-acre parcel along U.S. Highway 27 which will serve veterans in North Florida, Southwest Georgia, and Southeast Alabama. The VA also reported that it had hired a firm to develop the master plan for all phases of the cemetery and for the first phase of construction, which should be completed by January 1, 2014.

The October 2013 draft National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Site Specific Environmental Assessment (EA) found no significant environmental impacts to the site. The draft assessment also notes that the first phase of construction of approximately 35 acres could begin in 2017. However, the construction date is dependent of allocation of federal funds which will need to be appropriated by Congress. It is anticipated that the NEPA will be completed at the end of 2013.

Action: Support sufficient appropriations for the construction of the Veterans Affairs National Cemetery in Leon County.

### **Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21)**

**Issue:** On July 6, 2012, President Obama signed Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21) into law. The legislation provides funding over two years (FY 2013 – FY 2014) in the amount of \$105 billion for surface transportation programs in the United States. MAP-21 is the first ‘long-term’ highway authorization enacted since 2005 and is set to expire on September 30, 2014. Local governments use this funding to aid with the building and maintaining transportation infrastructure. Counties own and maintain 44% of America's roads (including more than 200,000 bridges), involved in the operation of 27% of public transit systems, and invest \$106 billion per year on building infrastructure and maintaining and operating public works.

In recent years, Congress has only extended current authorizations, but it is expected that 2014 will be different. If MAP-21 was extended at the current level of funding, it would require additional revenue or programmatic cuts. Patton Boggs anticipates that Congress will address the reauthorization of MAP-21 next year, once Congress finalizes the Water Resources Reform and Development bill.

**Action:** Support the reauthorization of MAP-21 at or above the current level of funding for surface transportation programs.

Staff coordinates regularly with Patton Boggs by phone and e-mail to strategize on key federal budget issues and to identify new federal grant opportunities that could potentially fund County project requests. In addition, Patton Boggs has been submitting monthly memoranda to update the Board on their federal lobbying activities in order to further improve communication between the Board and their federal lobbying firm. It is important to note that the NACo Legislative Conference is scheduled for March 1-5, 2014 in Washington, D.C. In the past, Commissioners and County staff have used the NACo Legislative Conference as an opportunity to meet with the Leon County Federal Legislative Delegation to advocate for the County’s federal priorities.

#### **Options:**

1. Approve the 2014 state and federal legislative priorities, as amended by the Board.
2. Board direction.

#### **Recommendation:**

Option #1.

#### **Attachments:**

1. 2014 State and Federal Legislative Appropriations Request and Related Materials
2. 2014 State Legislative Session Policy Requests and Related Materials
3. 2014 Federal Policy Requests and Related Materials
4. 2014 Florida Association of Counties State Legislative Priorities



# Leon County Board of County Commissioners

## 2014 LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Department/Division: Blueprint 2000  
Contact Person: Wayne Tedder  
Email: [wayne.tedder@talgov.com](mailto:wayne.tedder@talgov.com) Phone: 219-1060  
Topic/Project Title: Capital Circle Southwest

### APPROPRIATION REQUEST (IF APPLICABLE)

**Federal**

**State**

#### Project Description:

This project will provide for the construction of Capital Circle Southwest (SR 263) from north of Orange Avenue (SR 371) to Crawfordville Road (SR 61/US319) a distance of approximately six miles. The existing 2-lane rural road section of Capital Circle Southwest will be reconstructed to a 6-lane curb and gutter facility with an enclosed drainage system and new stormwater ponds. The 6 lane roadway will be flanked by paved bike lanes, a 10' wide multi-use meandering trail on one side and a 6' wide concrete sidewalk on the other side of the roadway. Extensive landscaping will be installed along the medians and within the right-of-way of the corridor. New overhead lighting will also be installed. Signalized intersections will be constructed at Orange Avenue, the main entrance of the Tallahassee Regional Airport and at Springhill Road.

This six mile segment of Capital Circle Southwest has been divided into two segments with both segments currently being designed under the supervision of the Florida Department of Transportation, District Three. Segment 1 is from north of Orange Avenue to south of Springhill Road. Segment 2 is from south of Springhill Road to Crawfordville Road. The estimated cost for Segment 1 is \$65.4 million which is broken down into \$30.0 million for right-of-way acquisition and \$35.4 million for construction. Segment 2 is estimated at \$53.7 million which is broken down into \$31.0 million for right-of-way acquisition and \$22.7 million for construction.

#### Purpose of Project and Outcome Expected:

Reconstruction of this six mile segment of Capital Circle Southwest will service the traveling public with convenient access to Tallahassee Regional Airport and businesses and communities located in the southwest quadrant of Leon County. The 6-lane facility will provide additional vehicular capacity on Capital Circle. Intersection improvements will be constructed at several existing cross roads for safety and ease of traffic movements. The multi-use trail and sidewalk will provide safe facilities for pedestrians and bike enthusiasts. New housing developments and businesses could be attracted to the area by the reconstruction of this segment of Capital Circle Southwest. The project terminates at Crawfordville Road which provides travelers a convenient roadway to the south and to the beaches of the Gulf of Mexico.

#### Service Provided:

The entire six mile segment of Capital Circle Southwest will be designated as part of Florida's Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) which is vital for transporting both people and goods between major commercial facilities such as airports, rail terminals, and seaports. Efficient transportation between these major commercial facilities will benefit city, county and state agencies with potential for new businesses and developments along the corridor to service and handle/store goods.

**Population Served:**

The population served by the reconstruction of this 6 mile segment of Capital Circle Southwest includes the businesses and neighborhood that currently surround this segment of the roadway as well as those traveling to the Tallahassee Regional Airport, south to the beaches or circling the downtown area of Tallahassee via Capital Circle Southwest. The traveling public will be treated to a nicely landscaped 6-lane roadway corridor replacing the existing 2-lane road. The trail and sidewalk will attract active biking, walking and running enthusiasts while creating a pedestrian friendly environment.

**Project Dates for Construction/Operation:**

Both segments of Capital Circle Southwest (Segment 1 - north of Orange Avenue to south of Springhill Road and Segment 2 - south of Springhill Road to Crawfordville Road) are currently being designed under the direction of District Three at the Florida Department of Transportation. The design work should be complete by the end of calendar year 2015. Construction funding has not been identified.

**Funding:**

*Summary of Funding Request:*

Segment 1: North of Orange Avenue (SR 371) to south of Springhill Road (CR 2203)  
Estimated Construction Cost: \$35.4M  
Estimated Right-of-Way Cost: \$30.0M  
TOTAL: \$65.4M

Segment 2: South of Springhill Road (CR 2203) to Crawfordville Road (SR 61/ US 319)  
Estimated Construction Cost: \$22.7M  
Estimated Right-of-Way Cost: \$31.0M  
TOTAL: \$53.7M

*Federal Funding Requested (as applicable):*

Segment 1: North of Orange Avenue (SR 371) to south of Springhill Road (CR 2203) \$65.4 million  
Segment 2: South of Springhill Road (CR 2203) to Crawfordville Road (SR 61/ US 319) \$53.7 million

*State Funding Requested (as applicable):*

Segment 1: North of Orange Avenue (SR 371) to south of Springhill Road (CR 2203) \$65.4 million  
Segment 2: South of Springhill Road (CR 2203) to Crawfordville Road (SR 61/ US 319) \$53.7 million

*Present or Pending Funding Sources (including county):*

\$4.8 million in design funding from the Florida Department of Transportation



# Leon County Board of County Commissioners

## 2014 LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Department/Division: Capital Regional Transportation Planning Agency (CRTPA)  
Contact Person: Harry Reed  
Email: [Harry.Reed@talgov.com](mailto:Harry.Reed@talgov.com) Phone: 891-6815  
Topic/Project Title: Woodville Highway

### APPROPRIATION REQUEST (IF APPLICABLE)

Federal

State

#### Project Description:

This project is for the design of Woodville Highway to widen the existing two-lane segment to four lanes from Paul Russell Road to Capital Circle.

#### Purpose of Project and Outcome Expected:

Woodville Highway connects to major arterials systems including Capital Circle and Monroe Street and serves as a major evacuation route from the Coastal Highway (US 98).

This road is frequented by residents of Wakulla County that work in Leon County. It is anticipated that the volume of traffic will continue to increase as the Capital Circle Office Complex, which houses a number of state agencies, continues to expand.

During the FY 06/07 budget process, the Board budgeted \$2.1 million for Woodville Highway. On September 18, 2007, the Board approved a Joint Project Agreement with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to perform a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study for a portion of Woodville Highway from Gaile Avenue to Capital Circle. On March 11, 2008, the Board authorized the expenditure of funds, up to \$175,000, to match funds from FDOT to perform a Corridor Master Plan for a portion of Woodville Highway from Gaile Avenue to Commerce Boulevard. On April 12, 2011, the Board amended its Agreement with FDOT for a PD&E study of Woodville Highway, from Gaile Avenue to Capital Circle, to extend north to Paul Russell Road. Several reasons for the extension include adding sidewalks, designing pedestrian crossings, and addressing any potential for redevelopment of the Leon County Fairgrounds, all of which could have a significant impact on future traffic patterns.

CRTPA held a meeting last year with property owners and residents to kick-off a corridor study that will be utilized to develop the Corridor Master Plan. The final Corridor Master Plan was completed in November 2011. The PD&E study has been under way for the last year and is expected to be completed at the end of 2013.

At the completion of this project, it is anticipated that there will be significant improvement in commuter access through southern Leon County and northern Wakulla County, improved freight movement from the coast, and improved hurricane evacuation options.

**Service Provided:**

Leon County and the City of Tallahassee, through their joint “Southern Strategy” are attempting to spur economic growth in the southern area of the city/county with a combination of roadway improvements, sector planning efforts, growth management, and economic incentives. Woodville Highway also serves as one of the primary evacuation routes from the central coastal panhandle. Given the importance of the corridor to the region, it is currently being evaluated by a citizen committee as a potential project to be funded with the local government infrastructure surtax extension.

**Population Served:**

All regional coastal residents of neighboring counties will benefit from this project. The current Annual Average Daily Traffic count is 12,900. This road serves as one of two links to the coast via Wakulla County.

**Project Dates for Construction/Operation:**

Due to the time necessary for the corridor study, project design, and right-of-way acquisition, construction commencement will be determined at a future date by FDOT.

**Funding:**

*Federal Funding Requested (as applicable):* \$26.6 million  
    \$3.6 million for right of way acquisition  
    \$23 million for construction

*State Funding Requested (as applicable):*

*Present or Pending Funding Sources (including county):*

\$1.976 million in design funding from the Florida Department of Transportation



# Leon County Board of County Commissioners

## 2014 LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Department/Division: Emergency Medical Services  
Contact Person: Chief Tom Quillin  
Email: [QuillinT@leoncountyfl.gov](mailto:QuillinT@leoncountyfl.gov) Phone: 606-2100  
Topic/Project Title: EMS Healthcare Innovation Challenge Grant

### APPROPRIATION REQUEST (IF APPLICABLE)

**Federal**

**State**

#### Project Description:

This program is a collaborative healthcare project to coordinate all healthcare resources in the community in matching appropriate patients with the appropriate level of care to spare scarce resources and contain costs. The program utilizes Leon County EMS (LCEMS), since LCEMS is already deeply imbedded out in the community and assigns highly trained Community Paramedics to assess, utilize advanced diagnostics, connect to physicians via telemedicine, and refer patients to local existing medical resources. Patients would be identified, screened, evaluated, and connected with a Board Certified Emergency Physician (Telemedicine). Assessment would extend beyond traditional medical exams. All issues that contribute to negative healthcare outcomes would be addressed such as housing, financial, meal service, transportation, pharmaceuticals, and much more. Local community resources would be utilized to meet the varying needs of the patient instead of the traditional approach of taking all patients to the already overcrowded emergency rooms. This model could be utilized in any urban or rural area and could be adapted to local resources.

LCEMS has partnered with the following entities to pursue this grant opportunity Tallahassee Memorial Hospital, Capital Regional Medical Center, physicians, Capital Medical Society, Leon County Health Department, Bond Community Clinic, 211 Big Bend, Leon County Dental Clinic, Leon County Human Services, Leon County Primary Health, Senior Outreach, Florida DOH, Florida Dept. of Children and Families, Apalachee Mental Health, and Emergency Telemedicine Physicians.

#### Purpose of Project and Outcome Expected:

This program is a new model of healthcare delivery that expands the role of paramedics that are currently experienced and in the field to include community based evaluation and treatment of patients utilizing physicians through a telemedicine connection. The idea is to utilize an EMS system that is already intimately familiar with the population of patients that are at risk and divert those patients that qualify from transport to the emergency room. Currently emergency rooms are overcrowded with non-emergent patients that could receive care either on the scene through telemedicine or through a referral to local medical clinics, physicians, or other resources. Greater utilization of existing local medical resources is a goal and lightening the load on emergency rooms is another so they can focus on emergency cases. Field evaluation is more convenient for the patient, cost effective, and provides an opportunity to educate the patient on the availability of local resources that can better deal with their ongoing medical issues. If patients have their medical needs met with appropriate medications, arranged visits with physicians, provided transportation, and other issues related to medical care, they will not call 911 to deal with non-emergent problems.

