

PBC Legislative Update



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Legislative Update—Third Week of Session

STATE ISSUES

APPROPRIATIONS

By: County Staff, Ericks Consultants, and Ron L. Book PA

Both the House and Senate released their overall budget bills this week. The Senate budget is approximately \$80.4 billion, and the House budget totals just under \$76.2 billion. The discrepancy in funding is twofold, and is within the health care arena. The Senate is intent on including funding within the budget to draw down \$2.8 billion in federal aid that would allow the state to extend healthcare coverage to approximately 800,000 uninsured Floridians not eligible for the state's Medicaid program. The Senate has also put forth a bill that would bring additional federal funding to assist hospitals in paying for the indigent care provided. The House has not included these provisions or funding for these, in their budget.

Below are some of the highlights of local items important to Palm Beach County:

BUDGET ITEM TED APPROPS	REQUEST	HOUSE LINE ITEM #	HOUSE ALLOCATION (\$)	SENATE LINE ITEM #	SENATE ALLOCATION (\$)
TORRY ISLAND	75,000				
GLADES ROADS	1,000,000			1927	1,000,000
SMALL CITY TRANSPORTATION FUND s. 288.0656(7)	9,000,000			1911	9,000,000
BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB	1,000,000				
SADOWSKI TRUST FUND	PRESERVE AFFORDABLE HOUSING FUNDS			2240 2241	256,000,000
LIBRARY	27,409,823			3106	22,298,834 (GR) 2,150,606 (TF)
LIBRARY COOPERATIVE	2,000,000	3105	1,700,000	3105	2,000,000
CULTURAL AND MUSEUMS GRANTS		3118	10,977,000	3118	5,000,000
CULTURAL PROJECTS		3123A	18,839,581	3123A	13,341,874
CULTURAL ENDOWMENTS		3118A	1,920,000	3118A	960,000

WPB-BROADWAY					
LW PARK OF COMMERCE	7,500,000			1927	2,500,000
NORTON MUSEUM	2,000,000	3123A	155,000	3123A	1,000,000
SPADY MUSEUM					
PAHOKEE MARINA	1,300,000			2233A	1,300,000
PAHOKEE MARINA - FEMA	200,000			2567	107,321
LAKE O SCENIC TRAIL	1,000,000				
GATEWAY REDEVELOPMENT ROADWAY	506,000			1927	506,000
VILLAGE OF TEQUESTA TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES				1927	200,000

BUDGET ITEM ED APPROPS	REQUEST	HOUSE LINE ITEM #	HOUSE ALLOCATION (\$)	SENATE LINE ITEM #	SENATE ALLOCATION (\$)
WESTTECH	1,471,714			106	1,400,000
INLAND PORT ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE - SOUTH BAY	470,900			2249A PROVISO	470,900
MAX PLANCK	2,000,000	138	500,000		
FAU TECH RUNWAY	3,000,000	2249A	3,000,000	2249B	1,000,000
FAU MED SCHOOL		145	22,609,894 GR: 14,337,889 TRUST FUND: 8,272,005		22,161,778 GR: 13,889,773; TRUST FUND: 8,272,005
FAU JUPITER BIOSCIENCE GATEWAY		138	400,000		
FAU JUPITER RESEARCH BUILDING RENOVATION	29,000,000	21	14,650,000		
PBSC LOX CAMPUS	9,000,000	20	2,004,182		
STEM FUNDING		99	\$4,000,000	99	\$4,000,000

BUDGET ITEM GG APPROPS	REQUEST	HOUSE LINE ITEM #	HOUSE ALLOCATION (\$)	SENATE LINE ITEM #	SENATE ALLOCATION (\$)
WATER PROJECTS			80,589,000		0
GLADES REGION WATER INFRASTRUCTURE	3,000,000		PROVISO PENDING		
LW LAGOON	3,300,000		PROVISO PENDING		
FRESHWATER LAKE RESTORATION	165,000		PROVISO PENDING		

