

PALM BEACH COUNTY

2022 STATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

GENERAL GOVERNMENT ISSUES



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FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

As a member of the Florida Association of Counties (FAC), Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** the FAC Legislative Program and Guiding Principles unless issues specifically conflict with Palm Beach County position.

COUNTY COALITION FOR RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT OF LAKE OKEECHOBEE

As a member, Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** the 2022 State Legislative Priorities of the 16 County Coalition, unless issues specifically conflict with Palm Beach County position.

SOUTHEAST FLORIDA REGIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE COMPACT

As a member, Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact 2022 State Climate, Energy and Resilience Legislative Principles unless issues specifically conflict with Palm Beach County position.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GLADES REGIONAL INITIATIVES

In an effort to provide economic growth and stimulus to the region surrounding Lake Okeechobee, Palm Beach County has identified several legislative issues that will promote economic development and job creation in the Glades Region. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS**:

- Legislative initiatives and funding to implement components of the Glades Region Master Plan, which include:
 - Improvements to existing affordable housing units, as well as the development of new affordable housing units
 - Storm water improvements to enhance economic and housing development, as well as improve water quality and prevent flooding
 - Mitigation of muck soils that result in construction cost premiums for buildings, infrastructure and roads
- The continuation and enhancement of Small County Outreach Program (SCOP) funding for road reconstruction and repaving
- Continuation of funding for the Everglades Restoration Agricultural Community Employment Training Program
- Funding to ensure that the Glades Region has appropriate shelter facilities for emergencies
- Funding for youth violence prevention programs
- Funding to help improve infrastructure surrounding agricultural communities
- Legislation to help farmers in their efforts to produce fruits and vegetables for our country and our community

RURAL JOBS TAX CREDIT

This existing rural jobs tax credit is provided to new or expanding employers in Rural Area of Opportunity (RAO) counties (includes Belle Glade, Pahokee and South Bay). It is valued up to \$1,000 per new job and is good for a two-year period, plus a 5-year carry-forward period. Depending on the number of current employees, an existing business has to have created at least 20 percent more jobs or 10 new employees one year prior to the date of application. No pre-approval is needed prior to the company's decision to locate in the RAO county. This credit may only be taken against the Florida Corporate Income Tax or Sales and Use Tax owed by the company to the State.

A revised Rural Jobs Tax Credit should provide the following:

- Does not require a minimum number of jobs be created at a new eligible business.
- Up to a \$2,500 tax credit for a new eligible business.
- At an existing business with less than 50 employees, for a 10 percent increase in the number of employees, allow up to a \$2,000 tax credit per job created.
- At an existing business with 50 or more employees, allow a \$1,500 tax credit per job created if the business adds at least 5 new employees.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** enhancement of the rural jobs tax credit.

FLORIDA'S FILM, TELEVISION, AND DIGITAL MEDIA

Florida's entertainment industry generates thousands of jobs for Florida workers, brings substantial new money to our local communities, spawns financial investment and tourism throughout the state, and can be an integral part of Florida's economic recovery.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** the performance-based Targeted Rebate Program. Only projects that provide the highest return on investment and economic benefits in Florida would qualify requiring a \$1.5 million minimum spend, 70% film days in the state, 60% FL cast and crew with bonuses to encourage family-friendly projects, filming in underutilized areas, hiring Florida graduates and military veterans.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** programs to retain Florida's professionals and new graduates in these industries, thereby building the confidence to stay in Florida and move onto gainful high-skill, high-wage employment.

Palm Beach County also **SUPPORTS** the Film and Television Commission's education initiative, The Palm Beaches Student Showcase of Films, Florida's largest student film competition and award show.

BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH FUNDING

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** new and recurring funding for educational programs produced by local universities and state colleges and their partnership such as Max Planck and Scripps of Florida. Biomedical research funding is beneficial to not only the residents of Palm Beach County, but to residents nationwide.

ENTERPRISE FLORIDA

Palm Beach County will continue to **MONITOR** the discussions regarding the future of Enterprise Florida. In an effort to continue the provision of resources to assist Palm Beach County's Office of Housing and Economic Sustainability, the Business Development Board and the Florida Sports Foundation, the state's economic development toolkit should be funded in a manner that supports continued economic growth and financial stability for regional businesses and those seeking to relocate to our area. Sports tourism should remain a key component of this support.

JOB GROWTH GRANT FUND

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** continued funding for the Florida Job Growth Grant Fund (Section 288.101, F.S.) or other incentive programs to support the development of infrastructure and workforce training related to the expansion of economic development throughout the state.

VISIT FLORIDA

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** full funding for Visit Florida, and **SUPPORTS** removal of agency's sunset provision. Additionally, **SUPPORT** funding to help offset natural occurrences that may affect loss in tourism.

BLUEWAY TRAIL

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** the continued development of the Blueway Trail within the chain of lakes, and will **MONITOR** any state funding proposals to enhance the ecotourism project.

EQUESTRIAN TOURISM

From Wellington to Ocala to Pensacola, the equine industry makes a dramatic impact on the local economies hosting various multi-week events. The Florida Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services estimates that the Florida horse industry generates an annual \$6.8 billion impact on the gross domestic product of Florida, providing more than 244,000 jobs in the State. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** promoting our equestrian industries as well as the investment of State tourism dollars for promotion of "Equine-Tourism" throughout the state.

PEANUT ISLAND

Peanut Island is a 79-acre island at the mouth of the Lake Worth inlet that was created by dredging related projects in 1918, which also created the inlet and the Port of Palm Beach. A \$13 million renovation on the island in 2005 resulted in Peanut Island Park including campsites, a pier, and a man-made reef and picnic sites.

On the island is the historic U.S. Coast Guard Lake Worth Inlet Station significant for its role in coastal defense and rescue activities during the early months of World War II, and for its involvement in the events of the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1961 and 1962. An abandoned fallout shelter is located on a contiguous parcel of property. The fallout shelter, known at the Kennedy Bunker and built in secrecy by the Navy Seabees, was to serve as a command center for President John F. Kennedy, should there have been a nuclear attack while he

was visiting his family's nearby Palm Beach home. The shelter has been owned by the Port of Palm Beach District since May 1971. It was open for tours for several years, but was closed in October 2017.

The facility has fallen into disrepair and the Port is looking to lease the property in an effort to restore this rich part of American history and revitalize the area's legacy of ecotourism by renovating and restoring these historic facilities. It is anticipated that the restoration of the building would cost approximately \$5 million. **SUPPORT** funding of \$1.5 million to assist in the restoration efforts of Peanut Island's historic properties.

COVID-19

SUPPORT continued funding for statewide COVID-19 testing and vaccination distribution. Prioritize Palm Beach County, as one of the largest population centers with the highest concentration of senior residents in Florida, for vaccine distribution. Support continued allocation of funding for farmworker testing and vaccination to safeguard this valuable workforce for one of the state's largest industries. Support funding distributions from the Federal American Rescue Plan or similar legislation that would provide additional resources for local governments and businesses around the state. **SUPPORT** local government's ability to adequately respond to emerging pandemic related emergencies.

SUBSTANCE USE AND MENTAL HEALTH

SUBSTANCE USE AND MENTAL HEALTH FUNDING

The human and economic costs of untreated substance use and mental illness in our state continue to rise. Often these issues arise as a result of unaddressed trauma. These costs include the criminalization of people with untreated mental illnesses, family erosion, substance use, job loss, domestic violence, homelessness, medical problems, crime and suicide. Florida must do more to invest and fund community-based and integrated mental healthcare and trauma informed care. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** increased funding for the region's managing entity, the South East Florida Behavioral Health Network, to be utilized by care systems working collaboratively to reduce opioid use and addiction disorder, reduce suicides especially in young people, raise awareness, and create overall safer communities.