With this Telemedicine Paramedic Program model, EMS and physician response and charge can still be done but we will eliminate the hospital emergency room response and charge. Using a conservative estimate of 20% of Leon County EMS (LCEMS) runs, this would divert 4,814 patients into this new system. With an average emergency room charge of \$2, 576, this amounts to a cost reduction of \$12,400,864 per year. Once this model is established and accepted, many other healthcare providers and patients will want to take advantage of this cost savings model. There can be on greater benefit to a patient than to take care of their healthcare needs in the comfort of their own home.

**Service Provided:**

Many patients would have a greatly improved access to care. With this improved access to care, patients could be handled early on in a disease process when costs are reasonable, before patients wait when their condition has deteriorated to the point of needing hospital admission. This model will identify several categories of high risk patients and will plug them in early to appropriate and complete medical care and reduce hospital re-admissions. Better healthcare, satisfied patients, and cost savings. The Leon County Community Telemedicine Paramedic Program will have a significant positive impact on our local community quality of life.

**Population Served:**

This program would target populations such as the medically underserved, hospital readmission patients – critical care discharge and surgical follow-up, EMS patients where an ER visit is not indicated, psychological emergencies- direct admit to psych. centers, homeless, vulnerable adult and children, early disease intervention, medication assistance and monitoring, immunizations, community medicine coordination, system abusers, and disaster recovery and disaster community clinics.

**Project Dates for Construction/Operation:** Dependent on Funding

**Funding:**

*Summary of Funding Request:*

Training	\$42,000
Personnel	\$445,241
Contractual	\$251,000
Equipment	\$182,000
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$920,241</i>

*Federal Funding Requested (as applicable):* \$920,241

*State Funding Requested (as applicable):* N/A

*Present or Pending Funding Sources (including county):* N/A



# Leon County Board of County Commissioners

## 2014 LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Department/Division: Economic Development and Business Partnerships  
Contact Person: Ken Morris  
Email: [morrisk@leoncountyfl.gov](mailto:morrisk@leoncountyfl.gov) Phone: 606-5300  
Topic/Project Title: EDC: Entrepreneurial Excellence Program

### APPROPRIATION REQUEST (IF APPLICABLE)

**Federal**

**State**

#### Project Description:

The Economic Development Council's (EDC) Entrepreneurial Excellence Program (EEP) launched in 2011 with the support of a four-year \$450,000 grant from the U.S. Small Business Administration. This program supports business incubation in the Leon County is based on the curriculum developed by the successful University of Central Florida Incubation Program. The EEP is designed to help entrepreneurs navigate the vulnerable stages of business development by providing access to a team of local business experts, researchers, and specialists who will help lay the foundation for a successful company. The program teaches participants such basics as effective business models; team development; legal foundations; marketing strategies; funding insight; and entrepreneurial skills and development in a four-week boot camp of evening classes.

A majority of the EEP graduates can be described as full-time workers or mid-career types in pursuit of their entrepreneurial dreams. The EEP will exhaust its federal grant funds by September 2014, with an anticipated alumni base of 80-90 entrepreneurs at that time. The EEP is a valuable and needed resource for entrepreneurs in Leon County. Keeping the EEP program funded will enable Leon County to continue growing new businesses.

#### Purpose of Project and Outcome Expected:

To support the EDC's request to continue to fund the Entrepreneurial Excellence Program which helps entrepreneurs establish their budding businesses by providing access to experts, researchers, and specialists who can help them refine their business ideas.

#### Service Provide:

The EEP fosters new businesses, which grow the local and state economy. As these businesses expand, new jobs are created in Florida. This funding will allow programmatic support over a three year period to help entrepreneurs navigate the vulnerable stages of business development by providing access to a team of local business experts, researchers, and specialists who will help lay the foundation for a successful company.

#### Population Served:

The EDC's Entrepreneurial Excellence Program provides valuable advice to early stage start-up businesses and entrepreneurs in the Leon County region as they navigate through the vulnerable stages of business development. A majority of the EEP graduates can be described as full-time workers or mid-career types in pursuit of their entrepreneurial dreams. It is anticipated that funding for this program will assist 72 companies and 120 individuals over a three year period (24 companies/40 individuals per year).

**Project Dates for Construction/Operation:**

The EDC's Entrepreneurial Excellence Program is currently funded through September 2014. If additional funding is secured, the program can continue operation without interruption of service to Leon County entrepreneurs.

**Funding:**

*Federal Funding Requested (as applicable):* **\$650,000**

*State Funding Requested (as applicable):*

*Present or Pending Funding Sources (including county):*



# Leon County Board of County Commissioners

## 2014 LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Department/Division: Public Works/Engineering Services  
Contact Person: Ms. Katherine Burke  
Email: [burkek@leoncountyfl.gov](mailto:burkek@leoncountyfl.gov) Phone: 606-1518  
Topic/Project Title: Woodville Sewer Project

### APPROPRIATION REQUEST (IF APPLICABLE)

**Federal**

**State**

#### Project Description:

This project is for the design of a sewer system to provide sewer services to approximately 1,500 homes or properties located within the Woodville area of Leon County. These homes are located upstream to Wakulla Springs and threaten one of the world's largest and deepest freshwater springs.

#### Purpose of Project and Outcome Expected:

Providing sewer service will eliminate the need for septic tanks which, in the event of failure, can cause environmental concerns and impacts.

#### Service Provided:

The Leon County Comprehensive Plan provides that all waste water is to be treated and disposed of in a manner that protects natural resources and public health. (Note: The State of Florida has acquired more than half of the 6,500 acre buffer zone around Wakulla Springs acknowledging the importance of preserving this natural habitat).

#### Population Served:

Approximately 1,500 homes will be directly impacted in Leon County. Wakulla Springs is also home to a state park that has thousands of visitors each year.

#### Project Dates for Construction/Operation:

During the County's FY 07/08 budget workshop, the Board discontinued the funding of non-mandatory capital projects. A number of sewer projects were approved for discontinuation including the Woodville project. Due to the time necessary for the studies, project design, and right-of-way acquisition, construction may not commence for several years. However, during its April 12, 2011 Workshop on the Infrastructure Sales Tax Extension, Board identified the Woodville project for future discussion regarding funding. This project was presented to the Sales Tax Committee for consideration for funding. Currently, the Woodville project is grouped with several other water quality and stormwater control projects in a 'bucket'. The subtotal of the projects in said 'bucket' exceed the \$85 million that is currently recommended to fund the projects. It is anticipated that the Sales Tax Committee will finalize their recommendations in January 2014.

#### Funding:

*Federal Funding Requested (as applicable): \$500,000 for design*

*State Funding Requested (as applicable): \$500,000 for design*

*Present or Pending Funding Sources (including county): N/A*



# Leon County Board of County Commissioners

## 2014 LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Department/Division: Tourist Development  
Contact Person: Lee Daniel  
Email: [danielLee@leoncountyfl.gov](mailto:danielLee@leoncountyfl.gov) Phone: 606-2300  
Topic/Project Title: Lake Talquin International Rowing Training Center

### APPROPRIATION REQUEST (IF APPLICABLE)

Federal

State

#### Project Description:

In FY 2012 and 2013, the Florida Legislature allocated a total of \$10 million to complete the Benderson Rowing Complex in Sarasota County. This funding was contingent on Sarasota being selected as the host site for the 2017 World Rowing Championships. On August 2013, International Federation of Rowing Associations announced that Sarasota would be hosting this competition, which is the sport's largest competition apart from the Olympic Games. The 10-day World Rowing Championships are expected to bring in an estimated 42,000 athletes and supports and inject millions of dollars into Southwest Florida's economy.

Similar to the 1996 Olympics venues throughout the state will be needed to provide training facilities for teams competing in this worldwide competition. Lake Talquin and the Williams Landing Park are on ideal location for teams to train for this event as the lake has one of the most unique rowing waters in the United States, mostly due to the construction of the Bob Woodruff Dam on the Ochlocknee River. Rowing teams need more than 2,000 meters to train and Lake Talquin hosts over 6,000 meters of rowable water.

#### Purpose of Project and Outcome Expected:

Support the Tallahassee International Rowing Association request for funding in the amount of \$150,000 to purchase rowing equipment and infrastructure that will be utilized as a training center for the 2017 World Rowing Championships in Sarasota, Florida.

#### Service Provided:

To provide the necessary training facilities for teams to compete in the 2017 World Rowing Competition. Currently, there are no training facilities available at the Sarasota complex. Similar to the 1996 Olympics venues throughout the state will be needed to provide training facilities for teams competing in this worldwide competition.

**Population Served:** Rowing communities such as the collegiate athletes and international rowing associations.

**Project Dates for Construction/Operation:** Dependent on funding.

#### Funding:

##### *Summary of Funding Request:*

Two low profile aluminum floating docks for launching and retrieval of rowing shells: \$80,000.

One combination starting/fishing fixed dock off the point of the Lake Talquin Trails State Park: \$40,000.

Fixed floating buoys 2,000 meters in overall length: \$20,000.

Survey, engineering, and permitting: \$10,000.

**TOTAL: \$150,000**

*Federal Funding Requested (as applicable): N/A*

*State Funding Requested (as applicable): \$150,000*

*Present or Pending Funding Sources (including county): N/A*



# Leon County Board of County Commissioners

## 2014 LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Department/Division: Parks and Recreation  
Contact Person: Leigh Davis  
Email: [davisle@leoncountyfl.gov](mailto:davisle@leoncountyfl.gov) Phone: 606-1475  
Topic/Project Title: FRDAP Parks Funding

### APPROPRIATION REQUEST (IF APPLICABLE)

Federal

State

#### Project Description:

Daniel B. Chaires Park contains 125 acres and is located next to Chaires Elementary School. An analysis completed by Parks & Rec staff in July 2012, identified it as the only County-maintained, active recreation facility that did not have a playground supplementing the baseball fields, and furthermore, it was in need of parking improvements to support the active recreation facilities on the eastern side of the property. In September 2013, construction began on the parking improvements, with the County investing over \$350,000 in that project. In addition, the County has purchased playground equipment for the park and installation is scheduled for 2014.

The County is requesting funding assistance for a rubberized pour-it-in-place surface to be installed in lieu of sand or mulch material, as well as security lighting for the baseball/playground parking area. By installing the rubberized surface under the equipment, the playground will become more accessible to the physically impaired, and the lighting will ensure safe access to vehicles for all users.

Construction began on the park in 2001, and it has developed over the years to provide a community center, tennis courts, basketball courts, three baseball fields, a natural area, and a restroom/concession. The park fronts Chaires Cross Road at 4768 Chaires Cross Road, next to Chaires Elementary School, and the access drive is located just north and west of the Chaires Cross Road/Capitola Road intersection.

#### Purpose of Project and Outcome Expected:

The County is requesting funding assistance for a rubberized pour-it-in-place surface to be installed in lieu of sand or mulch material, as well as security lighting for the baseball/playground parking area. By installing the rubberized surface under the equipment, the playground will become more accessible to the physically impaired, and the lighting will ensure safe access to vehicles for all users.

#### Service Provided:

The park improvements will increase accessibility of the park to citizen of all capabilities. The park improvements will also improve the Leon County Parks and Recreation system overall, which serves residents throughout the County and surrounding communities.

#### Population Served:

The Leon County Parks and Recreation system serves approximately 277,971 residents of Leon County.

**Funding:**

*Federal Funding Requested (as applicable): N/A*

*State Funding Requested (as applicable): \$95,000*

*Present or Pending Funding Sources (including county): \$350,000*



# Leon County Board of County Commissioners

## 2014 LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Department/Division: Intergovernmental Affairs /Special Projects  
Contact Person: Ken Morris/Cristina Paredes  
Email: [paredesc@leoncountyfl.gov](mailto:paredesc@leoncountyfl.gov) Phone: 606-5300  
Topic/Project Title: Protection of State Workforce

### PROBLEM/NEED

Identify effect on county programs/services and the economic impact.

**Priority:**       Critical       Important       Anticipated

**Description:**

State workers comprise a substantial percentage of Leon County’s population contributing to our community, economy, and diversity. Protecting the jobs of these workers from privatization and advocating for fair wages has always been a top priority of the Board during the legislative cycle.