BEACH & INLET FUND	29,346,860		40,000,000	1647	25,000,000
-CORAL COVE PARK DUNE RESTORATION	425k				
- JUPITER/CARLIN SHORE PROTECTION	100k	1647	100k		
-JUNO BEACH SHORE PROTECTION	8,875				
-CENTRAL PBC EROSION CONTROL	172k				
-SOUTH LW INLET MGMT	55,663				
-OCEAN RIDGE SHORE PROTECTION	51,300	1647	51,300		
-BOCA RATON NORTH BEACH SHORE PROTECTION	234,700	1647	233,650— 106,150; 127,500 FOR MONITORING		
-BOCA RATON CENTRAL BEACH SHORE PROTECTION	3,908,900		1.7M		
-BOCA RATON SOUTH BEACH SHORE PROTECTION	886,400		820,375		
-BOCA RATON INLET	384,300	1647	384.3k		
-LW INLET MAINTENANCE DREDGING	46,500	1647	46.5k		
-MIDTOWN BEACH RESTORATION	7,487,604				
-PHIPPS PARK RESTORATION	6,851,793				
LOXAHATCHEE RIVER INITIATIVE	2,186,785		PROVISO PENDING		
EVERGLADES RESTORATION	SUPPORT 100M APPROPRIATION REQUEST	1621	132M; 100M FROM SAVE OUR EVERGLADES TRUST; 32M FROM LAND ACQ TRUST FUND	1620- 1621	79,000,000
FRDAP		1711A	29,020,591	1711- 1712	7,000,000
CORBETT DIKE	4,000,000				

BUDGET ITEM CJ APPROPS	REQUEST	HOUSE LINE ITEM#	HOUSE ALLOCATION (\$)	SENATE LINE ITEM #	SENATE ALLOCATION (\$)
SHARED DETENTION COST SPLIT	50/50 WITH PARTIAL PAYBACK		57 - COUNTY 43 - STATE		60 - COUNTY 40 - STATE
LIGHTING IN HIGH CRIME AREAS	200,000				
OFFICE FURNITURE, STATE ATTORNEY (CIRCUIT 15)	76,006				76,006
PROSECUTION OF PIP FRAUD		908 2424	1,559,239	2424	1,559,239
CONSTRUCTION 4TH DCA BUILDING	16,784,446	3160	6,508,689	3160	16,784,446
SOUTH BAY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY		715	2,908,779	715	5,050,143
SAGO PALM WORK CAMP		715	1,473,375	715	1,473,375

BUDGET ITEM HHS APPROPS	REQUEST	HOUSE LINE ITEM#	HOUSE ALLOCATION (\$)	SENATE LINE ITEM #	SENATE ALLOCATION (\$)
TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED		1868	50,783,704	1868	52,783,704
JEROME GOLDEN 12-BED FACILITY	575,000	377L	575,000		
CHILDNET— CLOSE FOSTER FUNDING DEFICIT	3,200,000				
COMMUNITY BASED CHILD WELFARE RISK POOL	5,000,000	308	13,000,000	308	13,000,000
EXTENDED FOSTER CARE					
ALZHEIMER'S COMMUNITY CARE	1,000,000	391	500,000		
CARIDAD CENTER	1,800,000				
PLACE OF HOPE	3,250,000				
RUTH & NORMAN RALES JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES	250,000				
ALPERT JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES	342,000				
SOUTH COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH CENTER	500,000				
SCRIPPS	5,000,000			2249A	1,000,000
PB HABILITATION CENTER FOR MENTALLY DISABLED	694,111	253A	649,111		649,111
PDMP		503	500,000		
PACE (MORSE) EXPANSION FOR ELDERLY		400	2,917,584		

ENVIRONMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS

By: Anfield

This week, after receiving allocations from their presiding officers, the House and Senate subcommittees released the “Chairman’s” budget proposals for the upcoming fiscal year. There are significant differences between the chambers with regard to the total funds dedicated to agriculture and natural resource management agencies. With respect to key environmental program and initiatives, the Chair’s allocations are as follows:

Program	House	Senate
Florida Forever / Land Acquisition	\$205,000,000	\$ 22,000,000
Everglades Restoration	\$100,000,000	\$ 79,000,000
Everglades Restoration (Incl. IRL)	\$ 33,000,000	\$ 0
Northern Everglades, WQ & Estuaries Projects	\$ 20,167,551	\$ 3,000,000
Springs Protection	\$ 55,215,853	\$ 50,000,000
Alternative Water Supply	\$ 50,000,000	\$ 50,000,000
Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Program	\$ 95,863,107	\$ 88,422,307
Wastewater Revolving Loan Program	\$191,128,531	\$181,210,531
Small County Wastewater Treatment Grants	\$ 16,000,000	\$ 16,000,000
Total Maximum Daily Loads	\$ 9,385,000	\$ 9,385,000
DACS “Water Farming” Lake O. Basin	\$ 7,000,000	\$ 0
DACS BMP’s Implementation	\$ 5,500,000	\$ 1,900,000
DACS Hybrid Wetland Treatment Program	\$ 6,200,000	\$ 0
Non-point Source Management	\$ 17,300,000	\$ 3,000,000
Keys Wastewater Treatment	\$ 25,000,000	\$ 0
Beach Restoration	\$ 40,000,000	\$ 25,000,000
Petroleum Tank Clean-up	\$110,000,000	\$110,000,000
Dry Cleaning Solvent Clean-up	\$ 6,500,000	\$ 6,500,000
Local Water Projects	\$ 80,589,000	\$ 0
Transfer to DOT for Trails	\$ 0	\$ 25,000,000

As summarized below, with respect to funds associated with the Land Acquisition and Management Trust Fund (**Amendment 1**), the chambers took different approaches towards the expenditure of the funds.

Agency	House	Senate
Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services	\$125,104,703	\$ 89,525,015
Department of Environmental Protection	\$505,316,871	\$504,006,631
Fish and Wildlife Commission	\$ 98,975,597	\$120,662,794
	\$729,397,171	\$714,154,400

Next week (4th week) both chambers will consider and amend these proposals in the full appropriations committees prior to floor action. Once each chamber approves their versions of the State budget they will be in a posture to commence budget conference (reconcile the difference) as soon as the presiding officers agree on allocations within each area of the budget. This is not anticipated to happen until week 7 at the earliest.

Entertainment Industry Tax Credit

By: Ericks Consultants and Corcoran & Johnston

HB 451, relating to Entertainment Industry Tax Credit Program, by Representative Miller, passed 11-2 in the House Economic Development & Tourism Subcommittee this. Members of the committee recognized the need to compete with other states to encourage the industry to base its productions in Florida and commended hard work of the sponsor.

This legislation is similar to the Senate plan by Senator Detert, which eliminates the Florida Film and Entertainment Advisory Council and renames the Office of Film and Entertainment to the Division of Film and Entertainment, while simultaneously moving the entity to Enterprise Florida. The Division will accept applications twice a year and there is an allocation of \$50 million in tax credits as well as extension of the program also provided for, under the provisions of this legislation. The bill also allows the Governor to approve up to \$2 million in tax credits, by way of a Production Action Fund.

HB 451 was opposed by Americans For Prosperity, and members of the committee also took issue with some of the tactics used by the group to influence their vote on the bill. The bill has two more committees in the House. Its Senate companion, which differs significantly, also has two more committees.

AMENDMENT 1

By: Ericks Consultants

Senate and House Appropriations approved the differing Senate and House versions of Amendment 1 implementation respectively. The House bill 1291 does not impact funding for affordable housing and transportation trust funds. The Senate bill originally would have reduced the transportation trust fund by \$100 million and the affordable housing trust fund by \$100 million, however the committee adopted an amendment to keep the percentage distributions at the trust fund funding levels prior to the amendment passing. The amendment was adopted with a high amount of support from the committee and the public. Both bills are now ready to go before the full Chambers.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING/SHIP AND SAIL

By: Corcoran & Johnston

This week, in the Senate Transportation & Economic Development meeting, Chairman Latvala explained that the distribution on housing money is currently split 60% for SHIP and 40% for SAIL and that they want to provide a more even ratio this year.