If the State of Florida receives lawsuit settlement dollars related to opioid and substance use cases, Palm Beach County encourages the state to set aside a portion of the settlement proceeds for a research and development grant program related to opioid use and addiction in general.

Palm Beach County also **SUPPORTS** funding efforts by the legislature for additional beds and treatment programs for mental health and substance use disorders with an emphasis on youth services and expectant mothers.

Palm Beach County also **SUPPORTS** funding efforts by the legislature for trauma informed care education and treatment, mental health awareness programs to reduce stigmatization and youth suicide prevention programs.

Palm Beach County also **SUPPORTS** funding efforts by the legislature for evidence-based public therapeutic recreation programs in the treatment and prevention of chronic health conditions including substance use and mental illness.

OPIOID AND SUBSTANCE USE

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** policy changes, as well as appropriations, to support providing life-saving interventions, medically-assisted detoxification programs, location for expectant mothers to decrease the risk of complications and birth defects due to opioid and substance use, and diversions from the criminal justice system for those suffering from opioid addiction.

SOBER HOMES

The Palm Beach County Sober Homes Task Force was created in 2016 to monitor operation of unregulated “sober homes,” prosecute fraudulent treatment and marketing practices, and recommend changes to laws and regulations for the protection of vulnerable people in recovery. In 2017, there were 642 opioid overdose deaths, according to figures released by the Palm Beach County Medical Examiner. Through efforts of the Task Force, in 2018, based on numbers from the Medical Examiner, opioid overdose deaths declined approximately 40%. However, Overdose deaths increased by 10% in 2019, from 401 to 446, and are currently on pace to increase another 20% in 2020, according to the Palm Beach County Medical Examiner’s Office. These increases are reflected both statewide and nationally and appear to be fueled by both the increased use of Fentanyl, as well as the Coronavirus pandemic.

The Task Force was instrumental in the passage of landmark legislation addressing the treatment industry in 2017, 2019 and 2020. These measures have certainly helped in our efforts to minimize the destructive effects of opioid use disorder and the fraud and abuse that had been commonplace in the industry.

Safe and supportive housing is critical in the recovery process. Operation of sober homes with no oversight or regulation can lead to, among other things, homelessness and relapse for those suffering from substance use. Fraudulent marketing and treatment practices can also have devastating effects on the lives of individuals who come to Palm Beach County for treatment. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** the Sober Homes Task Force, and their recommended statutory changes for the 2022 session, including:

- A service provider of substance abuse services should be required to record all recovery residences that refer to, or receive referrals from the service provider, with financial penalty.
- A certified recovery resident administrator should manage no more than 50 residents at any given time, unless written justification is provided to, and approved by, the credentialing

entity. At no time should such an administrator manage more than 100 residents at any given time.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AND HEALTHCARE

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

In 2020, for the first time in over a decade, the legislature fully funded and appropriated \$225 million in Housing Trust Funds to the State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program (SHIP) for affordable housing statewide. Palm Beach County was allocated \$15.4 million for SHIP. This amount was vetoed by Governor DeSantis as a result of an expected revenue drop due to the COVID pandemic. In 2021, the county received \$7.3 million of the \$15.5 million that it would have received had full funding been allocated.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** efforts to increase funding and ensure the Sadowski Local Government Housing Trust Funds are fully funded and appropriated only for affordable housing projects.

HOMELESSNESS

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** efforts by members of the Legislature to identify and fund programs for the homeless. The County is experiencing a growing problem with homeless students, seniors, and veterans. The County proposes the following:

- Sober homes legislation that will provide options to prevent individuals who are forced to leave a home from becoming homeless.
- Full-funding of the State Apartment Incentive Loan (SAIL) program from the State Housing Trust Fund.
- Funding for DCF Homeless Unified Challenge Grants that provide continuum of care wrap-around services for homelessness.
- Support mental health funding.
- Support Affordable Housing Task Force recommendations.
- Support additional funding to prevent college and university students, youth aging out of foster care, and unaccompanied minors from becoming homeless. Provide free or subsidized housing and food, as well as case management wrap around services.
- Support creation of and funding for the Poverty Council first proposed in 2016 under SB 556, which would conduct a review of policies and programs that move people out of poverty, develop strategies to address the causes of poverty in the state, and develop recommendations to reduce the percentage of people living in poverty in the state.

HOMELESS RESOURCE FACILITIES

A key initiative of the Board of County Commissioners' 10-Year-Plan to End Homelessness, adopted in 2008, was to establish regional homeless resource centers in the County to provide temporary shelter and wrap-around case management services to assist individuals in addressing their homelessness. Palm Beach

County's first homeless resources center opened in 2012 in West Palm Beach and currently operates with 20 beds for women, 20 for men, and 20 beds for youth (ages 18-24). Several agencies have offices at the center to help residents find housing, medical care and jobs. In January 2020, 1,510 people were counted as homeless in the county. Palm Beach County has selected a location for a second Homeless Resources Facility to meet the unmet needs of this population. The cost to construct the facility is \$8 million and sales tax dollars have been allocated to fund the structure.

The County is requesting \$1 million from the State of Florida to assist in the construction of this facility.

TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED PROGRAMS

Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) funding is an important funding source for Palm Tran, enabling Palm Beach County to provide the most economically challenged customers with public transportation when they are located outside of the fixed route service area, and to provide discounted fixed route bus passes. To maintain the existing level of services and accommodate the needs of TD residents, Palm Beach County has annually supported the TD program efforts with additional funding. This year, the County's local contribution is \$32,984,981 of which \$416,425 is required.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** attempts to increase the funding to the TD program and to prevent diversion of these dollars for other purposes.

Additionally, Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** an appropriation for \$2 million to help offset the increase in local contribution made for the TD program.

PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTION FOR HOMELESS POINT-IN-TIME COUNT IDENTIFYING DATA

Federal law requires local homeless Continuums of Care to conduct a point-in-time homeless count every other year. These numbers determine funding levels for many of the homeless programs. An issue arose frequently when a newspaper reporter submitted a public records request for identifying information from the required survey. This is extremely sensitive because the homeless are often concerned during these surveys with their privacy being maintained. If there was concern about this information becoming public, homeless individuals would be less likely to participate in the survey. This, in turn, affects federal funding levels from HUD. Therefore, Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** legislation that would allow identifying information such as name and date of birth to remain exempt from public record requests. Additionally, Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** legislation that would keep youth information exempt from public record. In 2017, SB 1024 passed the Senate 36-0 but died in messages because HB 381 did not receive a hearing.

CHILD WELFARE

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** the following enhancements to Florida's statewide child welfare funding that together will improve the child welfare system in Palm Beach County and throughout the state.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** the Florida Coalition for Children’s (FCC) request for increased funding with recurring revenue for the agencies operating Florida’s system of foster care and related services. The FCC is a statewide association of community-based care (CBC) lead agencies, which includes ChildNet Palm Beach and those agencies that directly serve Florida’s abused, abandoned and neglected children. Since fiscal year 2013-2014, the number of children being removed from their homes throughout Florida because of verified abuse, abandonment and neglect has increased substantially. Annual increases in statewide child welfare funding have not been sufficient to meet the needs of this expanding population. The increased appropriation of funds will enable lead agencies and their subcontracted service providers, in Palm Beach and throughout the state, to deliver a comprehensive range of high quality services sufficient to consistently and effectively meet the needs of Florida’s expanded foster care population.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** full funding for Guardian ad Litem (GAL).