After significant lobbying from the County and our community partners, the FY13/14 state budget included an increase in state employee salaries, though it also eliminates nearly 3,400 positions throughout the state. This pay increase is the first in seven years for state workers. On October 1, 2013, state workers earning less than \$40,000 a year received a \$1,400 raise and those who earn more than \$40,000 received a \$1,000 raise. In addition, merit based bonuses of up to \$600 were given to 35 percent of the state employees. Law enforcement officers also saw an increase in pay. A five percent increase was given to those law enforcement officers with five years or more experience and a three percent increase will go to those with five years or less. Teachers also saw a salary increase in the FY13/14 budget. Each school district received a share of \$480 million for school employee raises. The Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce estimates that the state employee raises will result in a \$22 million dollar economic impact for the Leon County community.

There have been attempts in the past few sessions to cap the state’s total spending on employee health insurance and in effect increase in health insurance premiums of state employees. The FY13/14 state budget did not increase state employee health insurance premiums, which remain at \$50 per month for individual coverage and \$180 per month for family coverage for most employees.

It is anticipated that the Legislature will once again pursue legislation reforming the Florida Retirement System (FRS). This is a top priority of Florida House Speaker Will Weatherford who would like to close the defined benefit enrollment option to new employees and require them to join the investment plan. FRS is the primary retirement plan for public servant employees, 80% of which are county government agencies, district school boards, community colleges, and universities. Currently, only one bill has been filed regarding FRS reform. Senate Bill 184 would provide compulsory membership in FRS investment plan for employees in the Elected Officers’ Class or Senior Management Service Class enrolled on or after July 1, 2014.

### RECOMMENDED CHANGE IN FLORIDA STATUTES (IF APPLICABLE)

**Current Statute of Reference:** N/A

**Suggested New Language:** N/A

### RECOMMENDED COUNTY POSITION

**Recommended Position:**

Oppose any additional reductions to state employee benefits and encourage the Legislature to study the economic impact of FRS and health insurance reform.



# Leon County Board of County Commissioners

## 2014 LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Department/Division: Intergovernmental Affairs /Special Projects  
 Contact Person: Ken Morris/Cristina Paredes  
 Email: [paredesc@leoncountyfl.gov](mailto:paredesc@leoncountyfl.gov) Phone: 606-5300  
 Topic/Project Title: Communications Service Tax

### PROBLEM/NEED

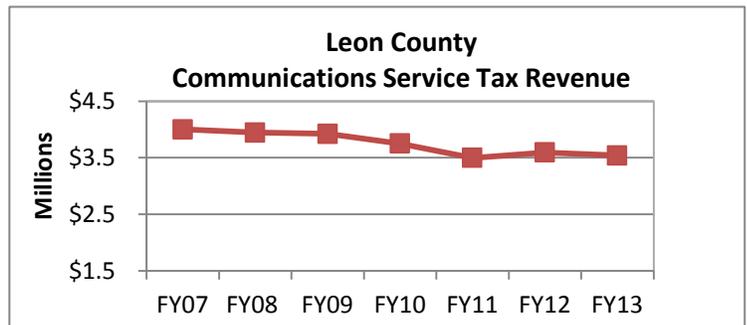
Identify effect on county programs/services and the economic impact.

**Priority:**       Critical       Important       Anticipated

**Description:**

The Communication Service Tax (CST) is a tax on the retail sales of communications services, which include voice, data, audio, video, and any other information including cable (video) services. Internet access, as defined by the Internet Tax Freedom Act, email services, and prepaid calling arrangements (cards and cellphones) are not included and account for approximately 25% to 40% of all wireless phones. The proceeds from the tax are transferred to county and municipal governments, the Public Education Capital Outlay and Debt Service Trust Fund, and the state’s General Revenue Fund. Since CST revenue funds the Public Education Capital Outlay program, the CST is also an issue for the County’s community partners like Leon County Schools, Florida State University, Florida A&M University, and Tallahassee Community College.

A county or municipality may choose to levy the CST by ordinance. Currently, Leon County levies a CST 6.02% within the unincorporated areas of the County. The City of Tallahassee’s rate is applied to those individuals who live within the city limits and is levied at 6.90%. For the past seven fiscal years, the revenues from the CST have declined by an average of 2% or a total of 11.5%. The chart to the right illustrates the collection of this revenue source.



Currently, the Florida Department of Revenue (DOR) administers the statewide collection of the state and local tax payments. Dealers/retailers who collect local communications services tax must notify the DOR of the method employed to accurately assign addresses to the appropriate taxing jurisdiction. The DOR maintains a database that provides the local taxing jurisdiction for all addresses in Florida. The database contains county and municipal names for every address and is based on information provided by the local taxing jurisdiction and updated at least once every six months. The amount of revenue collected is dependent on the jurisdiction’s local CST rate. A county government’s local CST is charged to those billable customers residing within the unincorporated area. A municipal government’s local CST is charged to those billable customers residing within the incorporated area. There are currently 122 different local CST rates.

During the 2012 session, the Legislature passed a bill that made changes to definitions of the CST, and creates a workgroup to study the tax to make recommendations on future communications tax policies. The state levies a 6.65% communications services tax on items such as phone service and local governments apply a wide range of additional taxes that range from 0.1% to 7%. A key provision in HB 809 provided a broad CST exemption for certain services and hardware that are not separately stated on a customer's bill. For example, phone/cable service, in "bundles" with digital items such as cloud data storage or home security, would not have to pay communications taxes. Furthermore, the legislation created the Communications Services Tax Working Group within the Department of Revenue to propose solutions to the problems associated with the CST. The Workgroup recommended that the best approach in addressing CST issues would be a holistic replacement of the CST by repealing the tax and bringing all communications services under an increased sales and use tax. According to the Workgroup, this option would modernize the current tax structure, streamline the administrative system, and remove competitive advantages without reducing local government revenues. The Department of Revenue (DOR) estimated that the state sales tax rate would need to be adjusted from 6% to 6.34% under the CST Workgroup's proposal in order to offset the repeal of the current CST structure. Despite the proposal being revenue neutral, legislators were resistive to the idea of raising the state sales tax citing that it would hurt retailers. Legislation that included the Workgroup's recommendation was not filed in either chamber, though several bills did address issues related to the CST.

Currently, a bill has been proposed for the 2014 session which would reduce the state's collection of CST by 2%. As mention previously, Governor Scott has announced that he plans to advance \$500 million in tax cuts during the 2014 session. The revenue estimating conference anticipates that this proposed reduction would result \$255 million less in state CST collections. In turn, the FAC estimates a \$35 million impact to local governments.

**RECOMMENDED CHANGE IN FLORIDA STATUTES  
(IF APPLICABLE)**

**Current Statute of Reference:** N/A

**Suggested New Language:** N/A

**RECOMMENDED COUNTY POSITION**

**Recommended Position:**

Support legislation that is revenue neutral; simplifies administration and collection of the current tax; enhances the stability and reliability as an important revenue source for local government; and provides the opportunity for market-based growth.



# Leon County Board of County Commissioners

## 2014 LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Department/Division: Intergovernmental Affairs/ Special Projects  
Contact Person: Ken Morris/Cristina Paredes  
Email: [paredesc@leoncountyfl.gov](mailto:paredesc@leoncountyfl.gov) Phone: 606-5300  
Topic/Project Title: Internet Sales Tax

### PROBLEM/NEED

Identify effect on county programs/services and the economic impact.

**Priority:**             Critical         Important         Anticipated

**Description:**

Under current law, individuals who buy goods online are supposed to send the sales tax to the state on their own, but that provision is largely unheeded and not enforced. Economists estimate the state loses out on about \$400 million in revenue each year the tax goes uncollected. Purchases from these stores are not subject to sales tax due to the fact that they are not physically located in the state of Florida. Currently, it is the responsibility of the purchaser to file with the Department of Revenue the amount of sales tax they owe from internet purchases, something few people actually do. The inability to collect an internet sales tax puts local ‘brick-and-mortar’ businesses in Florida at a disadvantage compared to out-of-state online retailers.

Legislation regarding the implementation of an internet sales tax has been considered in the State Legislature and is currently being considered in Congress. This spring the United States Senate passed the Market Fairness Act with bipartisan support. This bill is expected to face challenges as it reaches the U.S. House. If Congress declines to pass internet sales tax legislation, Florida could join the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement, an interstate compact of twenty-four states that encourages merchants in one member state to collect and submit another member state’s sales taxes.

There is resistance in the Florida Legislature to any legislation that could be perceived as increasing taxes. Enforcing the collection of the sales tax on internet purchases is seen by the Governor and members of the Legislature as a tax increase. The Governor and several legislators are advocating for a “revenue neutral” approach to the collection of this tax.

### RECOMMENDED CHANGE IN FLORIDA STATUTES (IF APPLICABLE)

**Current Statute of Reference:** N/A

**Suggested New Language:** N/A

### RECOMMENDED COUNTY POSITION

**Recommended Position:**

Support legislation that promotes an equitable competitive environment between ‘brick and mortar’ businesses and remote businesses establishments operating in Florida.



# Leon County Board of County Commissioners

## 2014 LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Department/Division: Libraries  
Contact Person: Cay Hohmeister  
Email: [hohmeisterh@leoncountyfl.gov](mailto:hohmeisterh@leoncountyfl.gov) Phone: 606-2600  
Topic/Project Title: State Aid to Public Libraries

### PROBLEM/NEED

Identify effect on county programs/services and the economic impact.

**Priority:**             Critical       Important       Anticipated

**Description:**

Florida's State Aid to Libraries Grant Program, managed by the Florida Department of State's Division of Library and Information Services, has been the cornerstone of public library support in Florida since 1963, and is recognized as a national model. In the last 10 years, State Aid to public libraries has been reduced by 33% to \$22,298,834 for the current year FY 2013.

Florida library systems rely on State Aid grant funding to assist library users with economic development resources to small businesses and job seekers; access to the internet, government services, and a vast array of online services and products and; education and reading. Libraries are transitioning from traditional libraries to community hubs which function as learning environments to better serve their communities. Libraries are extending all their services to the Web while at the same time allowing citizens to develop new businesses, to teach early reading skills, to provide safe environments for children and teens, to develop new skills to become a better fit for today's workplace, and to find greater civic engagement.

Last year, the Leon County library system received \$165,913 in state aid. The library system uses State Aid grant funding to assist with purchasing circulating library materials for County residents.

### RECOMMENDED CHANGE IN FLORIDA STATUTES (IF APPLICABLE)

**Current Statute of Reference:** N/A

**Suggested New Language:** N/A

### RECOMMENDED COUNTY POSITION

**Recommended Position:** Support State Aid to Public Libraries grant funding for public library programs.



# Leon County Board of County Commissioners

## 2014 LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Department/Division: Intergovernmental Affairs /Special Projects  
Contact Person: Ken Morris/Cristina Paredes  
Email: [paredesc@leoncountyfl.gov](mailto:paredesc@leoncountyfl.gov) Phone: 606-5300  
Topic/Project Title: Florida Association of Counties

### PROBLEM/NEED

Identify effect on county programs/services and the economic impact.

**Priority:**             Critical             Important             Anticipated

**Description:**

FAC represents 67 counties before the Florida Legislature on issues that have broad statewide appeal, such as the opposition of unfunded mandates or cost shifts to counties (such as the \$90 million DJJ cost shift that was passed in 2005 and the \$146 million in Medicaid retrospective reconciliation and new billing system changes passed in 2012), growth management, annexation, revenue-sharing, and water management issues. FAC finalized their 2014 legislative program during their legislative conference on November 14, 2013 (Attachment #4).

### RECOMMENDED CHANGE IN FLORIDA STATUTES (IF APPLICABLE)

**Current Statute of Reference:** N/A

**Suggested New Language:** N/A

### RECOMMENDED COUNTY POSITION

**Recommended Position:**

Support the 2013 FAC legislative program unless specific issues conflict with Leon County's interests.



# Leon County Board of County Commissioners

## 2014 LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Department/Division: Intergovernmental Affairs /Special Projects  
Contact Person: Ken Morris/Cristina Paredes  
Email: [paredesc@leoncountyfl.gov](mailto:paredesc@leoncountyfl.gov) Phone: 606-5300  
Topic/Project Title: Use of Federal Correctional Institution Property

### PROBLEM/NEED

Identify effect on county programs/services and the economic impact.

**Priority:**             Critical             Important             Anticipated

**Description:**

Leon County is seeking a small parcel of land to be conveyed from the Federal Correctional Institution (FCI) to the County for additional playing space at Tom Brown Park. The Bureau of Prisons (BOP) Headquarters in Washington, D.C, which maintains jurisdiction over the FCI, is the entity that decides upon land that can be determined “surplus” to the agency’s needs.

On June 14, 2011, the Board authorized Commissioner Desloge to reach out to the Federal Correctional Institution (FCI) for usage of open space adjacent to the FCI facility for Little League baseball fields. The open space is adjacent to Tom Brown Park.