The Florida Finance Corporation explained that State Apartment Incentive Loan (SAIL) is for rental and State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) was for homeownership. They stated that of the SHIP money 65% is required for homeownership and 10% goes to administrative, of the remaining quarter, a local government can decide to use it for rental or homeownership, but most use it for homeownership.

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

By: Corcoran & Johnston

On Tuesday, the House Children, Families, and Seniors Subcommittee convened to hold a workshop on mental health and substance abuse, in hopes of rolling out a bill next week. Representative Harrell gave an in-depth overview of their goals with this bill.

In her introduction, Chair Harrell was quoted as saying, "Dealing with mental health and substance abuse spans across many different aspects of government, it is multi-faceted and pulling everything together is not easy. Mental health severely affects the childcare system. There are difficult decisions that need to be made and I am not sure we will have excess funds for this issue this year. We have heard lots of good ideas, but I don't want to start new pilot programs until we truly understand the problems and the process. We do not need Band-Aids; we need surgery."

HOMELESSNESS

By: Ericks Consultants

The Senate Children, Families and Elder Affairs unanimously approved a homelessness package after making several amendments to the bill. SB 1500 would allow counties and eligible municipalities to use SHIP funds for rental assistance in cases of homelessness and disability and remove the requirement to dedicate 65% of funds to home ownership. The bill would encourage the involvement of Lead Agencies in the SHIP process and provide Lead Agencies with 4% of revenue from the Local Government Housing Trust Fund with performance goal requirements. It would require, instead of allow, the Office of Homelessness to administer Challenge

Grants. It would have Challenge Grant award levels take into account degrees of homelessness rather than just population. The original bill would have required the implementation of a statewide Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), however the committee amended the bill to instead establish a taskforce to make recommendations on implementation of a statewide HMIS. The bill has two more committees in the Senate. Its House companion has not been heard in its first of three committees.

CHILD NET

By: County Staff

County staff and Commissioner Melissa McKinlay met with House HHS Appropriations Chair Matt Hudson this week to discuss several issues related to Child Net and foster care services. While the House did not fund the program under the formula proposed by the CBCs, the House did include \$13 million in their appropriations bill for risk pool funding that was \$8 million more than requested. This funding model is intended to provide back end funding for a local provider if increases in service are required throughout the fiscal year.

DJJ DETENTION COSTS

By: County Staff

The House Justice Appropriations Subcommittee passed a measure that would require counties to pay 57% of juvenile detention costs, with the state paying the remaining 43%. County Commissioner Melissa McKinlay testified in committee on the history of the program and the desire for a resolution this session. Counties are seeking a 50-50 split, as well as reimbursement for their past overpayments. Last year, a bill that would have created such a split died on the final day of session amid disagreement over \$140 million in funds back owed to counties. This year, neither chamber has set aside money for reimbursement.

ENTERPRISE ZONES

By: Ericks Consultants

Senate Finance & Tax began a discussion on Enterprise Zones with several members voicing support for continuing the program. The committee did not get very detailed but plans to continue the discussion next week.

SOBER HOMES

By: Ericks Consultants and Ron L. Book, PA

Neither bill was heard this week. (SB 326 by Senator Clemens, HB 21 by Representative Hager) A proposed committee substitute was filed in the Senate this week that once passed, will make the bills virtually identical.

The legislation instructs DCF to approve a credentialing entity to develop and administer a voluntary certification program, including background checks for recovery residence operators. The bill would require DCF to publish a list of certified residences on its website.

AGRITOURISM

By: Ron L. Book, PA

The House and Senate are poised to pass a bill that would preempt local governments from enforcing ordinances and regulations that prohibit or restrict agritourism, such as field trips and weddings, on bona fide agricultural lands. The bill is in response to two counties that continued to enforce agritourism ordinances after a 2013 law prohibiting the adoption of such ordinances.