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** recommended changes to the CBC equity allocation model currently described in Section 409.991, F.S., that will facilitate a more equitable distribution of any new core funding allocated to community-based care lead agencies throughout the state.

SENIOR WELFARE

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** the Area Agency on Aging’s legislative priorities:

- Funding for Florida’s Aging & Disability Resource Centers client services workload under the Statewide Medicaid Managed Long Term Care Program to reduce the risk of nursing home placement for seniors and adults with disabilities;
- Funding to serve at-risk seniors statewide on the Department of Elder Affairs waiting list for the Community Care/Home Care for the Elderly and the Alzheimer’s Respite Care Programs;
- Appropriate 3.5 % of administrative costs to the Department of Elder Affairs for Florida’s Alzheimer’s Disease Initiative programs; and
- Establish an Adult Protective Services within the Community Care for Elderly Program to pay for the cost of emergency services provided to Adult Protective Services high-risk referrals received from the Department of Children and Families.

ADULTS/STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** increased funding for rate increases for services provided through the Agency for Persons with Disabilities. Currently, the rate crisis is causing many agencies to go out of business and others find it extremely difficult to attract and maintain staff. An 11% increase will establish funding at the 2003 level in actual dollars.

DENTAL ACCESS

In response to a need for improved dental access and affordability, multiple states have introduced legislation including Florida. In 2020, various pieces of legislation were introduced to put patients first

because the state scope of practice laws govern the activities that healthcare practitioners may engage in when caring for patients.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** efforts to make dental care more affordable and accessible. Palm Beach County continues to **SUPPORT** Palm Beach State College as they continue to expand their Dental Programs and help to improve access for vulnerable populations.

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES

MONITOR any legislation requiring school districts to ensure feminine hygiene products are available in public school bathrooms.

PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTION FOR MEDICAL EXAMINER

Pursuant to Section 119.07(1), F.S., Medical Examiner Offices in Florida are mandated to release all documents reflecting their work product as public records, to include investigative reports, autopsy reports, toxicology reports and ancillary studies, as long as the cases do not meet criteria for exemption.

The vast majority of cases in which Medical Examiner Jurisdiction is assumed fall under the non-exempted category, to include deaths secondary to natural disease, and of accidental or suicidal manners.

Autopsy reports include private information regarding an individual's life and medical history. Diagnoses that may have been made during the time the person was alive, as well as explicit personal identifiers such as tattoos, surgical and non-surgical scars, and descriptions of injuries, among other valuable personal information is included in an autopsy report. Medical records remain protected for 50 years following the death of the individual via HIPAA but that privacy status is lost when an autopsy is performed as it becomes a public record.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** legislation to amend Section 199.07(1), F.S., to provide for an exemption to withhold autopsy reports from public records to protect individual HIPAA rights and the privacy of loved ones.

BUDGET & TAXATION POLICY

UNFUNDED MANDATES

The State Legislature has frequently passed legislation that compels local governments to provide a service, program, or benefit without providing the appropriate funding or a funding source. This compromises local governments' ability to provide services requested by their local communities by diverting resources to these state-directed, unfunded mandates or cost shifts. In addition, as more and more mandates are created, local governments are faced with the burden of using local tax dollars to finance functions that they have little control over.

If the state requires a local government to provide a service or a higher service with no additional funding, the state must do a better job of identifying costs to local governments when passing new legislation and must provide funding or a funding source for every legislative initiative that imposes a cost on counties. Palm Beach County **OPPOSES** new unfunded mandates and unfunded state to county cost shifts. Additionally, Palm Beach County **OPPOSES** any action by the state to preempt the home rule authority of local governments or to restrict local governments' ability to levy ad valorem taxes.

Again in 2020, mandate bills were filed that would have prohibited local governments from regulating businesses, professions, and occupations within their governments, and would have vested that power within the state. Palm Beach County continues to **OPPOSE** any such legislation.

ARTICLE V

The State should allow for the expansion of the \$65 mandatory court fee to be applied to civil cases in addition to its current application to criminal cases. Expansion of the fee would provide for additional revenue to fund the state court system. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** the continuation and enhancement of the \$2 recording fee to be distributed to counties to fund court-related technology needs. Palm Beach **SUPPORTS** full funding for statewide traffic hearing officer programs.

Under existing law, counties are required to increase funding for courts by 1.5% a year. In recent years, counties successfully obtained an exemption from having to increase annual funding for court-related functions by 1.5% under Section 29.008, F.S. **SUPPORT** eliminating the requirements of Section 29.008(4)(a), F.S., that require counties to fund this increase.

VACATION RENTALS

In 2011, the Florida Legislature passed HB 883, which blocked local governments from "regulating, restricting, or prohibiting" vacation rental properties. Recognizing that the 2011 legislation went too far, the Legislature passed HB 356 in 2014, restoring partial Home Rule authority to local governments. In effect, the law allowed counties to enact certain regulations (parking, occupancy standards, and local registration), but precluded them from passing regulations that prohibited vacation rentals or limited the duration and frequency of stays.

However, in 2018, HB 773 overturned the 2014 legislation and effectively took counties back to what was enacted in 2011. The effect is that local governments have few measures to regulate these uses in a way that would maintain the character of a residential neighborhood. Over the past few years, local government have fielded numerous complaints about the operation of vacation rentals.

SUPPORT legislation that would provide local governments with reasonable authority to help govern the operation of vacation rentals in residential neighborhoods.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** the Palm Beach County Tax Collector's request for amendment of Section 212.03 (1)(a), F.S., regarding transient rentals tax to add vessels to the taxable list of entities renting for under six months. Currently, a number of on-line companies are now advertising vessels on their websites. One website has 17 vessel rentals for rent under six months. These rentals range from \$59 to \$500 per night. This will enable counties and municipalities to collect bed taxes consistent with other transient rentals.

TOURIST DEVELOPMENT TAX

In 2018, the use of the Tourist Development Tax (TDT) was expanded to include any related land acquisition, land improvement, design, and engineering costs required to bring public facilities into service. This includes major capital improvements that have a life expectancy of five or more years. In 2021, legislation proposing adding resilience projects to the list of permissible TDT tax uses was proposed, but was not adopted.

Palm Beach County **OPPOSES** further expansion of the Tourist Development Tax.

ARCADES

In 2013, the Florida Legislature passed a law clearly prohibiting adult arcades from operating slot machines or other games of chance and paying winners in cash and expensive prizes. State law also states "Arcade Amusement Centers" can only pay out non-cash prizes worth a minimum amount and are prohibited from operating games of chance, and makes it a misdemeanor to violate the statute (Sections 849.08 and 849.16, F.S.). Further, F.S. 849.16 defines illegal slot machines as machine-based games that contain "any element of chance or any other outcome unpredictable by the user."

As Arcades were closed by the Governor pursuant to COVID-19 Executive Orders, it became apparent that there were a proliferation of Adult Arcades that have set up shop to operate in Palm Beach County.

Arcade operators have long argued that the machines are legal under the state's "Chuck E. Cheese" law, which allows people to play games with an "application of skill" to get credits redeemable for non-cash prizes. However, local governments throughout Florida, with no authority to regulate these businesses, have shut down arcades arguing that gambling equipment is a public nuisance and have put the public safety at risk since robberies and sometimes-fatal shootings have occurred at these businesses throughout the state.