On July 29, 2011 Commissioner Desloge sent a letter to the Federal Bureau of Prisons on behalf of the Board requesting the use of open space adjacent to the Federal Correctional Institution (FCI) facility for Little League baseball fields. The initial response from the Federal Bureau of Prisons indicated that it did not have the authority to grant the County’s request. On September 20, 2011, Commissioner Desloge and staff met with FCI Warden William Taylor to familiarize him with the County’s proposal, seek FCI’s support of the project, and assure him that the County and its lobbying team would take the lead in working with the Department of Justice. At that time, the Warden Taylor agreed to support the County’s efforts to gain authorization for the use of the property.

On February 24, 2012, Congressman Southerland met with County Commissioner Desloge and representatives from the Mayor of Tallahassee’s office to discuss possible land conveyance legislation from the federal Bureau of Prisons to the County to expand Tom Brown Park.

On March 7, 2012, Congressman Southerland introduced legislation concerning land conveyance from the Bureau of Prisons to Leon County for use for additional recreational space at Tom Brown Park. Congressman Crenshaw agreed to co-sponsor the bill. The bill was originally referred to the House Committee on Judiciary, Subcommittee on the Constitution. However, it was reassigned to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security. The Subcommittee notified Congressman Southerland’s office of two issues it needs addressed at this time in order to proceed on the bill. One issue for the Subcommittee was any FCI structures that may exist on the requested property. Staff subsequently walked the site and identified a small FCI electrical platform at the very corner of the requested property. An updated map was sent to Congressman Southerland’s office showing that the electrical platform would not be incorporated in land conveyance request and would remain on FCI land. The second issue the Subcommittee has expressed

concern with is that it has been getting some pushback with regard to the legislation from the U.S. Bureau of Prisons' headquarters in Washington, D.C as the land has not been discharged as 'surplus' property. Subsequently, the County sent a letter to the Bureau of Prisons requesting that it allow the legislative process to proceed without objection.

On January 3, 2013, the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress adjourned before H.R. 4151, Land Conveyance Legislation for Tom Brown Park, could be passed. When the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress convened, H.R. 4151 died in Committee. New legislation to convey FCI land to the County has not yet been filed.

The County hosted Congressman Steve Southerland on August 20, 2013 for an in-person look at the Tom Brown Park/FCI properties and to discuss the issue of potential County use of the FCI land. The County and the Congressman met with the new FCI warden, Vick Flournoy. Under the direction of the new warden, FCI objects to the County's use of the undeveloped land that lies adjacent to the Tom Brown Park.

**RECOMMENDED CHANGE IN FLORIDA STATUTES  
(IF APPLICABLE)**

**Current Statute of Reference:** N/A

**Suggested New Language:** N/A

**RECOMMENDED COUNTY POSITION**

**Recommended Position:**

Continue to work with Patton Boggs to secure the usage of property at the Federal Correctional Institution facility for the purpose of constructing baseball fields.



# Leon County Board of County Commissioners

## 2014 LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Department/Division: Intergovernmental Affairs/Special Projects  
Contact Person: Ken Morris/Cristina Paredes  
Email: [paredesc@leoncountyfl.gov](mailto:paredesc@leoncountyfl.gov) Phone: 606-5300  
Topic/Project Title: Veterans Affairs National Cemetery

### PROBLEM/NEED

Identify effect on county programs/services and the economic impact.

**Priority:**             Critical             Important             Anticipated

**Description:**

In November 2012, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that it purchased land for a new national cemetery in Leon County. The VA purchased a 250-acre parcel along U.S. Highway 27 which will serve veterans in North Florida, Southwest Georgia, and Southeast Alabama. The VA also reported that it had hired a firm to develop the master plan for all phases of the cemetery and for the first phase of construction, which should be completed by January 1, 2014.

The October 2013 draft National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Site Specific Environmental Assessment (EA) found no significant environmental impacts to the site. The draft assessment also notes that the first phase of construction of approximately 35 acres could begin in 2017. However, the construction date is dependent of allocation of federal funds which will need to be appropriated by Congress. It is anticipated that the NEPA will be completed at the end of 2013.

### RECOMMENDED CHANGE IN FLORIDA STATUTES (IF APPLICABLE)

**Current Statute of Reference:** N/A

**Suggested New Language:** N/A

### RECOMMENDED COUNTY POSITION

**Recommended Position:**

Support sufficient appropriations for the construction of the National Cemetery in Leon County.



# Leon County Board of County Commissioners

## 2014 LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Department/Division: Intergovernmental Affairs/Special Projects  
Contact Person: Ken Morris/Cristina Paredes  
Email: [paredesc@leoncountyfl.gov](mailto:paredesc@leoncountyfl.gov) Phone: 606-5300  
Topic/Project Title: Reauthorization of Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21)

### PROBLEM/NEED

Identify effect on county programs/services and the economic impact.

**Priority:**             Critical             Important             Anticipated

**Description:**

On July 6, 2012, President Obama signed Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21) into law. The legislation provides funding over two years (FY 2013 – FY 2014) in the amount of \$105 billion for surface transportation programs in the United States. MAP-21 is the first ‘long-term’ highway authorization enacted since 2005 and is set to expire on September 30, 2014. Local governments use this funding to aid with the building and maintaining transportation infrastructure. Counties own and maintain 44% of America's roads (including more than 200,000 bridges), involved in the operation of 27% of public transit systems, and invest \$106 billion per year on building infrastructure and maintaining and operating public works.

In recent years, Congress has only extended current authorizations, but it is expected that 2014 will be different. If MAP-21 was extended at the current level of funding, it would require additional revenue or programmatic cuts. Patton Boggs anticipates that Congress will address the reauthorization of MAP-21 next year, once Congress finalizes the Water Resources Reform and Development bill.

### RECOMMENDED CHANGE IN FLORIDA STATUTES (IF APPLICABLE)

**Current Statute of Reference:** N/A

**Suggested New Language:** N/A

### RECOMMENDED COUNTY POSITION

**Recommended Position:**

Support the reauthorization of MAP-21 at or above the current level of funding for surface transportation programs.



## Federal Policy Committee 2013-14 Policy Statements: Priority Advocacy

### Water Resources

Deena Reppen, Legislative Director  
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Phone: 850-922-4300 Fax: 850-488-7501

#### WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT

**Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP): SUPPORT** passage of a Water Resources Development Act, with inclusion of the following provisions:

- Authorization of CERP projects with completed Chief of Engineers' Reports:
  - Caloosahatchee River (C-43) West Basin Storage Reservoir Project
  - C-111 Spreader Canal Western Project
  - Biscayne Bay Coast Wetlands - Phase 1 Project
  - Broward County Water Preserve Areas Project
  - Central Everglades Planning Project
- Amend the authorization for the Picayune Strand Restoration Project to increase the Authorized Project Cost (i.e., Section 902 Fix)
- Authorize carry-over of credits to manage the Federal/Non-Federal cost-share balance (Treatment of Credit Provision) for all agreements between the Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District, allowing the required cost-share balance to be managed across all projects with executed Agreements.

**Shore Protection & Dredging: SUPPORT** inclusion of provisions in the Water Resources Development Act that provide for ongoing maintenance of shore protection, beach renourishment and dredging projects within Florida, including:

- Authorization of navigation projects within Florida with completed Chief of Engineers' Reports, and conditional authorization of projects with reports scheduled for completion in 2013/14.

**Explanation:** Generally authorized by the Senate Environment & Public Works Committee and the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, the Water Resources Development Act authorizes the Civil Works program for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It sets policy and authorizes new water resource-related civil works projects that address environmental, structural, navigational, beach management, flood protection and hydrology needs across the nation.

## Water Resources Appropriations

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**Everglades Restoration:** **SUPPORT** appropriations necessary to complete restoration of the Kissimmee River and the C44-Reservoir and Stormwater Treatment Area component of the Indian River Lagoon-South Everglades restoration project.

**Herbert Hoover Dike Rehabilitation:** **SUPPORT** continued and full federal funding for the rehabilitation of the Herbert Hoover Dike.

***Explanation:** The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is undertaking major rehabilitation of the Herbert Hoover Dike (HHD). The goal of the rehabilitation is to reduce risk to nearby citizens through a system-wide approach that includes the replacement of water control structures within the HHD project. Lowering the risk of failure of the HHD should allow the Corps to better manage water levels in Lake Okeechobee and lessen the necessity and frequency of harmful freshwater discharges to coastal estuaries during high water times. The 143-mile earthen dike surrounds Lake Okeechobee, the second largest freshwater lake in the nation.*

## Transportation & Infrastructure

Eric Poole, Assistant Legislative Director  
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### NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

#### **Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act:**

- **SUPPORT** revision of the Biggert-Waters Act to delay flood insurance rate increases that unfairly penalize Florida's consumers.
- **SUPPORT** completion of the affordability study by FEMA, required by the 2012 law.
- **SUPPORT** alternative policies that stabilize the NFIP Trust Fund but lessen the financial impact on families and small business owners.

#### **FEMA Mapping Procedures:**

- As FEMA amends flood hazard maps for Florida's counties, **SUPPORT** the agency's full coordination with local governments and technical experts to ensure technical and scientific accuracy of any final maps, which have the potential for negative economic impacts.

***Explanation:** Changes made to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) to secure its fiscal solvency, along with the release of new flood maps are causing dramatic increases in the cost of flood insurance. Florida holds 37 percent of the nation's flood insurance policies. Florida's homeowners have supported the NFIP with more than \$16 billion in payments since 1978, with only \$3.7 billion in claims during the same timeframe*



## Federal Policy Committee 2013-14 Policy Statements: Other

### Transportation & Infrastructure

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Phone: 850-922-4300 or Fax: 850-488-7501

#### **Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21):**

**SUPPORT** reauthorization of MAP-21 and coordination with the Florida Department of Transportation on legislative principles that support Florida's infrastructure and economy, including *(TBD)*:

- *Efforts to enhance federal transportation revenue streams and replenish the Highway Trust Fund*
- *Full funding of transit programs*
- *Revision of the gas tax distribution formula to provide a fair and equitable distribution of collected revenues to Florida*

**Explanation:** *The federal surface transportation program, MAP-21 (P.L. 112-141), was signed into law in July 2012. Funding surface transportation programs at over \$105 billion for fiscal years 2013 and 2014, MAP-21 is the first long-term highway authorization enacted since 2005. It is set to expire on 9 September 30, 2014.*

### Energy, Environment & Agriculture

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**Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA):** **SUPPORT** revisions to OPA to provide for greater participation from local governments as primary first responders in the protection of local communities.

**Offshore Energy Production:** Monitor and report on the potential for expansion of offshore energy exploration in Florida's federal waters.

**Numeric Nutrient Criteria:** Monitor and report on activities associated with proposed numeric water quality criteria for lakes, flowing waters and canals.

## Tax Reform

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**Tax-Exempt Status of Municipal Bonds:** **SUPPORT** the preservation of the existing tax-exempt status of municipal bonds. Oppose legislative provisions that would repeal or eliminate the tax exempt status of municipal bonds. Oppose legislative provisions that would repeal, limit or "cap" the deduction for interest earned on new and outstanding municipal bonds.

**Marketplace Fairness Act:** Monitor and report on the status of legislative provisions for the collection of sales and use taxes from remote sellers and the effect on a state's ability to enforce state and local sales and use tax laws.

## Entitlements & Appropriations

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**Block Grants:** Monitor and report on the status of funding for the Social Services Block Grant, the Community Services Block Grant as well as the program's formula grant structure. Oppose any efforts to eliminate or reduce block grant funding.

**Immigration:** Monitor and report on the status of federal reimbursement to counties for all costs related to detaining, and transporting undocumented immigrants. Monitor and report on the reauthorization of the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP), to reimburse state and local costs of incarcerating undocumented criminal aliens.

## Healthcare & Human Services

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**Health Care:** Monitor and report on implications of health care reforms for potential fiscal and health delivery impacts. Monitor and report on implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and changes to Medicaid that would further shift the financial burden to states and counties.

**Veteran's Health:** **SUPPORT** NACo's efforts to assure that:

- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) funds are made available to reimburse counties for the services provided to veterans eligible for VA services and for services provided to veterans awaiting determination of eligibility.
- VA funds are made available to reimburse services provided to veterans eligible for VA services by public and private providers under contract with the VA.
- U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) funds are made available to reimburse counties for the services provided to veterans eligible for DOD services.

- Appropriate county level data are available so that counties know how many veterans are returning to their local areas.



## Health & Human Services Policy Committee 2013-14 Policy Statements

### Health Care

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#### **CONSENT ITEMS**

**Baker Act:** **SUPPORT** appropriate funding as outlined in the existing state capacity formula for crisis mental health and substance abuse beds statewide. **SUPPORT** increased funding for public receiving facilities and maintaining funding for public facilities if new state general revenue is provided to private receiving facilities.

**Behavioral Health System:** **SUPPORT** appropriate funding for core mental health and substance abuse services. **SUPPORT** continued efforts to work through Medicaid reform initiatives to ensure that persons with substance abuse and mental health treatment needs are appropriately served. **SUPPORT** efforts to increase supportive housing, employment and education initiatives for people with behavioral health issues and/or disabilities.