PRIVATE PROPERTY

By: Ericks Consultants

The House Local Government Affairs Subcommittee unanimously voted to provide a cause of action in situations when state and local government impose unconstitutional exactions on a private property owner, as there is with the Federal government. HB 383 would also allow for Bert Harris Safe Harbor provisions to apply whether or not a settlement agreement was reached within 150 days. The committee adopted amendments that better clarified definitions and intent of the bill- specifying that only property that is directly affected could qualify for the cause of action and that an exaction is unconstitutional only if it lacks a nexus to a legitimate public purpose. Florida League of Cities and Florida Association of Counties expressed concern over expansion of the Koontz ruling, worried it could expose local-level governments to frivolous suits. The Florida Chamber supported the bill. The Chair made clear that the bill language still has work. The bill has two more committees in the House. Its Senate companion has not been filed.

HAZARDOUS WALKING

By: Ron L. Book, PA and Ericks Consultants

The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Education unanimously approved SB 154 that would revise the process by which hazardous walking conditions for school children are identified and addressed by enhancing cooperation between the school district and local government. The Florida School Board Association testified in support of the bill despite the possible financial impact of increased demand on transportation but asked that certain successful interlocal plans not be preempted. The Florida Association of Counties also testified in support of the bill and reiterated the importance of exempting certain interlocal agreements that have proved successful. One Senator stated that she would like the bill to recognize the variances between urban and rural counties. The bill has one more committee stop in the Senate. Its House companion is scheduled next week in its second of three committees.

LOW VOLTAGE ALARM SYSTEMS

By: Ericks Consultants

The Senate Community Affairs approved SB 466 that would reduce the maximum amount a local government may charge for permit fees for low-voltage alarm systems from \$55 to \$40. It would also prohibit local governments from charging any additional fees for the installation of a new or replacement of an old system. The bill also clarifies that a wireless alarm system does not require a permit. The Florida League of Cities testified in opposed the lowering of the permit fee and warned that the reduction could cause other permit fees to rise in order to cover administrative costs. Comcast, AT&T, Associated Industries of Florida and ADT support the legislation. The bill has one more committee of reference in the Senate. Its House companion is now ready to go before the full House.

PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS

By: Ericks Consultants

The House Finance & Tax committee unanimously voted to increase property tax exemptions for widows, widowers, blind persons and persons permanently disabled from \$500 to \$5,000. State economists estimated a \$41 million impact to local governments statewide. The exemption would not be implemented until 2016. HB 173 has one more committee of reference in the House. It does not have a Senate companion.

VALUE ADJUSTMENT BOARDS SB 972/HB 695

By: Ericks Consultants

The Senate Committee on Community Affairs unanimously voted to reform the VAB

proceedings based on OPPAGA recommendations in order to shorten the process and provide school districts, special districts and local governments predictability in their budget planning. The United Way of Miami Dade and Miami Dade County supported the bill in committee. Meanwhile, the House Finance & Tax committee voted 10-6 to approve its House companion after adopting an amendment to the bill. Members of the committee and public, expressed concerns over removing local officials from the VAB which have an interest in the budget funded by the petitioning taxpayer and replacing them with appointments from the local Legislative Delegation. Others had concerns over provisions related to homestead exemption fraud. Property appraisers expressed technical concerns as well as concern over tilting the appeals process in favor of "tax reps" who represent petitioning taxpayers. All stakeholders agreed with the underlying purpose of the bill despite concerns and pledged to continue working together on the final product. Both the Senate and House bill have two more committees each.

GLEANING

By: Ericks Consultants

The House Civil Justice Subcommittee unanimously approved a bill to reduce civil liability for farmers who gratuitously allow people onto their property to harvest excess food. The bill would still hold farmers liable for not warning about a known danger that would not be obvious to anyone entering the property. The bill has one more committee in the House and is scheduled for its final committee of reference next week. Its Senate companion, SB 158, is on 3rd reading next week in the Senate.

COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES TAX

By: Ericks Consultants and Ron L. Book PA

The Senate Committee on Finance & Tax unanimously passed HB 110 that would reduce the Communications Services Tax, a priority of the Governor's. The amendment also raises the distribution of revenues levied by the tax that go towards local government share of the tax in order to hold local governments harmless. The communications industry and other business and consumer representatives supported the bill, as did the Florida Association of Counties and Florida League of Cities. The bill has an estimated recurring impact to the State of \$470 million. The bill has one more committee of reference in the Senate. Its House companion has not yet been filed.

PENSION REFORM

By: Ericks Consultants and Ron L. Book, PA

The House Speaker released a memo this week stating that he will not pursue FRS reform in the 2015 Legislative Session, due to the release of a study that shows the cost of requiring new state employees to move to a 401(k) system, to be much higher than anticipated. The Speaker's office did not rule out looking into reforms in 2016. The Senate has not had an appetite for FRS reform in recent years and there have been no indications of that changing

HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES

By: Ericks Consultants

The House Insurance & Banking Subcommittee voted 10-3 to approve HB 681 that would address costs for patients receiving out-of-network services. The committee adopted a strike-all amendment, which successfully removed a significant financial impact on local governments. The bill has two more committees of reference in the House. Its Senate companion, that still has the transportation provisions that affect local governments, has not yet been heard in its first of three committees. It is expected to be amended to conform to the House bill once it is.

REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCILS

By: Ron L. Book, PA

SB 484 by Senator Simpson (the House companion is HB 873 by Representative Mayfield) as originally filed would have eliminated the 11 Regional Planning Councils. Senator Simpson offered a strike-everything amendment that would reduce the RPCs from 11 to 10, eliminate duties that are duplicative and obsolete, authorizes the legislature to be responsible for a boundary review of the RPCs, and funds the RPCs with \$2.5 million as has been allocated in past years. The bill passed the Committee on Community Affairs by a vote of 7 – 0. The House companion, HB 873 has not been heard.

GAMING

By: Ron L. Book, PA

HB 1233 by Representative Young – This is an omnibus gaming bill that comprehensively addresses gaming in Florida. This bill is expected to be work shopped next week. The bill does the following:

- Allows two destination resort licenses for Florida. The bill provides incentives for resort casinos to buy existing permits instead of obtaining new ones. Those casinos would also have to make a \$2 billion capital investment and pay a minimum of \$175 million in taxes per year, gain the support of local governments via referendum. 10 % of the resort casino's floor space would be dedicated to games.
- Decouples greyhound racing and gambling.
- Dog tracks would be required to report animal injuries
- Creates a new Department of Gaming Control that would oversee all gambling related activities. This would replace and expand on the Division of Pari-Mutuel Wagering and would be funded through a new trust fund created by HB 1237
- Reduces existing pari-mutuel tax rate from 35 % to 25 %
- Ends all tax credits for dog tracks and allows four tracks to operate in the state
- Palm Beach and Lee counties could also operate slot machines at their dog tracks or at stand- alone facilities. (Each county has passed a referendum for slot machines.)
- Create a moratorium on new gambling permits.

FRACKING SB 1209/HB 1205

By: Ericks Consultants

The House Agriculture and Natural Resources Subcommittee voted 10-2 to set up a regulatory framework that would allow high-pressure well stimulation or “fracking” in the state of Florida. The bill would give DEP rulemaking and permitting authority and prohibit local governments from adopting their own permitting process. Over 30 members of the public expressed opposition to the bill. Members of the committee argued that the bill sets up strict regulations for the practice. The same committee voted 8-4 to exempt from public records “proprietary business information” in connection with the chemical disclosure registry created in the framework legislation. The bills have two more committees each in the House. Their Senate companions have not yet been heard in the first of three committees.