SUPPORT legislation that increases the penalties for individuals that operate illegal adult arcade gaming operations.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND MOBILITY

GROWTH MANAGEMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Growth management laws should take careful consideration of and protect the distinct home rule authority and land use controls of local governments. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** changes that: 1) strengthen the

intergovernmental review process; 2) ensure that the development impacts occurring outside the approving jurisdiction are adequately mitigated; 3) eliminate unnecessary duplication and expenses, and 4) support full funding of regional planning councils and **OPPOSE** legislation prohibiting or restricting the ability of a regional planning council to provide planning and technical service to its local governments. Palm Beach County additionally **SUPPORTS** efforts to strengthen intergovernmental coordination so land use decisions of one jurisdiction do not negatively affect another.

Current law requires “proportionate share” payments only for the first project to take a road segment from under capacity to an over capacity situation. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** amending state law to require any project affecting an over capacity road to contribute an amount equal to their impact/use of the capacity they are absorbing.

Additionally, Palm Beach County **OPPOSES** legislation that preempts the legislative and policy making powers of counties used to regulate land use and implement local zoning controls and/or fire codes and **OPPOSES** additional conversions of independent special districts under Section 165.0615, F.S. Further, **OPPOSE** legislative efforts that mandate minimum land use densities for properties that meet specific size, use and location characteristics.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (FDOT) GRANT PROGRAMS

Palm Beach County is qualified for, and has been the recipient of, various FDOT grant programs. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** attempts to increase funding to FDOT grant funding programs including, but not limited to the following:

- Public Transit Service Development Program—this program provides initial funding to public transit projects with new or innovative techniques to improve system efficiencies, ridership or revenue. Palm Tran’s Go Glades on-demand service was created from funding through this program.
- Transit Corridor Program—this program is designed to relieve congestion and improve capacity within an identified transportation corridor by increasing the people carrying capacity of transportation systems using high-occupancy conveyances.
- Park and Ride Lot Program—this program provides for the purchase and/or lease of private land for the construction of park and ride lots, the promotion of these lots, and the monitoring of their use. Palm Tran has received funding from this program and would like to seek future opportunities to receive funding.
- Airport Development Grant Program – The county **SUPPORTS** state funding for airport development that is no less than which is proposed by FDOT in the tentative work plan for 2022-2023.

NATURAL GAS FUEL REBATE PROGRAM

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** the reinstatement of the Natural Gas Fuel Rebate Program. In 2016, \$6 million was awarded statewide. However, the Legislature has not funded the program since its expiration in 2020.

INDEXING LOCAL OPTION FUEL TAXES

In aligning the state and counties with the same indexing system, it would allow counties to strategically fund projects from revenue generated within their county thus allowing for a more targeted control of maintenance, development and investment. It will provide a much needed revenue source to fund transportation capital projects especially since the local gas tax is not indexed and it has lost most of its purchasing power due to inflation and increasing costs of construction.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** indexing local option fuel taxes to annual adjustments of the Consumer Price Index.

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

The Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners remains dedicated to the goal of an integrated regional transportation system and new, dedicated funding for the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (SFRTA) will enable Palm Beach County to use existing funds to expand and enhance its transit needs.

SFRTA is committed, if successful in obtaining a dedicated funding source, to funding millions for projects identified by Palm Beach County's Transportation Planning Agency in its five-year plan for the Capital Improvements Projects within Palm Beach County and other identified plans in the region.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** a dedicated funding source of annual revenue that provides support to transit operations and capital costs going to the SFRTA.

Palm Beach County continues to **MONITOR** state funding and other opportunities for rail transportation available in Palm Beach County including the expansion of service on FEC, CSX rail lines, and US 27 corridor rail lines.

AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES/TECHNOLOGY ADVANCEMENTS

As the technology for self-driving cars grows and develops, Palm Beach County will **MONITOR** further legislation related to autonomous vehicles.

INVESTMENTS IN HYBRID AND ELECTRICAL BUSES

Palm Tran continues to implement policies and strategies aimed at creating a more sustainable transit system. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** initiatives and cost-share programs that aid transit agencies seeking to expand their electric fleet and charging infrastructure.

Palm Tran **SUPPORTS** any legislation that increases funds deposited into the State Transportation Trust Fund (STTF), and Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund (TDTF) such as, but not limited to:

- Efforts to return money to the STTF that has been previously diverted.
- Opposition to any future measures that divert funding from the STTF for non-transportation purposes.
- Funding of the Innovative Service Development Grant through the TDTF.

Palm Tran **SUPPORTS** efforts to extend the Natural Gas Fuel Fleet Vehicle Rebate Program.

COVID-19 SPENDING FLEXIBILITY

Palm Tran **SUPPORTS** change in policies or guidelines that would allow for greater flexibility in the use of funding allocated for capital dollars, or other State funding source, to fund transit operations, if needed, during the COVID-19 recovery.

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK COMPANIES

Transportation Network Companies (TNC) have continued to expand their service throughout the state and have introduced new consumers to the concept of ride sharing. The Florida Legislature passed laws in 2017 to help facilitate the expansion of their services in the state. In 2019, legislation expanded TNC service to non-emergency medical transportation (HB 411). Palm Beach County seeks to ensure that TNC continue to complement public transit and **SUPPORTS** legislation that expands first mile-last mile transportation options for our residents. Palm Beach County will also **MONITOR** Legislative efforts to reclassify TNC drivers from independent contractors to employees.

5G INSTALLATION PREEMPTION

In an effort to protect property values, community standards and safety, Palm Beach County **OPPOSES** any additional preemption that would prohibit local governments discretion in permitting the design, color, aesthetics or installation standards of small cell node equipment in the implementation of 5G antennae installation.

BROADBAND ACCESS

What was once a rural access issue, the COVID pandemic has brought to light a statewide need for reliable and affordable high-speed internet access, which is essential for residents to be prosperous in business, successful in education and have access to telemedicine to improve health outcomes.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** the Department of Economic Opportunity's Office of Broadband in the effort to achieve access to reliable and affordable high-speed internet access to every household and business throughout the state.

SR 715 NAME DESIGNATION

In the early morning hours of November 28, 2007, Deputy Sheriff Donta Manuel and Deputy Sheriff Jonathan Wallace, as well as several other PBSO deputies, were responding to a report of a stolen vehicle in progress

in Belle Glade. While participating in a tactical initiative to apprehend the fleeing stolen vehicle, Deputy Sheriff Manuel, along with Deputy Sheriff Wallace, were struck by one of the pursuing patrol cars while attempting to remove stop sticks from the roadway on State Road 715, near Lake Okeechobee. Both deputies were killed instantly.

Deputy Sheriff Manuel was 33 years old and served with the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office for 13 years. Deputy Sheriff Wallace, 23 years of age, had been with PBSO for 18 months. **SUPPORT** legislation to name a portion of SR 715, south of the Pahokee Airport, in memory of Deputy Sheriff Jonathan Wallace and Deputy Sheriff Donta Manuel, killed in the line of duty in 2007.

RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

The purpose of the Rural Infrastructure Fund (RIF) Grant is to facilitate the planning, preparing and financing of infrastructure projects in rural communities which will encourage job creation, capital investment and the strengthening and diversification of rural economies. The RIF program is intended to facilitate access of rural communities to infrastructure funding programs. The FY 2021-22 Florida budget eliminated base funding and provided nonrecurring funds and limited access only for panhandle counties, with a reduction of \$2 million in recurring funds to \$1.6 million in base funding.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** restoring this funding to the 2020-2021 funding level of \$3.6 million.

PUBLIC SAFETY

CERTIFICATES OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY

Palm Beach County has a responsibility to promote the health, safety and welfare of its residents and visitors by providing for the regulation of life support services, promoting the development and maintenance of safe, healthy, efficient and service-oriented life support transport services. Palm Beach County's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Ordinance establishes standards for issuing Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity (COPCN) for basic and advanced life support services which applies to the unincorporated and incorporated area of Palm Beach County.