**County Health Departments (CHDs):** **SUPPORT** maintaining state general revenue funding for CHDs, and **OPPOSE** any state reductions to the CHD Trust Funds. **SUPPORT** efforts to enable CHDs to transition to managed care under the Statewide Medicaid Managed Care Program without impacting service capacity. **SUPPORT** maintaining a coordinated system of CHDs that is centrally housed within the Department of Health (DOH). **SUPPORT** preserving the ability of CHDs to provide primary care and direct patient care services, particularly in communities without adequate substitutes or alternative providers for these services.

**Emergency Medical Services (EMS):** **SUPPORT** ST Segment Elevated Myocardial Infarction (STEMI) legislation that leads to better coordination of care without imposing additional liability or administrative costs on county government. **OPPOSE** legislation that preempts county authority to regulate use or register distribution of Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs). **SUPPORT** a cost recovery mechanism if county provided training is mandated.

**Graduate Medical Education (GME):** **SUPPORT** efforts to fund GME programs to meet the healthcare needs of the state and its local communities, with a particular

emphasis on programs that provide for specialties in need as well as the development of physicians practice in medically underserved areas.

**Statewide Medicaid Managed Care Program:** **SUPPORT** including County Health Departments as priority providers within the Medicaid Managed Care Program and protect their ability to deliver primary care services to the communities they serve. **SUPPORT** carving out the coordinated Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) system to avoid fragmentation, inefficient operation, and costly duplication of TD services. **SUPPORT** the continuation of the Medically Needy program.

**Trauma Care System:** **SUPPORT** efforts to maintain and enhance established trauma care funding, including incentives for the development of new trauma centers. **OPPOSE** any efforts to shift the state's financial responsibility for the trauma system to counties or divert trauma care funding for purposes other than those intended by the existing legislation.

### **NEW AND REVISED ITEMS**

**County Share of Cost for Medicaid Services:** ~~FAC **SUPPORTS** the dissolution of the current county state Medicaid contributory relationship in a manner that: (1) absolves counties of all financial responsibilities related to the provision of Medicaid services in Florida; (2) eliminates associated administrative burdens for the counties and the state; and, (3) equitably mitigates any potential fiscal impact for all affected parties. However, absent the identification of strategies to achieve the aforementioned goals in the referenced proscribed manner, FAC **SUPPORTS** retaining the current Medicaid billing system, but only with certain statutory modifications. At a minimum, these modifications should include: (1) allowing counties to review their bills prior to payment; (2) allowing counties to pay from a revenue source of their choosing within a specified time period; and, (3) allowing the state to withhold county revenue sharing for nonpayment within a specific time period; (4) and, requiring the state, in consultation with the counties, to develop an accurate, reliable, and equitable billing process.~~

**SUPPORT** continued evaluation of the county-state Medicaid cost-share arrangement, taking into consideration the impacts of state policies designed to contain growth in Medicaid costs, including statewide Medicaid managed care and diagnosis related group reimbursement for hospitals. Additionally, consider possible alternatives to the current arrangement, including but not limited to:

- o Alternative financing mechanisms;
- o Targeted local investment of the statutory county Medicaid contribution; and
- o Elimination of the unfunded mandate.

**SUPPORT** the efforts of the County Medicaid Workgroup to evaluate alternative formulaic distributions of the county Medicaid contributions set forth in s. 409.915, F.S. **OPPOSE** efforts to further shift state Medicaid costs to counties.

***Explanation:*** During the 2013 Legislative Session, the Legislature passed SB 1520, which significantly modified the county-state Medicaid cost share relationship to eliminate the monthly billing system in lieu of a fixed formula-based county contribution. For the first two years, county contributions are based on past actual utilization (during 2012-13); however, beginning in FY 2015-16, the formula will begin transitioning to being based on each county's respective share of Medicaid enrollees. Additionally, the state has adopted policies in recent years that are designed, in part, to stabilize and/or reduce certain Medicaid costs. FAC supports closely evaluating the impacts of these programs to ensure that counties share in any savings derived from the various reforms.

**Health Care for Veterans: SUPPORT** collaboration with the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs to steer veterans who are eligible for federal health care benefits into the appropriate federal programs.

***Explanation:*** Certain veterans are eligible for federal health care benefits through the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA). It is estimated that thousands of eligible veterans in Florida have not accessed this coverage, and instead remain uninsured or under-insured.

## Human Services

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### **CONSENT ITEMS**

**Community Care for the Elderly:** **SUPPORT** restoration and expansion of state funding for the Community Care for the Elderly Program, which provides cost efficient diversion from nursing home placement for impaired elders.

**Healthy Families:** **SUPPORT** a continuation of funding for the Florida Healthy Families program.

**Open Water Life Guards:** **SUPPORT** legislation that would provide for open water lifeguard agency certification in Florida.

**Smoking Regulation:** **SUPPORT** legislation that repeals the state statutory preemption of smoking regulation by allowing local governments to enact local regulations that exceed state standards.

**Transportation Disadvantaged (TD):** **SUPPORT** the continuation of a coordinated Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) system. **SUPPORT** efforts to avoid fragmentation, inefficient operation, and costly duplication of TD services. **SUPPORT** appropriate and dedicated state funding for the TD program. **SUPPORT** efforts to protect the TD trust fund. **SUPPORT** carving out the coordinated Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) system to avoid fragmentation, inefficient operation, and costly duplication of TD services.

### **NEW AND REVISED ITEMS**

**Homelessness:** **SUPPORT** developing a dedicated state funding source for homeless programs. ~~restoring state funding for programs that serve the homeless.~~ **SUPPORT** legislation that streamlines current state statutes relating to homelessness and associated programs. ~~**SUPPORT** a process that would waive the fees related to obtaining personal identification from the state for persons identified as homeless.~~ **SUPPORT** the implementation of discharge protocols and/or procedures for hospitals and correctional facilities when releasing homeless persons. **SUPPORT** the development of strategies that would allow local governments to work with the state and federal government to serve target populations: the chronically homeless, veterans, and families and children, with particular emphasis on children aging out of the foster care system. **SUPPORT** continued coordination with the state's homeless planning council, specifically as it develops policies in support of the new Federal Strategic Plan to End Homelessness. **SUPPORT** efforts to extend tax credits to businesses that employ the homeless.

**Recovery Residences:** SUPPORT legislation defining and establishing minimum regulatory standards for recovery residence facilities, while also allowing more stringent local regulation.

*Explanation: Although not specifically defined in state law, a "sober home" or "recovery residence" is a residential facility designed to provide a sober living environment for individuals recovering from substance abuse. Functioning under the theory that such living arrangements will foster sobriety and recovery for addicts, there are currently no licensing requirements or state regulations governing sober homes. Due to the lack of oversight, sober homes vary significantly throughout the state, and as expected, there are good actors and bad actors.*

*During the 2013 Legislative Session, SB 738 (Sen. Clemens) and HB 1089 (Rep. Grant) were filed to address the sober home issue, but both bills died in committee. Proviso language was inserted in SB 1500, the General Appropriations Act, requiring the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to study the possible licensure or registration of sober homes in Florida. DCF must submit their findings and recommendations to the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, and the Governor by October 1, 2013. DCF took public comment at three public meetings during the summer; the agency's report is expected in the next few weeks.*

**Unclaimed Bodies:** ~~SUPPORT~~ revisions to current statute that would clarify the responsibilities of counties in the disposition of remains, eliminate redundant language, and include an updated list of definitions.

*Explanation: HB 171 (Rep. Rooney) was passed into law during the 2013 Legislative Session. The bill authorizes counties to establish procedures for the final disposition of unclaimed human remains by ordinance or resolution.*



## Finance, Tax & Administration Policy Committee 2013-14 Policy Statements

### Finance

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Phone: 850-922-4300 or Fax: 850-488-7501

### **CONSENT ITEMS**

#### **FINANCE & TAX POLICY**

**Communications Services Tax:** **SUPPORT** amending and/or revising current law in a manner that is: 1) revenue neutral; 2) simplifies administration and collection of the current tax; 3) provides for a broad and equitable tax base; 4) provides for enhanced stability and reliability as an important revenue source for local government; and 5) provides the opportunity for market-based growth. **OPPOSE** legislation that would revise current law in a manner that significantly reduces current local government related revenues.

**Local Business Tax:** **SUPPORT** the authorization of local governments to modify local ordinances in a manner that results in a more simplified, efficient and equitable tax system that benefits business and local communities. **OPPOSE** legislation that would provide for the elimination of the Local Business Tax.

**E-911 Fee:** **SUPPORT** collection of E-911 fee on prepaid mobile telecommunications for use in support of local government emergency communications operations.

**Internet Sales Tax/"Main Street" Fairness Act:** **SUPPORT** legislation that promotes an equitable competitive environment between "Brick and Mortar" businesses and remote business establishments conducting business in Florida.

**Local Discretionary Revenue Flexibility:** **SUPPORT** modifications to existing laws governing local discretionary revenue sources to provide greater flexibility and more efficient administration and management.

#### **APPROPRIATIONS**

**Specific County Based Appropriations:** **SUPPORT** maintaining current state appropriations critical to the delivery of public services at the county government level as it relates to currently funded county based appropriations in the SFY 2014-2015 budget. **SUPPORT** maintenance of existing appropriations currently funded in support of fiscally constrained counties.

## **NEW AND REVISED ITEMS**

### **FINANCE & TAX POLICY**

**Sales Tax Exemption on Commercial Leases:** **OPPOSE** legislation that would exempt state sales tax and local option sales tax on commercial leases.

**Explanation/Update:** *For the upcoming 2014 session two bills have been filed:*

- *House Bill 11 (Rep. Stuebe) would phase out the sales and use tax on commercial rentals by reducing the tax rate by 1% per year and completely repealing both state and local sales and use taxes in the year 2020. According to the 2013 Florida Revenue Estimating Conference, this proposal would have a negative recurring fiscal impact to local governments (mostly cities and counties) of more than \$400 million annually (by 2020).*
- *Senate Bill 176 (Sen. Hukill) would only reduce the current state sales and use tax of 6% to 5% on commercial rentals. Local option sales and use taxes would not be affected. Currently, FAC staff estimates that the negative impact to counties would be approximately \$12 million (county fiscal year 2015).*
- *The proposal was identified by the Florida Association of Realtors as its primary legislative objective for 2014.*

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

#### **Film/Television Entertainment Production Tax Incentives:** **SUPPORT**

legislation that would enhance the current incentives program to foster a more sustainable and competitive environment for attracting film, television, digital, and new media related entertainment production in the State of Florida.

**Explanation/Update:** *Several counties have expressed interests in exploring strategies to enhance Florida's incentive program to be more competitive on a national and international basis.*

## BUDGET & FINANCE ADMINISTRATION

**Chart of Accounts Consolidation:** **OPPOSE** legislation that would require all governmental entities in the State of Florida to utilize the same Chart of Accounts (Accounting System).

**Explanation:** *The Legislature passed SB 1292 during the 2011 Session, requiring the Chief Financial Officer to develop a Uniform Chart of Accounts to be used by all governmental entities for the reporting of assets, liabilities, equities, revenues and expenditures. Since the passage of this legislation, the CFO's office has developed draft recommendations that may prove to be costly and burdensome in its implementation for local governments. Recently, the Florida Government Finance Officers Association produced a white paper detailing the concerns of local government entities.*

**Value Adjustment Boards:** **OPPOSE** legislation that would harm the ability of Value Adjustment Boards in fulfilling its role as intended by the State Constitution.

**Explanation:** *During the 2013 Legislative Session, a Proposed Committee Substitute Bill for HB 1381 was filed with the intent of providing for several revisions to current laws governing the composition and operation of Value Adjustment Boards.*

*Of primary concern to counties, the bill would have:*

- *Amended the current composition of VABs to include three citizen members and only two elected officials.*
- *One of the citizen members would be appointed by the Clerk of Courts – Secretary to the VAB.*
- *Amended provisions regarding the role and duty of the VAB Attorney.*

*The bill(s) failed to be passed out of committees of reference. It is anticipated that this issue will be carried forward to the 2014 legislative session.*

Administration

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## CONSENT ITEMS

**Collective Bargaining:** **SUPPORT** legislation clarifying that constitutional officers can resolve impasse issues at the discretion of the constitutional officer.

**Elections: SUPPORT** full state funding of all expenditures by supervisors of elections to comply with the requirements of the federal Help America Vote Act.

***Explanation/Update:** In 2013, passage of HB 7013 extended early voting days/hours from 8 days minimum up to 14 days at the discretion of the Supervisor of Elections and increased the hours from 96 to a maximum of 168 hours. The bill also expanded the authorized sites to include civic and convention centers, fairgrounds, stadiums, courthouses and commission buildings.*

**Procurement: SUPPORT** the non-publishing of detailed bid estimates by creating an exemption for county and municipality projects in statute. **SUPPORT** establishing an optional (alternative) process for state and local entities to consider cost in the award of professional services agreements pursuant to the Consultants' Competitive Negotiation Act.