DEVELOPMENTS OF REGIONAL IMPACT

By: Ericks Consultants

The Senate Committee on Transportation voted 6-1 to approve SB 562 that would remove the mandate of a DRI review process for new developments. The bill would also shift comprehensive plan amendments related to the development from the Expedited State Review Process to the State Coordinated Review Process, which has a longer review period and has all comments coordinated by DEO rather than submitted directly to the local government. The Florida Association of Counties and Environmental Caucus of Florida opposed the bill. The Florida League of Cities testified that some of its members have concerns that they hoped to work with the sponsor on addressing. The Florida Community Developers Inc. supported it. The bill has one more committee of reference in the Senate. Its House companion has not yet been heard in its first of three committees of reference.

PREEMPTION OF LOCAL PREFERENCE IN CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

By: Corcoran & Johnston and Ericks Consultants

HB 113 that would preempt local preference ordinances for construction projects that are funded 50% with state dollars moved through committees along party lines in both the House and Senate this week. The Senate Governmental Oversight and Accountability voted 3-2 and House Appropriations voted 19-9 to approve the legislation. The bill is a top priority for the Florida Associated Builders and Contractors. Members who supported the bill argued in favor of free markets and claimed that local preferences are discriminatory and force taxpayers to pay higher prices. The Florida League of Cities and Florida Association of Counties testified that local preferences were vital economic development tools. The Florida AFL-CIO and Florida Electrical Workers Association also opposed the bill. Rep. Kevin Rader argued passionately that passage of this bill would run contrary to programs that encourage governments to hire locally. The House bill has one more committee of reference before going to the full House. The Senate bill will be heard in its final committee of reference next week.

MEMBERSHIP ASSOCIATIONS THAT RECEIVE PUBLIC FUNDS

By: Ericks Consultants

House and Senate Committees voted along party lines to prohibit membership associations whose membership includes elected or appointed public officials and whose budget is funded 25% or more by taxpayer dollars from entering into litigation against the state. HB 1114 would also put transparency requirements on the associations, including a detailed report of membership dues, assets and liabilities, salaries of certain employees, benefits packages, and disbursements for lobbying and litigation to be sent to the Legislature annually. The bill excludes labor organizations. The bill is largely in response to current litigation by the Florida School Board Association against the state. The bill sponsors argued transparency requirements were comparable to that of a 990 form and that the bill did not preclude litigation but prevented the use of taxpayer dollars in litigation. The bill is supported by Americans For Prosperity. The Florida League of Cities expressed concerns with restricting the right to litigation. Both the House and Senate bill have one committee stop each.

REDUCED FEES FOR COUNTY & MUNICIPAL PARKS AND TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITIES

By: Ericks Consultants

The House Local Government Affairs Subcommittee unanimously passed HB 1095 which would require regional transportation authorities to offer partial or full discount on fares to disabled veterans as well as discounted entrance fees to military members, veterans, & spouses & parents of certain deceased military members, law enforcement officers, & firefighters. The South Florida Regional Transportation Authority supports the bill. The bill has one more committee of reference in the House. Its Senate companion is scheduled in its first of three committees next week.

EMERGENCY FIRE RESCUE SERVICES AND FACILITIES SURTAX

By: Ericks Consultants

The House Finance & Tax Committee approved HB 209 that would revise the Emergency Fire Rescue Services and Facilities Surtax to distribute the revenue to all providers in a county that adopts the surtax, rather than only providers that enter into an interlocal agreement with the county. The bill would provide local government providers with an amount of revenue from the surtax that's proportionate to their annual expenditures for fire control and emergency fire rescue services from the preceding five years. The local government must reduce their millage rate the same amount in order to make the legislation revenue neutral. The Palm Beach County Firefighters supported the bill. It is now ready to go before the full House. Its Senate companion has two more committees of reference in the Senate.

PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTION FOR PUBLIC TRANSIT PROVIDERS

By: Ericks Consultants

The House unanimously passed a bill exempting personal identifying information held by a public transit provider to facilitate prepaid transit fare cards. The legislation is supported by the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority and the Florida Public Transit Association. Its Senate companion is ready for first passage in the Senate.