Palm Beach County **OPPOSES** any legislative effort to preempt the County's ability to grant COPCNs to EMS providers within the county under Section 401.25, F.S.

REENTRY FOR NON-VIOLENT OFFENDERS

Florida continues to house one of America's largest prison populations. More than 34,000 people return to their communities from prison each year with more than 1,200 of those coming to Palm Beach County. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** efforts to restore rights to felons and to provide resources to ensure successful re-entry into the regular workforce. In addition, Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** the criminal justice reform described below:

- During the 2013 Legislative Session, Section 1011.84, F.S. was modified to prohibit the use of state funding of educational programs for state prison and county jail inmates. This dramatically affects our local state college, Palm Beach State College, from educating inmates at reentry facilities, including Sago Palm. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** legislation aimed at increasing the successful reentry of state prisoners, including the ability of state colleges to provide coursework and training classes to inmates at reentry facilities.
- During the 2021 Legislative Session, Palm Beach County's RESTORE: Re-entry program was appropriated \$500,000. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** continued funding of this program with a \$500,000 appropriation request, which connects returning citizens from our local Palm Beach County Jail, the Florida Department of Corrections, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons to necessary services.

REGULATION OF DRONES NEAR CRITICAL COUNTY FACILITIES

During the 2017 Legislative Session, HB 1027 enacted the "Unmanned Aircraft Systems Act" (Section 330.41, F.S.) which vested authority to regulate drones in the State and prohibited local governments from enacting ordinances that regulate drones. The new law also makes it unlawful for a person to operate a drone over or near a "critical infrastructure facility." However, critical infrastructure facility was defined as electrical generation or transmission facilities, chemical storage facilities, mining facility, natural gas facility or pipeline, natural gas or propane terminal or storage facility, oil or gas pipeline, and wireless communications facilities. Many of the County's critical facilities are not covered by this definition such as jails, law enforcement facilities, courthouses and other government buildings. The County is concerned that without a prohibition of drones over or in the proximity of critical county facilities that the possibility of escapes, terrorism, and breaches in confidentiality increase significantly; all which impact public safety or potentially compromise the judicial and policy setting process.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** an amendment to the definition of "critical infrastructure facility" in Section 330.41 F.S. to include jails, law enforcement facilities, courthouses, water and wastewater infrastructure, and buildings designated as the County Seat.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTIONS

1. After-Action Reports

Emergency management agencies throughout Florida compile after-action reports and quality assurance activities to evaluate disaster response and to further improve or modify response plans based on assessment results. In order to effectively conduct these quality assurance activities, the emergency management agencies rely on honest reports from stakeholders. Exempting this information will ensure that response partners and stakeholders will openly and candidly report without fear of retribution. Pursuant to Sections 395.0193, 395.1055, and 395.4025, F.S., healthcare and trauma agencies quality assurance records are exempt following the same logic.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** legislation to amend Sections 119.071(3) and 252.905, F.S.; to provide for an exemption for emergency management after-action reports and quality assurance activities to evaluate disaster response and to further improve or modify the quality of disaster response.

2. Emergency Management Data

Emergency management agencies throughout Florida are using emerging technologies that enable a multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional coordinated response to disasters and to implement emergency response plans across multiple agencies in real-time. Technologies include the ability in real-time to prioritize critical needs, assign tasks and personnel, and allocate resources as required to implement emergency plans. Exempting this information minimizes the risk of security system plans becoming subject to disclosure and could compromise security systems and security plans during emergencies when limited resources are available.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** legislation to amend Section 119.071(3), F.S., to provide for an exemption for emergency management database platforms, applications, programs, software and all data and records contained therein, utilized to coordinate, plan, report, respond and recover from local and statewide emergencies and disasters.

MARSY'S LAW AMENDMENT

In order to effectively conduct active shooter and mass fatality incident response activities, emergency management agencies rely on personal identifying information, as well as, [minimal] healthcare data from first responders and healthcare providers. Currently, Sections 401.30 and 960.0011, F.S. (Marsy's Law), prohibit the disclosure of this information to emergency management agencies. Allowing disclosure of personal identifying information, as well as [minimal] healthcare data from first responders and healthcare providers to emergency management agencies in times of disaster will facilitate more effective family reunification and operation of family assistance centers.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** legislation to amend Sections 401.30, and s. 960.0011, F.S. (Marsy's Law) to permit disclosure of personal identifying information and healthcare data from first responders and healthcare providers to emergency management agencies in times of disaster.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS ISSUES

The Emergency Management Preparedness and Assistance Trust Fund (EMPA) was created within Ch. 252, F.S. Since inception of the Trust Fund in 1993, it has remained at the same funding level despite a substantial increase in demands on county and municipal emergency management. The EMPA is administered under the oversight of the Executive Office of the Governor. An annual surcharge of \$2.00 per residential property insurance policy and \$4.00 per commercial property insurance policy is currently imposed. A recent Florida Legislative Committee on Intergovernmental Relations study suggests that changes in the insurance industry since the 1994 inception of the surcharge may be responsible for unintended "loopholes" in surcharge assessments. It is important to note that the fees or types of policies this surcharge affects have not been modified since the trust fund's inception.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** an examination of methods to correct the deficiencies in surcharge collection and the application of the surcharge to the number of units or parcels included for coverage in a commercial or residential insurance policy. Prior to 2003, proceeds from the EMPA trust fund were distributed based on a fixed allocation formula in the statute and authorized each year by the Legislature. Since then, the annual appropriation levels for base grants to county emergency management programs have equaled \$7.1 million, a historical level representing approximately 44% of the annual trust fund proceeds.

Palm Beach County:

- **SUPPORTS** maintaining this funding level as the minimum allocation for county base grants.
- **SUPPORTS** an increase in county base grants to reflect the increased demands on county emergency management programs.
- **OPPOSES** efforts to shift state funding of emergency management from counties to cities.
- **SUPPORTS** maintaining the EMPA program administered by the Florida Division of Emergency Management (DEM) consistent with the original statutory intent (i.e., Section 252.373, F.S.).

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** efforts to increase the fee that the Florida Division of Emergency Management can charge to review Comprehensive Emergency Management Plans to better balance the costs incurred by the County for staff to conduct the reviews. Currently, DEM can charge \$31.25 per hour.

VICTIMS' SERVICES

According to the Department of Justice, only 310 out of every 1,000 sexual assaults are reported to police. That means about 2 out of 3 go unreported.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** legislation that would support survivors of sexual assault:

- Per Section 960.28, F.S., payment for a victim's initial forensic physical examinations is available to a medical provider who performs an initial forensic physical examination. The provider may not bill a victim or the victim's parent or guardian if the victim is a minor, directly or indirectly for that examination. The Crime Victims' Services Office of the Department of Legal Affairs shall pay for medical expenses connected with an initial forensic physical examination of a victim of sexual battery as defined in Chapter 794 or a lewd or lascivious offense as defined in Chapter 800.

SUPPORT efforts of the Office of the Attorney General to enforce the statewide collection of court fines and fees in order to stabilize the Crimes Compensation Trust Fund so that the initial forensic examination is fully compensated pursuant to Section 960.28, F.S.

BATTERERS' INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

In 2012, the Florida Legislature eliminated formal certification of Batterers' Intervention Programs (BIP) statewide which were, at that time, overseen by the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF). The

amendment left the “identification” of these programs to counties. Certification under DCF entailed a treatment and administrative review of providers. Every county in Florida is now struggling with how to “identify” providers, therefore:

Palm Beach County **RECOMMENDS** that The Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) evaluate the usage and effectiveness of BIPs across the State to determine whether the current 29-week psychoeducational model is being consistently ordered as envisioned and whether the curriculum is achieving the intended result of reducing repeat incidents of domestic violence.