**Public Notice: SUPPORT** legislation allowing local governments to comply with public notice and legal advertisement requirements by means other than the newspaper.

**Florida Retirement System (FRS): OPPOSE** any FRS benefit changes that result in an increase in the FRS county and county employee contribution rates. **SUPPORT** requiring all legislation that potentially results in an increase in the FRS contribution rate to be analyzed and evaluated to determine the direct fiscal impact of proposed changes to all local and state government to be eligible for consideration.

***Explanation/Update:** In 2013, HB7011/SB1392 sought to reform the FRS by either closing the Defined Benefit (pension) plan to new employees or changing the default of plan options from Defined Benefit (pension) to Defined Contribution (investment) plan.*

*The Senate proposed the more conservative approach of changing the default, whereas the House sought to close the pension. The two chambers could not reach agreement and reform efforts died. It is expected that the issue will be taken up again in 2014.*

*Also in 2013, SB1810 contained the annual employer contribution rate adjustments, which kept significant rate increases in place beginning July 1, 2013.*

**Public Record and Open Meeting Exemptions for Economic Development: SUPPORT** changes to s.286.0113 and s.288.075, F.S., that would allow the Board of County Commissioners to deliberate in private regarding an economic development proposal and would allow confidential information in the possession of an economic development agency to be provided to a member of the Board of County Commissioners without the possibility of such communication being considered a disclosure, which would terminate the confidential nature of the information. Information would be released before final decision is made, however.



**Public Safety  
Policy Committee**  
*2013-14 Policy Statements*

**Public Safety**

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**CONSENT ITEMS:**

**JUDICIAL SYSTEM**

**Article V: SUPPORT** reducing or eliminating the requirements of s. 29.008(4)(a), F.S., that require counties to fund certain court expenditures by 1.5 percent over the prior county fiscal year.

***Explanation/Update:*** *In 2013, counties successfully obtained an exemption from having to increase annual funding for court-related functions by 1.5% under section 29.008, Florida Statutes, for FY13-14.*

**Pretrial Service Agencies: SUPPORT** maintaining county ability to provide non-monetary and risk assessment pretrial release services that ensure the safety and welfare of local communities by preventing new offenses and ensuring those appear as obligated. **OPPOSE** legislation limiting the discretion of the first appearance judge, requiring written reports and eliminating the presumption of release on non-monetary conditions. **SUPPORT** changing pretrial program reporting requirements as provided in s. 907.043, F.S., from weekly to monthly updates. **OPPOSE** legislation that restricts pretrial services to only indigent defendants and **SUPPORT** legislation that requires bail bondsmen to report information as required of pretrial service agencies in s.907.043 F.

**Small County Courthouse Funding: SUPPORT** continued state general revenue funding for capital improvements to county courthouses and other court-related facilities located in rural counties.

**Traffic Hearing Officer Program: SUPPORT** full funding for traffic hearing officer programs statewide and allow magistrates to handle cases resulting from red light camera offenses.

## IMPACTS TO COUNTY JAILS

**Inmate Medical Costs:** **SUPPORT** legislation that reduces jail expenses by setting a reimbursement amount paid by counties to medical providers for health care services for inmates and arrestees at no higher than the established Medicare rate plus 10%, the same rate as currently charged to the Department of Corrections, unless there is an existing contract in place or a business practice providing a lower rate.

**Shift of Prison Inmates to Jails:** **OPPOSE** any efforts to shift inmates with less than a year on their sentence at the time of sentencing to jails instead of prisons.

**Explanation/Update:** *As part of its annual budget reduction exercise, in 2012 the Departments of Corrections proposed amending s. 944.17(3)(a), F.S., to state that only persons with 1 year or more left on their sentences (at time of sentencing) are to be sent to prison. Such a change would have meant more than a \$100 million cost shift to the counties. FAC worked aggressively against the proposal and it was not included in the Governor's Budget Recommendation or in any legislation.*

**Mentally Ill and Substance Abuse:** **SUPPORT** increased funding of the Criminal Justice Mental Health and Substance Abuse Reinvestment Grant Program with recurring dollars in a trust fund. **SUPPORT** sustainable matching state funds to counties that have received both planning and implementation Reinvestment Grant funds.

## JUVENILE JUSTICE

**Juvenile Detention:** **SUPPORT** the state taking full responsibility for funding and operation of detention facilities serving juveniles, both for pre-disposition and post-disposition days and implementing juvenile justice reform, as recommended by the Detention Cost Share Proviso Workgroup. In the alternative, **SUPPORT** the dissolution of the current shared County-State Detention relationship in a manner that eliminates the administrative burdens for all parties and establishes a more collaborative and equitable detention model.

**Explanation/Update:** *In June 2013, the First District Court of Appeal in DJJ v. Okaloosa, et al. (Case No. 1D12-3929) affirmed a DOAH Final Order in Okaloosa, et al. v. DJJ (Case No. 12-0891RX) that invalidated rules DJJ promulgated to administer the cost/share relationship. The practical effect of which was that, for years, DJJ improperly shifted financial responsibility for detention days to the counties. County costs estimates for FY13-14 dropped from \$71 million to \$32 million, leaving the State with a budget deficit to fund. It is expected that the Legislature will look for ways to mitigate additional funding requirements, which may present an opportunity to establish a more equitable detention model.*

**Cost of Care:** **SUPPORT** legislation allowing counties to charge juveniles, or the parents of juveniles, for the costs of providing pre-adjudicatory, secure detention care based on their availability to pay.

**Juvenile Assessment Centers (JAC Centers):** **SUPPORT** state funding of JAC Centers throughout Florida to strive to achieve equal treatment of youth offenders.

## **GENERAL PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Crystal Methamphetamine:** **SUPPORT** dedicated state funding for local and regional crystal methamphetamine enforcement, cleanup, and treatment.

**Synthetic Drugs:** **SUPPORT** expanding the controlled substance schedule to include new iterations of synthetic formulas that mimic the effects of illegal drugs. **SUPPORT** prohibiting certain types of packaging and marketing of any products claiming to mimic the effects of illegal drugs.

**Explanation/Update:** *In 2013, SB 294 expanded Schedule I of the controlled substances register to include 22 new formulas of synthetic drugs; all 22 formulas were included in the Attorney General's December 2012 Emergency Order. FAC supported the legislation throughout the process.*

**Pain Management Clinics:** **OPPOSE** preemption of the regulation of pain management clinics to the state.

**Explanation/Update:** *In 2013, SB 1192/HB 831 sought to preempt, or at least in part, restrict counties' ability to regulate pain management clinics and their practitioners. FAC opposed the effort and both bills eventually died during the final days of session.*

**County Emergency Radio Systems:** **OPPOSE** legislation that would shift funds or impede counties from building and maintaining an interoperable radio communication system as authorized by statute.

**Crime Lab Funding:** **SUPPORT** additional funding for locally-operated crime analysis laboratories.

**Copper and Other Metals Thefts:** **SUPPORT** legislation strengthening laws related to copper and other metals thefts and secondary metals recyclers to deter thefts from local governments, businesses and individuals. **SUPPORT** legislation increasing the penalties for illegal purchase of scrap metals. **OPPOSE** legislation preempting local scrap metal ordinances from being more restrictive.

**NEW AND REVISED ITEMS:**

**JUVENILE JUSTICE**

**Juvenile Detention:**

**(1) SUPPORT** *legislation that codifies the financial responsibility of the counties and state as upheld by Florida's courts.*

OR

**(2) SUPPORT** *legislation that codifies the financial responsibility of the counties and state as upheld by Florida's courts and allows counties to pay actual costs on a monthly reimbursement basis.*

OR

**(3) SUPPORT** *funding for the secure detention as upheld by Florida's courts.*

OR

**(4) SUPPORT** *initiatives which reduce juvenile detention through prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation services.*

## Emergency Management

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### **CONSENT ITEMS**

**Shelter Funding and Standards:** Consistent with the provisions of s. 252.385, F.S., which states that it is the intent of the Legislature that this state not have a deficit of safe shelter space by 1998 and thereafter, **SUPPORT** additional state funding for hurricane shelter spaces, including retrofitting existing facilities, and providing for the increased cost of construction for Enhanced Hurricane Protection Areas (EHPA) associated with new school construction. **SUPPORT** statutory revisions requiring nursing homes and assisted living facilities to have back-up power supply sources that operate a majority of the mechanical systems in the facility for a minimum of 72 hours. **SUPPORT** state funding for county and regional special needs patients and shelters.

**Background Checks for Emergency Volunteers:** **SUPPORT** a legislative review of the intent of background screening requirements of Chapter 2010-14, Laws of Florida with respect to volunteers in emergencies.

**Persons with Special Needs:** **SUPPORT** legislative changes to s.252.355 F.S. that provide additional privacy protections to all individuals who voluntarily register with local emergency management agencies.

**Emergency Operation Centers (EOCs):** **SUPPORT** continued state funding for county EOCs to ensure each is able to meet the minimum structural survivability and operational space criteria established by the state and federal government and the American Red Cross.

**Disaster Funding:** **SUPPORT** a 50/50 cost-share arrangement with the state for the non-federal portion of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). **SUPPORT** the current HMGP fund allocation and project selection process defined in Rule 9G-22, Florida Administrative Code. **SUPPORT** the creation of an emergency bridge loan program for counties to provide a source of expedient cash flow to counties impacted by a major catastrophe. Alternatively, **SUPPORT** expanding the current Florida Small Business Emergency Loan Program by making counties eligible applicants.

**Emergency Management Credentialing:** To strengthen the professionalism of County Emergency Management Directors, **SUPPORT** efforts that provide enhanced training and education opportunities for County Emergency Management employees. **OPPOSE** any state mandated training and hiring requirements for County Emergency Management Directors.

## **NEW AND REVISED ITEMS**

### **Emergency Management Preparedness and Assistance (EMPA) Trust Fund:**

**SUPPORT** maintaining the original intent and purpose of the EMPA Trust Fund, which is to serve as a funding source for state and local emergency management programs, by ensuring that all monies collected for purposes of funding emergency management, preparedness and assistance are deposited into the EMPA Trust Fund and spent on emergency management activities. Accordingly, FAC's OPPOSES legislative sweeps of the EMPA trust fund for non emergency management purposes and SUPPORTS an increase to the county base grant funding, which has remain unchanged for nearly a decade. **SUPPORT** changes to the EMPA trust fund by ensuring the \$2.00 and \$4.00 annual surcharge on all homeowner and business insurance policies is assessed on either a per-parcel or per-unit basis of coverage, rather than on a single policy. **SUPPORT** a repeal of the service charge to general revenue on the EMPA trust fund and redirect these monies back to the counties in the same manner in which the EMPA base grant is distributed. ~~**SUPPORT** The Division of Emergency Management's Legislative Budget Request to increase base grant funding by \$10,000 per county.~~

**Explanation/Update:** *Currently, each county receives approximately \$105,000 from the EMPA trust fund for emergency management purposes. While there have been incremental increases to the trust fund over the past decade, county allocations have remained flat during this same time period, while responsibilities have increased. Additionally, for State FY 12/13, the Legislature swept approximately \$3.5 million to general revenue, while another roughly \$5 million was redirected in 2010.*

~~**OPPOSE** efforts to amend Chapter 252, F.S., to impose mandates on counties relating to functional needs access to general population shelters. **SUPPORT** legislative review, or an opinion, from the State Attorney General, of Federal "Functional Needs Support Services Shelter Guidance" and its impact on Florida shelter standards and policies and the statutory mission of the Special Needs Interagency Committee.~~

**Explanation/Update:** *FAC and the Florida Emergency Preparedness Association (FEPA) will continue to work with FDEM to address this issue.*

**Emergency Management Ranking:** **SUPPORT** working with the Florida Department of Emergency Management on developing an appropriate ranking/typing of county emergency management offices.



## Growth, Agriculture & Environment Policy Committee 2013-14 Policy Statements

### Growth Management

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#### **CONSENT ITEMS**

#### **GROWTH MANAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION**

**Growth Management Reform:** The growth reforms of 2011 represented the most significant changes to the state's planning laws in more than 25 years. While FAC does not oppose the revised planning process, it believes that no further revisions should occur without first evaluating the impact the 2011 changes have had on the economy, the environment, local and regional infrastructure, and community development. Accordingly, until such an evaluation takes place, **OPPOSE** any further reductions in state planning oversight or other efforts preempting local planning decisions.

**Explanation/Update:** *Only two bills were filed during the 2013 session impacting home rule. Of those, one was signed into law that affects the timing and use of so-called mobility fee systems in lieu of traditional concurrency. While FAC does not anticipate any major legislation for 2014, efforts to limit certain planning and land use decisions are possible.*

**Expedited State Review:** **SUPPORT** changes to the Community Planning Act that would allow small counties to request the "State Coordinated Review Process" be used for the review of complex plan amendments.