GRANDPARENTS RIGHTS

By: Ericks Consultants

HB 149 that would give grandparents and great grandparents of deceased, vegetative state, and felon parents the right to petition the courts for visitation rights passed its final House committee stop and is now ready to go before the full House. The committee adopted a few amendments that added some additional protections for parents, including specifying acts parents must commit before a grandparent could petition for rights as well as requiring mediation prior to the final hearing. Florida Retired Americans Association, Florida Coalition of Children, AARP, Grandparents as Parents of Florida and Palm Beach County support the bill. The Senate companion has three more committees of reference.

CITY OF WEST PALM BEACH FIREFIGHTER PENSION

By: County Staff

On Wednesday, HB 1167 by Rep. Dave Kerner, a local bill that would amend the West Palm Beach Firefighter Pension Special Act, passed out of the House Local Government Affairs Subcommittee by a unanimous vote. The changes made by this bill are the result of a collective bargaining agreement between the City of West Palm Beach and International Association of Firefighters Local 727. The bill defines "Fire Chief" as the executive officer for the City of West Palm Beach Fire Department and provides the chief with modified pension benefits. This legislation also provides that a portion of the chapter 175 premium taxes must be used to reduce the employee contributions and the remainder must be allocated to the member share accounts.

HB 1167 has been placed on the House Government Operations Subcommittee agenda to be heard on Tuesday, March 24th.

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PALM BEACH COUNTY BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

By: County Staff

On Wednesday, HB 1253 by Rep. Pat Rooney, a local bill that would establish the School District of Palm Beach County Business Partnership Program, passed out of the House Local Government Affairs Subcommittee by a unanimous vote. This bill removes the need for periodic renewal of the pilot program that was established by



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the Legislature in 2008. It would continue to allow schools in the unincorporated areas of Palm Beach County to recognize its business partners by displaying the names of the partners on school property. In return for having their names publicly displayed, the partners fund programs such as Project Graduation and extracurricular activities.

HB 1263 has been placed on the House K-12 Subcommittee agenda to be heard on Tuesday, March 24th.

PALM BEACH COUNTY CLAIMS BILL

By: County Staff

The claims bill for the relief of Javier Soria by Palm Beach County will be on the agenda for next week. The bill would provide for an uncontested settlement in the amount of \$101,800 to Mr. Soria, who was injured by a county vehicle in Delray Beach.

UP NEXT WEEK IN TALLAHASSEE:

TNC (Uber) Insurance

<http://flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2015/1298/BillText/Filed/PDF>

Local Government Amendments to Building Code

<http://flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2015/0592/BillText/Filed/PDF>

Commercial Leases

<http://flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2015/0140/BillText/Filed/PDF>

Impact Fee Alternative

<http://flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2015/0850/BillText/Filed/PDF>

Employer Contributions to FRS

<http://flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2015/7038/BillText/Filed/PDF>

Location of Utilities- Strike All

<http://flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2015/0896/Amendment/885778/PDF>

Public Works Projects Preemption

<http://flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2015/0934/BillText/c1/PDF>

Flood Insurance

<http://flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2015/1094/BillText/c1/PDF>

Mental Health

<http://flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2015/0476/BillText/Filed/PDF>

Discounted Fares for Vets

<http://flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2015/1430/BillText/Filed/PDF>

Hemp Production

<http://flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2015/0902/BillText/Filed/PDF>

Controlled Substances

<http://flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2015/1098/BillText/Filed/PDF>

Kratom

<http://flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2015/0287/BillText/Filed/PDF>

Government Accountability

<http://flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2015/1063/BillText/Filed/PDF>

Local Preferences in Construction

<http://flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2015/0778/BillText/c2/PDF>

Hazardous Walking

<http://flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2015/0041/BillText/c1/PDF>

Gleaning

<http://flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2015/0158/BillText/Filed/PDF>

Fracking

<http://flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2015/1209/BillText/c1/PDF>

Petroleum Restoration

<http://flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2015/0733/BillText/Filed/PDF>

Public Records

<http://flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2015/0163/BillText/c2/PDF>

Amendment 1 on Special Order

Enterprise Zones discussion

Anchoring & Mooring Workshop