Palm Beach County additionally **SUPPORTS** amending and revising Section 741.325, F.S., to:

- Require BIP providers to submit program and participant data including, but not limited to, number of participants, client outcome status, fees imposed and collected, sliding fee scales, program curriculum, demographic information, and similar reporting and data metrics for the purpose of evaluating program efficiency and compliance.
- **AMEND** BIP requirements to include minimum provider training and education, reduced program duration, acceptable program content to include alternative program models, and data collection and reporting requirements.
- Authorize each local jurisdiction to utilize alternative BIP models for the community in cooperation with the local participants in the justice system, as well as social service agencies at the community level. These alternative programs may include programming for children of domestic violence victims or perpetrators.

HEALTH CERTIFICATES

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** a modification to Section 828.29, F.S., to remove the health certificate exemption for non-profit animal rescue groups. Current situation allows these groups to saturate our local communities with dogs from all over the country and beyond. There is no assurance that these animals are free from disease or were medically healthy prior to beginning their journey to our local communities.

DANGEROUS DOGS

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** a modification to Section 767.12, F.S., to provide criminal consequences for people who conceal or lie about the whereabouts of a dog following a severe attack on a human or other domestic animal. Palm Beach County has had numerous examples of dogs inflicting severe injury; however, an owner can falsely claim the dog ran away in the moments prior to County staff arrival. There is no remedy in law for such situations.

ANIMAL CARE AND CONTROL PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTION

Currently, personal information for those who adopt animals is public record; however, many public shelter animals come from criminal animal cruelty cases where the offender would like to retrieve their pet. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** protecting the new adopter’s personal information by exempting it from public record.

LIFEGUARD CERTIFICATION AND TRAINING

Coastal/open water lifeguards are employed by local governments around the state to provide effective injury prevention and emergency medical/rescue services. In emergency circumstances, pre-hospital medical care at Florida's public bathing places is necessary. In an effort to ensure minimum standards for rescue and pre-hospital medical care with transport providers, Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** legislation or regulatory action that would license and/or certify coastal/open water lifeguard agencies under the United States Lifesaving Association - Agency Certification program.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence occurs in all races and ethnic groups, across all economic classes and educational levels. Nearly all victims are female (94%), and 31% of the women murdered in the United States are killed by their significant others. Forty percent of homeless families in large cities are homeless because they are fleeing violence. Children whose mothers are abused are at a higher risk of also being abused. Furthermore, substance abuse is more likely to compound the risk of domestic violence. Locally, recent news reports of domestic violence victims dying at the hands of their abusers have raised the need to support further efforts to protect victims, treat abusers, and provide resources for families.

Therefore, Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS**:

- Legislation that allows for a victim of domestic violence to terminate rental leases if the victim can prove that the discontinued employment or need to terminate a lease is a direct result of circumstances related to domestic violence as defined in Section 741.28, F.S. The victim must:
 - a. Provide evidence, such as an injunction, protective order, or other such reasonable documentation authorized by state law, which reasonably proves that domestic violence has occurred.
 - b. Reasonably believe that a future act of domestic violence, including being a victim of stalking as provided in Sections 784.048(3), (4), or (5), F.S. is likely to occur against the individual by a family or household member, as defined in Section 741.28, F.S.
 - c. Make reasonable efforts to preserve lease by seeking a protective injunction prior to seeking a lease.
- If a victim successfully terminates a lease under the guidelines above, the victim must attempt to relocate.

Palm Beach County also **SUPPORTS** the expansion of allowable uses of the Domestic Violence Trust Fund articulated in Section 938.08, F.S., to include programming for domestic violence victims. Some of the programs suggested are an in-house batterer's intervention program and support services for victims to

assist getting restraining orders and case management assistance, as well as, funding for prevention, housing and treatment. Currently, these funds generated by fees are only used for law enforcement training for domestic violence issues and to offset the costs of incarceration of domestic violence offenders.

CENTER FOR YOUTHFUL OFFENDERS

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** urging the Florida Department of Corrections to open a Youthful Offender Facility in South Florida. A Youthful Offender center can be created within an existing structure here in South Florida. Such facilities house inmates up to 24 years of age whose crimes were committed before they turned 21 and whose sentences are ten years or less. A vital component to the rehabilitation of youthful offenders is being close to their families. However, the closest facility to Palm Beach County is in Sumter County. In 2012, a facility in Indian River County was closed down due to budget cuts in the Department of Corrections

JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER

The Palm Beach County Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC) and Detention Center opened in November 1998 with the goal of providing a 24/7 one-stop intake and assessment center for youthful offenders' initial entry into the Juvenile Justice system for the purposes of comprehensive case planning. By Statute, JACs are a local option spearheaded by the Department of Juvenile Justice in partnership with law enforcement and other community criminal justice entities. In Palm Beach County, this includes the State Attorney, School District Police, Palm Beach Sheriff's Office and other local service providers. Over its existence, the facility has fallen into disrepair, and is in dire need of refurbishment and major repair.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** funding for the Palm Beach County Juvenile Justice Assessment and Detention Center for maintenance and repair, as well as funding for additional diversion programs.

JUVENILE DIVERSION PROGRAM EXPUNCTION

Generally, when a law enforcement officer has probable cause to believe that a juvenile has committed a criminal offense, the officer may take the juvenile into custody or issue a notice to appear. Both taking a juvenile into custody and issuing of a notice to appear refer the matter to the clerk of court, where a juvenile delinquency case is generated. The creation of that case becomes part of the juvenile's offender record.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** requiring the Department of Law Enforcement to expunge the non-judicial arrest records of certain minors who successfully complete a diversion program for specified felony offenses, rather than only for misdemeanor offenses. **SUPPORT** expunction authorization for a minor who successfully completes a diversion program for any offense, rather than only for a first-time misdemeanor offense.

DEPENDENCY CHILDREN AGING OUT OF FOSTER CARE

Judges have seen that if a child is a crossover youth and goes into Dept. of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) commitment or is in DJJ commitment when they turn 18, they no longer are eligible for aging out benefits as DCF views them a DJJ responsibility even though they have no parents taking care of them. As such, they would not

qualify for benefits of Extended Foster Care such as housing assistance, upon their release from the DJJ program.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** adding language to Section 39.6251, F.S. to provide that commitment in a DJJ program on their 18th birthday would satisfy requirements as a “qualifying activity” and as residing in a “supervised living environment” when determining eligibility for Extended Foster Care.

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES GLADES REGION FACILITY

The Department of Children and Families Glades building was constructed over twenty years ago. Because this facility receives a lot of foot traffic, it is important to keep up the maintenance of the building. Recently, the General Services Director determined that the building is in need of structural improvements, attention to handicap bathrooms, rodents, etc.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** funding to help with maintenance and repair of the Glades Region Department of Children and Families facility.

MARCHMAN ACT REVISIONS

The Marchman Act is a civil process established in Chapter 397, F.S. that provides for the involuntary or voluntary assessment, stabilization, and treatment of a person abusing or addicted to drugs or alcohol.