**Explanation/Update:** *Under the growth reforms of 2011, two review processes were created for local plan amendments: the Expedited Review Process; and, the State Coordinated Review Process. The more robust State Coordinated Review process is used for Sector Plans, DRIs, EAR amendments, and amendments located in Areas of Critical State Concern. However, in some circumstances complex development proposals requiring plan amendments are submitted to small counties that have no professional planning staff. As such, these proposals often do not receive an appropriate review. This policy proposes a change in law allowing small counties to submit amendments of a certain size under the State Coordinated Review Process.*

**Concurrency:** In the absence of state-mandated transportation concurrency, and to ensure that the roads needed to support new development are concurrent with the impacts of development, **SUPPORT** county home rule authority, and current statutory provisions, which allow counties to retain their current transportation concurrency systems, as adopted by local ordinance.

***Explanation/Update:*** *As a result of the 2011 legislative changes, transportation concurrency is no longer mandated by the state but may be maintained by local option. Currently, only a few local governments have elected to withdraw their concurrency ordinances. During the 2013 session, the House passed a bill (HB 321) that would have prevented counties from applying transportation concurrency for three years (from July 2013 – July 2016). This policy statement is intended to ensure counties can maintain their concurrency management ordinances without interference from the legislature.*

**Developments of Regional Impact:** **SUPPORT** the purpose and intent of the DRI program, which is to evaluate – and potentially mitigate – the impacts of large scale developments have on communities outside the approving jurisdiction. However, recognizing the high cost of the DRI process, the potential for duplicative reviews, and the lack of mitigation enforcement outside the jurisdiction, **SUPPORT** revisions to the DRI program under the following conditions:

- That a coordinated review by the RPC's be retained for DRI-sized projects to specifically examine extra-jurisdictional impacts;
- That the review process be limited to environmental issues and impacts on the infrastructure, particularly roads; and
- That a mandatory mitigation component be included if it is found that a project will have impacts on the environment or infrastructure outside the host jurisdiction.

**Rural Growth:** FAC recognizes that rural areas play an important role in our state's economy, environment, agriculture, and cultural history. However, from a planning perspective, these areas have received much less attention than their urban and suburban counterparts. In view of this, **SUPPORT** the following:

- Restoring the full amount of local technical assistance monies (\$3.2 million) to the Department of Economic Opportunity, as originally provided under SB 360 (2005);
- Targeted technical assistance to small counties for specific comprehensive planning functions, including Rural Land Stewardship Area (RLSA) issues; and

## REGIONAL PLANNING

**Regional Planning Councils (RPCs):** **SUPPORT** full funding of regional planning councils to, at a minimum, cover the costs of statutory responsibilities, and to support enhanced economic development activities. **OPPOSE** legislation prohibiting or restricting the ability of a regional planning council to provide planning and technical service to its local governments.

**Explanation/Update:** *Historically, the state's 11 RPCs receive approximately \$2.5 million in state general revenue funds. For the past three years, RPCs have not received any state funding.*

## NEW AND REVISED ITEMS

**Proportionate Fair-Share Mitigation:** **SUPPORT** major revisions to the proportionate share statute to ensure that: (1) the funding formula and its application are clear and unambiguous; (2) local governments can determine if the payment is adequate to satisfy the concurrency management system; (3) each development can be charged its proportionate share of road improvements when the road is deficient or when development causes the road to become deficient; and, (4) development is not charged for existing deficiencies or backlog.

**Explanation/Update:** *This funding process – which is akin to an impact fee – has undergone numerous legislative changes over the last several years. Problematically, the statute has various interpretations among developers, local governments and state agencies. In short, the statutory language needs to be clarified, with an outcome that creates a balance between the identified transportation needs created by new development and the apportioned construction costs associated with those needs.*

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**Affordable Housing:** **SUPPORT** retaining the full amount of dedicated documentary tax revenues to fund state and local affordable housing programs.

**Explanation/Update:** *For the last three years, while some affordable housing assistance funds have been appropriated, essentially no housing funds have come from the primary funding source for affordable housing: The State and Local Housing Trust Funds. In fact, in 2011, the Legislature permanently diverted \$75 million per year of the doc stamp revenues to a newly created economic development program. For the current State Fiscal Year, the Legislature swept \$204 million from the State and Local Housing Trust Fund to General Revenue. However, attempted to offset this sweep by appropriating \$100 million from the 2012 National Mortgage Settlement to the SHIP (\$40 Million) and SAIL (\$60 Million) programs.*

## Transportation

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### **CONSENT ITEMS**

#### **TRANSPORTATION FUNDING**

**State Transportation Trust Fund: OPPOSE** any effort to divert revenues from the state transportation trust fund for non-transportation purposes.

**Explanation/Update:** *For the past two years, and a result of an improving state economy, the Legislature has not redirected revenues from the State Transportation Trust Fund (STTF) to the General Revenue fund. In fact, as a result of the Legislature increasing tag and title fees in 2009, the STTF received an additional \$200 million for FY 13/14. A portion of these new revenues are allocated to SCOP (\$10 million); Transportation Disadvantaged (\$10 million); Seaports (\$10 million); Turnpike Connectivity (\$35 million). As for overall transportation funding for FY 13/14, the FDOT Work Program is funded at \$8.4 billion.*

**Regional Transportation Finance Entities: SUPPORT** legislation that authorizes the creation of regional transportation finance authorities, who may be authorized to use tolls, or pledge a portion of the capacity improvement funds from the State Transportation Trust Fund to finance eligible transit or transportation improvement projects.

**Explanation/Update:** *During the 2013 session, FDOT's legislative package included language allowing the creation of the regional transportation finance authorities (RTFAs). The legislation, which ultimately failed, authorized a county, or two or more contiguous counties, to form a regional transportation finance authority for the purposes of financing, constructing, maintaining, and operating transportation projects in a region of the state, if approved by the Legislature and the county commission of each county that will be part of the authority.*

**Rural Transportation Funding: SUPPORT** state funding for the Small County Road Assistance Program (SCRAP). **SUPPORT** continuing enhanced state funding for the Small County Outreach Program (SCOP).

**Explanation/Update:** *FAC has seen success in its broad support of these programs before the Legislature. For FY 13/14, both SCRAP and SCOP received significant funding increases. Specifically, SCRAP was funded at \$27.6 million, an increase of \$2 million over last year's appropriation, while SCOP was funded at \$46.2 million, which represents a \$20 million increase from last year.*

**Urban Transportation Funding:** To help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, promote energy conservation, and lower the number of vehicle miles traveled, FAC **SUPPORTS** a change to the state's transportation funding investment policy by creating a more flexible and balanced allocation of funds between transit and traditional highway capacity improvements.

## **TRANSPORTATION PLANNING & ADMINISTRATION**

**Managed Lanes:** **SUPPORT** changes to FDOT's "Managed Lanes" designation process to ensure counties have proper notice and are given an adequate comment period relating to any state road corridor that is proposed to include managed lanes. Additionally, revenues derived from managed lane operations that are in excess of the amounts needed to pay debt service, operations, or maintenance directly related to the managed lanes in any given year, shall be returned to the county where such revenues were generated for transit or transportation program expansion, improvement, or enhancement.

**Metropolitan Planning Organizations:** **OPPOSE** FDOT efforts to require urbanized areas (UZAs) with multiple MPOs to submit one combined project priority list.

**Leasing of State Roads:** **OPPOSE** the State of Florida leasing any existing state-owned toll road to a private concessionaire without creating a more transparent and inclusive process for FDOT to follow when considering leasing state-owned toll roads. **SUPPORT** statutory changes that would:

- Include an early local government notification process;
- Ensure local governments provide comments to the agency prior to it soliciting proposals relating to the leasing of a toll road;
- Authorize the use of any remaining toll revenues from a lease agreement to be returned to the affected counties to provide funding for transportation related activities, including but not limited to, reimbursing counties for fire and emergency rescue services associated with the leased facility; and
- Authorize the use of any upfront revenues (a.k.a., lease payment) and any excess revenues from a lease agreement to include non-SIS facilities and other non-capacity projects, including transit, as identified by the Metropolitan Planning Organization within the county or counties where the lease road is located.

## **NEW AND REVISED ITEMS**

**County Transportation Projects: SUPPORT** increasing the cost cap (from \$400,00 to \$750,000) for counties to self-perform road improvement projects using the Constitutional Gas Tax proceeds.

***Explanation/Update:*** Sections 336.41(b) and (c), F.S. limit the amount of road construction work a county can perform using its own employees to no more than \$400,000. This policy proposes to increase the limit to \$750,000.

**Strategic Intermodal System (SIS): SUPPORT** legislation allowing SIS funds to be used on roads and other transportation facilities not designated on the SIS network if the improvement relieves congestion on the SIS.

***Explanation/Update:*** The SIS is a network of high-priority transportation facilities that includes the state's primary highways, rail corridors, airports, freight terminals and seaports. Since the creation of the SIS in 2003, FDOT has re-focused how it allocates its discretionary highway capacity funds by placing a priority on SIS facilities. While there is a local, regional, and statewide benefit to this policy, it does limit the amount of funds available for improving non-SIS facilities. In an effort to maximize the use of SIS funds and address other roadway deficiencies, FAC proposes a change in law that would allow the use of SIS dollars on non-SIS roads that are helping to effectively relieve congestion on the SIS road.

**Transportation Improvement Program (TRIP):** To help provide needed funding for the Transportation Regional Improvement Program (TRIP), **SUPPORT** redirecting a portion of the remaining 2009 tag and title fee increases (\$200 million) from state general revenue to the State Transportation Trust Fund (STTF)

***Explanation/Update:*** The purpose of the TRIP program is to encourage regional planning by providing state matching funds (up to 50% of total project costs) for improvements to regionally significant transportation facilities. TRIP is funded from a portion of the documentary stamp tax collected on all real estate transactions. When the real estate market is robust, the program is well funded. However, with a downturn in the economy, TRIP has received only marginal funding over the past few years. Additionally, in 2011, the legislature designated that, beginning July 2014, the first \$60 million of TRIP funds be directed the Florida Rail Enterprise.

*In an effort to replace some of the funding for TRIP, FAC supports redirecting a portion of the tag and title fee revenues that increased in 2009. That year, Legislature increased fees for vehicle titles and tags, generating an additional \$400 million for transportation purposes. However, the Legislature redirected this money for general revenue. Beginning in 2013, half of the money is scheduled to come back to the state transportation trust fund. FAC supports redirecting the balance for TRIP*

## Agriculture

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### **CONSENT ITEMS**

**Agricultural Protections:** **SUPPORT** policies and legislation that curb abuse of statutory agricultural protections by real estate speculators and developers, while protecting principles of investment backed expectation.

**Rural and Family Lands Protection Act:** **SUPPORT** funding the Rural and Family Lands Protection Act to allow for the purchase of rural lands protection easements to prevent the subdivision and conversion of such land into other uses.

**Rural Land Stewardship Areas (RLSAs):** **SUPPORT** Rural Land Stewardship Areas (RLSAs) to maintain the economic value of rural land in Florida, protect the character of rural areas, ensure the viability of our agricultural economy, and control urban sprawl. **SUPPORT** local match funding for technical assistance and planning needed by local government to implement RLSAs.

**Sustainable Agriculture Incentives:** **SUPPORT** legislation that encourages and incentivizes sustainable agriculture, and the maximization of local food production.

## Environment

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### **CONSENT ITEMS**

#### **BEACHES AND SHORES**

**Beach Access:** **SUPPORT** the preservation of public access to and along beaches and state water bodies and county regulatory authority.

**Beach Renourishment:** **SUPPORT** continuation of a dedicated state funding source for beach renourishment at or above statutory levels. **SUPPORT** the protection of sovereign immunity with regard to beach mitigation liability where a county conducts beach renourishment according to federal and state regulatory requirements.

**Permitting:** **SUPPORT** improvements that reduce the permit review time and costs associated with joint coastal permitting without jeopardizing environmental resources.

**SUPPORT** streamlined permitting for previously restored beaches and inlet management projects that have already been approved through the joint coastal permitting process.

**Working Waterfronts:** **SUPPORT** funding sources and statutory provisions to assist local governments with: 1) the acquisition of property or development rights, 2) the preservation of commercial working waterfronts; 3) the improvement of recreational opportunities and public access.

**Vessels and Waterways:** **SUPPORT** continued state funding of derelict vessel removal.

**SUPPORT** continued state and local regulation of vessels, mooring fields, bulkheads and seawalls, floating vessel platforms, and seagrasses.

**SUPPORT** greater county authority to regulate vessels in navigation outside of designated mooring fields.

**Explanation/Update:** *Per HB 999 (2013), mooring fields authorized by DEP General Permit may not exceed 100 vessels. This is a change from a size limitation of 50,000 square feet. DEP was also given delegated authority from the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund to issue leases for mooring fields that meet this requirement.*

## **LAND USE REGULATION**

**Billboards: OPPOSE** legislation that preempts or dilutes local government's ability to establish and maintain local ordinances which regulate billboards and outdoor advertising.

**Dangerous Captive Wildlife: SUPPORT** enhanced interagency coordination between the counties and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWCC) relating to land use regulations regarding dangerous captive wildlife.

**SUPPORT** the listing of iguanas as a "reptile of concern" or, in the alternative, removing the current Class III permitting exemption.

**Mining: OPPOSE** any reduction in the county government role in siting mines for the production of construction aggregate or other minerals.

**OPPOSE** any reduction in county authority to regulate local concerns relating to the operation of mines including, but not limited to, hours of operation, noise, traffic and dust.

## **ENERGY**

**Incentives: SUPPORT** incentives for local governments to assist in state energy policies such as green building and carbon emission reductions, and the technical assistance to implement these programs.

**Climate Change: SUPPORT** a comprehensive state climate change action plan, with energy policies and other initiatives to reduce carbon dioxide and other compounds in the atmosphere and address ecosystem sustainability, long term water supply, flood protection, public health and safety, and economic growth and prosperity.

**SUPPORT** state and federal recognition of adaptation and mitigation as critical to any climate change plan, and the funding necessary to assist local governments in developing and implementing climate change initiatives.

**Renewable Energy: SUPPORT** streamlining the permitting and regulatory processes for solar products and installers.

**SUPPORT** legislative incentives to encourage net metering and feed-in tariff programs, and the regulatory clarification that net metering should apply to each customer, rather than each meter, so that condominiums and other multi-unit buildings with a single solar system can apply the benefit to multiple users.

**SUPPORT** a Clean Portfolio Standard (CPS), or alternatively, a Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) for the State of Florida.

**SUPPORT** legislative authorization for solar energy product manufacturers to train contractors and supervise installation without being required to obtain a contracting license.

**SUPPORT** the repeal of the requirement of Florida Solar Energy Center (FSEC) approval in order to sell solar products in Florida. Alternatively, **SUPPORT** a requirement that FSEC develop nationally-recognized standards for its testing and approval process.

**SUPPORT** incentives to promote the use of solar power purchase agreements and solar leases. Additionally, **SUPPORT** statutory authorization, if needed, for local governments to create energy financing districts on a voluntary basis.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL PERMITTING**

**Delegation:** **SUPPORT** increased delegation to local government where resources exist to accept partial or complete delegation of state environmental regulatory programs. **OPPOSE** mandatory delegation as many local environmental programs seek only to fill in the gaps of state and federal regulatory programs.

**Permit Streamlining:** **SUPPORT** legislation that is thoroughly vetted with all stakeholders, and that takes a targeted approach to increasing regulatory efficiencies, rather than broadly preempting local government authority.

**OPPOSE** legislation that prevents counties from having local environmental programs that are more stringent than state or federal regulatory programs.

**SUPPORT** legislation that authorizes the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and water management districts to develop a general permit for local government restoration and enhancement projects, particularly as these activities pertain to implementation of the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) program.

***Explanation/Update:*** In 2013, HB 999 addressed of issues such as: electronic submissions; RAIs on development applications (with the exception of building permits); sovereign land leases for marinas, boatyards and marine retailers; preemption on water well permitting, water allocations with planned desalination plants; exemptions for man-made farm ponds (under 15 acres and 15 feet deep) and unauthorized flooding from an adjacent property; revised air source permit fees; recovered materials and dealers; and interstate natural gas pipelines. Expect to see another comprehensive permit streamlining bill during the 2014 session.

## **PUBLIC LANDS**

**Land Acquisition:** **SUPPORT** the continuation of the Florida Forever land acquisition program and a dedicated state funding source, which provides local match funding for acquisition or preservation of conservation lands.

**SUPPORT** legislation that would require land acquisition projects to be ranked and prioritized according to their consistency with the local comprehensive plan.

***Explanation/Update:*** *In the 2013 budget, \$20 million was allocated for land acquisition with the proviso that an additional \$50 million would be funded by the sale of state-owned lands no longer needed for conservation purposes. The DEP has been charged with identifying those lands with limited conservation value, which will then be sold in order to purchase land with greater value — for instance, land that is protective of springs, water quality, water quantity and land that can be used as a military buffer zone.*

*The Trust for Public Land and the DEP have brought together a technical advisory group to guide the process, and a list of approximately 170 parcels totaling 5,330 acres has been presented. These lands are scattered across 67 state forests, parks and other management units.*

*In the meantime, an advocacy group known as Florida's Water and Land Legacy has proposed an initiative to amend the state Constitution to require 33 percent of all net revenues derived from the documentary stamp tax to be dedicated to the Land Acquisition Trust Fund for the next 20 years. According to the group's website, they have collected approximately 150,000 signatures of the 683,149 needed to get the amendment on the November 2014 ballot.*

**Conservation Lands:** **SUPPORT** legislation that provides future state funding for the management and maintenance of conservation lands transferred to county control.

**SUPPORT** improved management of state conservation lands and increased public access to those lands.

**Sovereign Submerged Lands:** **SUPPORT** the current case law definition of the "ordinary high water mark" which delineates state lands from private lands. **OPPOSE** any changes having the effect of transferring large quantities of wetlands and uplands from state ownership to private ownership.

**Explanation/Update:** *In both the 2012 and 2013 Legislative Sessions, bills were introduced which would have revised the current definition and interpretation of the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM). The 2012 proposal would have changed the OHWM definition to the "highest reach of a navigable, non-tidal water body as it usually exists when in its ordinary condition and is not the highest reach of such water body during the high water season or in times of freshets."*

*The 2013 proposal would have redefined the "mean annual flood line" for delineating ERP limits to require calculating the arithmetic mean of the maximum yearly discharges for the most recent 10-year period of record. Although the language in both proposals died in committee, one can expect a similar effort this year.*

## **SOLID WASTE**

**Solid Waste Funding:** **SUPPORT** reinstating state funding of Solid Waste Management Grants. **SUPPORT** maintaining the waste tire fee as a dedicated revenue source for funding mosquito control programs and waste tire recycling.

**Solid Waste Regulation:** **OPPOSE** any diminution of county authority to franchise and otherwise regulate construction and demolition debris (C&D) haulers, recyclers, or disposal facilities.

**Recycling:** **SUPPORT** legislation that provides appropriate resources and incentives to local governments to achieve statewide recycling goals. **SUPPORT** a recycling credit for all recycled materials including municipal biomass and other waste-to-energy processes.

**OPPOSE** legislation that imposes fees or taxes on local governments for collecting waste, which is an essential governmental service. Any recycling plan promulgated by the state must consider market and state-wide economic conditions.

**SUPPORT** removing the exemption in s.403.7046(3), F.S., so that local government may require commercial establishments to convey source-separated recovered materials to the local government or to a facility designated by the local government for recycling.

**Explanation/Update:** *A late amendment to the permit streamlining bill HB 999 (2013), provides that a local government may not use information provided by a recovered materials dealer in its registration application to compete unfairly with the dealer until 90 days after receipt of the application. The law now also provides that a recovered materials dealer (or association) may initiate an action for injunctive relief or damages for alleged violations of § 403.7046.*

## **DOMESTIC WASTE**

**Central Sewer Systems:** **SUPPORT** the authority of county government to require mandatory connection to central sewer systems as they become available.

**Septage:** **SUPPORT** local government authority to regulate the land application of septage waste within its jurisdictional boundaries, given the differences in technical, environmental and economic feasibilities present within each jurisdiction.

**SUPPORT** the repeal of the statutory ban on the land application of septage set to commence in 2016.

## **WATER RESOURCES**

**Water Funding:** **SUPPORT** legislation that enhances regional and local financial capacity to address water supply development and the flexibility of all available funding sources.

**SUPPORT** the funding of the Water Protection and Sustainability Program within the Department of Environmental Protection for the development of alternative water supplies, water quality improvement projects, and comprehensive water infrastructure needs.

**SUPPORT** sustained commitment of state resources for regional systems of statewide importance, such as rivers, springs and the Everglades. **SUPPORT** renewed funding for alternative water supply projects, conservation, and the TMDL program.

**Water Supply:** **OPPOSE** any shift of the water supply allocation process from publicly regulated to a market driven process. **SUPPORT** the fundamental principles of Florida water law which:

- Requires demonstration that a proposed use of water is a reasonable-beneficial use, will not interfere with an existing legal use of water, and is consistent with the public interest to protect water and related natural resources.
- Establishes a right of use, not a right of ownership.
- Provides for "local sources first" – that is, a county in which water is withdrawn shall not be deprived directly or indirectly of the prior right to reasonable and beneficial use of water to supply the needs of its natural systems, property owners, or inhabitants.

**OPPOSE** any state-wide water commission or "water czar" which would redefine the water supply relationship among the state, water management districts, and local governments.

**SUPPORT** the enhancement of local government participation in the water management district planning, permitting and regulatory processes, including proposed reservations, minimum flows and levels, and recovery and prevention strategies.

**SUPPORT** removal of the current sales tax exemption on bottled water.

**Explanation/Update:** Bills were passed in the 2013 Legislative Session that:

- Authorizes utility companies, private landowners, water consumers, and the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) to enter into cooperation agreements with cities, counties, water management districts and the DEP to meet water supply needs.
- Adds DACS to those entities participating in regional water supply planning pursuant to §373.709. (HB 948)
- Increases permit duration to 30 years for alternative water supply projects, with an additional 7 years possible if bonds are issued to finance the project. (HB 364)
- Includes in water management districts' annual submittal to DEP proposed reservations and a list of water bodies that have the potential to be affected by withdrawals in an adjacent district for which an MFL might be appropriate.
- Provides that water management districts shall apply any reservation, MFL or recovery or prevention strategy adopted by DEP by rule without the district's separate adoption by rule. (SB 244)

**Water Quality:** **SUPPORT** the DEP's Numeric Nutrient Criteria Rule as a replacement for the federally promulgated numeric nutrient criteria, as it provides the necessary protection to the state's waterbodies without imposing unnecessary costs to county governments. **SUPPORT** the DEP's petition to the EPA to rescind their January 2009 determination to promulgate federal numeric nutrient criteria only in Florida.

**SUPPORT** measures to preserve county authority to address water quality problems and the flexibility to craft solutions at the local level.

**Explanation/Update:** Last Session, the Legislature passed SB 1808, which essentially is the State numeric nutrient criteria. The bill also authorized implementation in accordance with the DEP guidance document entitled "Implementation of Florida's Numeric Nutrient Standards."

The Legislature also passed HB 7157, which ratified TMDLs for St. Marks River Basin, Pensacola Bay Basin, Indian River Lagoon, Hillsborough River Basin, Springs Coast Basin and the statewide TMDL for mercury-impaired water bodies; and SB 1806, which provides that future TMDLs will not be subject to the legislative ratification under §120.541(3).

**Fertilizer:** **SUPPORT** the authority of county government to regulate the use and application of fertilizer to protect water quality.

**SUPPORT** the "Florida Green Industries Best Management Practices" as a basic level of water quality protection, with more stringent protection authorized to address water bodies in need.

**SUPPORT** legislation that would allow counties to develop regional approaches to nutrients, fertilizer, and other water quality issues that take into account particular local concerns relating to geology and hydrology.

**Utilities:** **SUPPORT** legislation that encourages and supports "goal-based water conservation initiatives through permit incentives and the use of conservation best management practices developed by the utility industry.

**SUPPORT** legislation that recognizes the responsibility and authority of local government utilities to establish rates and rate structures to allow for flexibility in the provision of services and the sustainable funding of operations.

#### **NEW AND REVISED STATEMENTS**

**Conservation Lands:** **SUPPORT** the authority of county government to purchase and sell conservation lands in accordance with local needs and financial capacity.

**Indian River Lagoon & Lake Okeechobee Basin:** **SUPPORT** state funding for the construction of additional water storage and water quality treatment facilities within the Lake Okeechobee, Caloosahatchee, St. Lucie and Indian River Lagoon watersheds.

**SUPPORT** state funding for domestic wastewater infrastructure that would reduce nutrient loading from septic tanks within the Lake Okeechobee Basin.

**Utility Liens:** **SUPPORT** legislation to amend Section 159.17, Florida Statutes, to authorize counties – as well as municipalities – that issue revenue bonds to place liens on properties served by any water, sewer or gas systems for service charges until paid, which liens shall be prior to and on parity with state, county and municipal tax liens.

**Stormwater Fees:** **SUPPORT** legislation to amend Section 403.0893, Florida Statutes, to provide authorization for stormwater utilities to charge and collect user fees from all beneficiaries of the stormwater utility system.

**Springs Protection:** **SUPPORT** state funding for nutrient load reduction programs within Florida's springsheds. **SUPPORT** state funding for projects that will improve water quantity and water quality within Florida's springsheds.