The Marchman Act involves a two-step process of assessment and then treatment. The most common way Marchman cases are initiated is with the filing of a petition for involuntary assessment in the county where the substance abuser is located. The criteria for the Marchman Act petition requires a demonstration that the individual has lost the power of self-control with respect to substance use and either (a) the individual is in need of substance abuse services and is incapable of making a rational decision in regard to receiving services or (b) is likely to suffer from neglect or has inflicted or threatened or attempted to inflict physical harm on oneself or another, or is likely to do so unless admitted.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** the amendment of the Marchman Act to:

- Clarify the definitions of access center, designated receiving facility, and triage center to define functionality and the ability to receive and hold involuntary patients.
- Provide flexibility for courts to retain jurisdiction over an individual who fails to complete involuntary treatment or relapses within 12 months, and to order individuals to be transferred to licensed recovery residences upon completion of treatment if recommended by a service provider and if additional funding is available.
- Provide for circumstances under which an individual may be held in protective custody to allow for additional petitions to be filed in state court, and to allow minors to be held in treatment facilities until a petition for involuntary treatment is heard in court.

Palm Beach County additionally **SUPPORTS** increased and appropriate funding for crisis mental health and substance abuse beds statewide. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** increased funding for public receiving facilities and maintaining funding for public facilities if new state general revenue is provided to private receiving facilities. Palm Beach County also **SUPPORTS** coordinated efforts to increase access to acute care behavioral health services for individuals and families.

PRE-TRIAL RELEASE

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** maintaining county ability to provide non-monetary pre-trial release services that ensure the safety and welfare of local communities and oppose legislation that would limit the discretion of first appearance judges to prescribe pre-trial options for defendants.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** the expansion of state resources to assist treatment-based drug court programs. Eligible drug-addicted persons may be sent to Drug Court in lieu of traditional justice system case processing. Drug Courts keep individuals in treatment long enough for it to work, while supervising them closely.

REGAIN LOCAL ABILITY FOR LIMITED GUN REGULATION

During the 2011 Legislative Session, HB 45 was enacted, which created stiff financial penalties for counties and elected officials that pass local ordinances and administrative rules that regulate firearms or ammunition. These fines range from \$5,000 for individuals to \$100,000 for repayment of attorneys' fees. In addition to financial penalties, employees acting in an official capacity that knowingly violate these provisions can be subject to immediate termination. The two exceptions to the provision of law are ordinances or rules that enact waiting periods or criminal background checks.

Palm Beach County **OPPOSES** Chapter 2011-109 Laws of Florida on the grounds that it violates the County's Home Rule Authority. The County had four ordinances and two resolutions related to gun control that had to be either amended or removed from the books due to the enactment of the law. The local ordinances and resolutions related to gun possession in family daycares, sale or possession of firearms during declared emergencies, locations where weapon discharging was permissible, records and holding periods of firearms by secondhand dealers (pawn shops), and forbidding the use of firearms in natural areas. The County continues to maintain the position that it should be able to pass ordinances or local rules that it believes are in the best interest of its citizens and visitors without interference from the Legislature.

Additionally, there has been concern over members of the public open carrying firearms at Juno Beach Fishing Pier. Section 790.25(3)(h), F.S., allows a person to open carry when the person is "engaged in fishing, camping or lawful hunting or going to or returning from fishing, camping, or lawful hunting expedition." **AMEND** the statute to clarify that open carrying of firearms is permitted while fishing on a boat, not on a public fishing pier.

BRITTANY'S LAW - DRIVER SAFETY FOR MINORS

In April 2015, a 17-year-old was accused of running a stop sign and killing 18-year old Palm Beach County resident Brittany Baxter. At the time the 17-year-old had been charged with eight traffic citations in the 33 months he was authorized to drive.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** legislation that would create enhanced driver safety by either increasing points assigned for repeat driving infractions incurred by drivers under the age of 18 and/or adjusting the state's graduated driver license program to restrict driver privileges for repeat offenders.

DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE AND OFFICER TRAINING

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** amending Section 316.193, adding and defining the term, "impairing substance" as a substance when taken into the human body, can impair, or diminish in some material respect, a person's normal faculties. That section will define alcoholic beverages, any chemical substance under F.S. 893 and now the phrase "any other impairing substance, or any combination thereof" as a description of someone driving under the influence. Sponsoring this legislation for the 2022 session are Sen. Lori Berman (SB 436) and Rep. Joe Casello (HB 271).

In addition, Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** marijuana impaired driving detection training for law enforcement. The course will provide the line officer with specialized training on recognizing modern forms of cannabis, as well as detecting the unique impairment clues that are presented by cannabis users. At the conclusion of training, line officers will be better prepared to detect drivers that are impaired by cannabis usage and how to investigate, document, and prepare effective cases for prosecution.

FIRE RESCUE

CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

Several times a year, the Palm Beach County Fire Rescue handles fatalities that have occurred because running car engines in garages have emitted toxic levels of carbon dioxide. If more homes were constructed with carbon monoxide detectors, these incidents could be eliminated. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** education to encourage the installment of detectors in garages of new construction homes.

MOBILE INTEGRATED HEALTH

Mobile integrated healthcare (MIH) is an overarching term that captures the concept of a new type of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) delivery system. In most cases, MIH is a more cost-effective and more efficient method of providing appropriate care to the ever-growing population of 911 callers who have a medical issue that needs attention but does not constitute an emergency as well as callers who do not need a quick emergency response. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** change in statute to allow for MIH-Community Paramedicine to bill insurance for non-emergency transport and care.

FIRE CODE ENFORCEMENT

Palm Beach County **OPPOSES** any effort by state government to infringe upon home rule authority by attempting to mandate change to Palm Beach County's established Fire Code and Enforcement practices.

CONSUMER SERVICES

TOWING BILL

Palm Beach County **OPPOSES** any changes to Florida Statute to that would preempt any current additional consumer protection provided by Palm Beach County.

MOBILE HOME DISCLOSURE

State law does not require mobile home owners to disclose to potential buyers of their homes that a developer has purchased the mobile home park, presumably for redevelopment. However, Chapter 723, Florida Statutes (Mobile Home Park Lot Tenancies), requires that a mobile home park owner must disclose certain zoning and land use information governing the park before entering into a rental agreement for a mobile home lot. It is unclear whether a buyer would receive such disclosure prior to closing on the purchase of a mobile home from a private seller. Therefore, Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** clarifying Chapter 723, F.S., to require a mobile home park owner to notify a buyer before closing on the purchase of a mobile home from a private seller, of any change in ownership of the mobile home park and/or any definite future plans for changes in the use of the park six months prior to the change of ownership in the park.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT/ADMINISTRATIVE

VALUE ADJUSTMENT BOARD

The Palm Beach County Value Adjustment Board received a record 19,800 petitions in 2009 from residents who pay a \$15 filing fee in comparison to the approximate \$114 in costs to the County to facilitate a petition. In 2015, while the number of petitions filed has decreased significantly, the cost ratio to conduct the hearings has remained consistent. The current filing fee has been in effect since 1988. With the changes in law coupled with the vast number of petitions filed and expected to grow, Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** raising the filing fee to \$50 to cover the anticipated increasing costs to process them.

DISCRIMINATION PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTION

Currently, state law allows for local government agency exemptions from inspection or copying of public records relating to complaints of discrimination regarding race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, marital status, sale or rental of housing, the provision of brokerage services, and the financing of housing. **AMEND** Section 119.0713, F.S. to include familial status. Also, include language stating that all records created or received in the course of conciliation with any unit of local government to resolve complaints of discrimination regarding race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, marital status,

familial status, sale or rental of housing, the provision of brokerage services, and the financing of housing are confidential and exempt from Section 119.07(1), F.S., and 24(a), Article I of the State Constitution.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** a statement of finding from the legislature that this exemption is necessary to encourage the resolution of complaints of discrimination and the effectiveness and efficiency of the conciliation process.

PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTION FOR SOLICITATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

In recent years, there have been a growing number of public records requests of county government from individuals and companies looking for employee contact information for the purpose of solicitation of goods and services. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** a request to exempt government employee contact information in situations where it is being requested for the blanket solicitation of goods and services.

PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTION FOR COUNTY ATTORNEYS AND COUNTY ADMINISTRATORS

In 2020, HB 63 was filed to create a public records exemption from public records requirements for personal identifying and location information of current and former county attorneys and assistant county attorneys. Because county attorneys and county administrators both review a full range of procedures, documents and services, Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** a public records exemption for county attorneys, assistant county attorneys and county administrators.

PUBLIC RECORDS REQUESTS ABUSE

The public records laws in Florida have granted the people rights without responsibility. People can, and do, misuse these laws, seemingly immune from consequences. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** state public records laws that maintain a meaningful public right of access while reducing the potential for mischief and misuse that are relevant to the realities of modern communication.

TESTIMONIALS FOR PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** a revision to Section 111.012, F.S., to clarify that the statute's provisions apply only to testimonials that are held to raise funds on behalf of any elected public officer. Presently, the statute applies to testimonials that are held to honor public officials, even if no funds are raised.

SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY

As the State of Florida continues to experience dramatic growth in population, so does the demand for recreational facilities to serve the populace. One recurring issue has been the reluctance of public agencies to allow or permit recreational activities on their property due to an unacceptable level of tort exposure.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** an amendment to Section 768.23, F.S. to provide sovereign immunity for any public property intended or permitted to be used for recreational purposes.

BUILDING CODES

Following the devastating event that took place on June 24, 2021 at Champlain Towers located in Surfside, Florida, Palm Beach County has undertaken a series of meetings with local building officials and stakeholders regarding developing and implementing a program to evaluate the safety of certain multi-family building types in Palm Beach County. Palm Beach County believes the issue of building safety transcends beyond the boundaries of the county and the legislature should seek to provide comprehensive and uniform requirements requiring periodic inspections for such facilities. **MONITOR** any legislation requiring more stringent inspection requirements for certain multi-family condominium facilities in Florida. Also, **MONITOR** any legislation addressing the financial responsibilities of condominium and community associations.

PROPERTY ASSESSED CLEAN ENERGY

The Property Assessed Clean Energy Program (PACE), is a financing program where residents pay for energy improvements to their homes through their property tax bill. The types of projects that can be financed are wind mitigation, new roofs or air conditioners and energy efficiency or renewable energy projects like solar panel installation.

To pay for the improvement, an assessment is attached to the property over a term and the homeowner pays for it, including interest, on their annual property tax bill over a period of years. According to a Tax Collector study, the average duration for an assessment on a new air conditioner is 15 years, a period of time that may likely exceed the typical lifespan of such equipment. The nature of this assessment can also make it difficult to sell or refinance the home and if a homeowner is unable to pay, it could mean the property is put in foreclosure.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** further clarifying the terms and conditions of PACE agreements, ensuring that participants taking advantage of the program are fully informed of the financial responsibilities.

EDUCATION

STATE LIBRARIES

Local governments receive State support for libraries through three different programs: the State Aid program, the Regional Multi-type Library Cooperative Grant program, and the Public Library Construction Grant program. Continuation of these funding sources will ensure that the State will play an appropriate role in enhancing public library service by matching local library expenditures, enhancing consortia services to area libraries, and providing needed dollars for the construction of new public libraries

The Legislature funded State Aid to Public Libraries at \$19.4 million, a \$ 2.1 million increase from the 2020 Legislative Session. Funding for Library Construction Grants and Library Cooperatives totaled \$2 million. Palm Beach County strongly **SUPPORTS** the restoration of the State Aid to Public Libraries program to at least the 2017 level of \$23 million.

Approximately 51% of Floridians have a library card, visiting our libraries 75.1 million times in person and 97.3 virtual visits to library websites. A strong fiscal foundation for our public libraries is critical to the state's economic and educational success.

Florida's State Aid grant program has been the cornerstone of public library support in our state since 1963 and is a national model. State Aid grant funding assists Floridians with:

- Economic development resources to small businesses and job seekers.
- Access to government services, especially e-government – public libraries are the “go to” place when Floridians need to access the Internet and the vast array of services and products online.
- Education and reading – libraries are the safety net that insures school success for students of all ages.

For every \$1.00 invested in public libraries, the return on investment is \$10.18, Gross Regional Product increases by \$13.23, and income (wages) increases by \$28.42. For every \$2,574 spent on public libraries from public funding sources in Florida, one job (in the economy, not just in libraries) is created.

LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY GRANTS

For some citizens, Public Libraries are the only way to access a computer for things like school, work, and employment searches. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** the restoration of Library Technology Grants that enable libraries to improve the technology services they can offer to citizens statewide.

NEW PUBLIC LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION GRANTS

The addition of new libraries would assist even more residents with getting access to the invaluable services provided by our library systems. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** full funding of \$14.6 million to support all eligible applications for grant funding. Palm Beach County's Canyon Branch library project is currently ranked #2 on the Library Construction Grant Application List.

REGIONAL MULTI-TYPE LIBRARY COOPERATIVES

The Palm Beach County Library System is part of the regional multi-type library consortia known as the Southeast Florida Library Information Network (SEFLIN), which connects both public and private libraries of all types to one another and allows the community to be served more effectively through the joint use of technology, continuing education and training of library staff. In FY21 funding for the Cooperatives was \$2.0 million. Each grantee is awarded up to \$400,000 but it requires a ten percent cash match of local funds. The Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** an appropriation of the same amount. These funds are critical for Florida's five multi-type library cooperatives (MLC's). These funds are used to:

- Promote resource sharing so Floridians can easily obtain resources from other libraries using statewide delivery and reciprocal borrowing services
- Continuously upgrade the skills of library employees to improve the experience of Florida library customers

- Create connections between libraries to encourage adoption of technologies and services important to Floridians.

SMART HORIZONS CAREER ONLINE SCHOOL

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** funding for this program that allows 19-and-older out of school adults to complete a private high school diploma and career certificate through 35 participating library systems. No money was appropriated by the Legislature this past year. As of September 2019, 630 students had graduated. This program makes a high school diploma more accessible to Floridians and prepares them for success in the workforce.

EARLY LEARNING COALITION

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** efforts to increase hours for children entering the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) program, based on assessment, would benefit from increased instructional hours to strengthen kindergarten readiness. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** maintaining School Readiness (SR) providers' ability to receive payment differential based on the results of observational assessment and implementation of approved child assessment.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Palm Beach County realizes that the physical health of students is as vital to learning and growth as mental health, and **SUPPORTS** efforts to emphasize physical health and fitness programming in our schools.

PALM BEACH COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** the legislative agenda put forward by the School District of Palm Beach County covering different focus areas:

- Behavioral and mental health student supports
- Investments in Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) to ensure kindergarten readiness
- Maintain full calculation of Required Local Effort to include property reassessments and new construction
- Hold teachers harmless for calculation of 2021 Value Added Models
- Flexibility to make decisions at the local level
- Discretion over use of remote learning

Palm Beach County also **SUPPORTS** increasing funding for mental health services to specifically address the adverse impact of COVID-19 on the emotional well-being of students and staff.

PALM BEACH STATE COLLEGE FUNDING

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** increased funding for the Florida College System, which will assist the College with responding quickly to workforce training and industry needs in the County.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** the allocation of additional Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO) funding for deferred maintenance to continue the renovation and preservation of current buildings on Palm Beach State College's campuses.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** efforts to increase opportunities for PBSC and the School District to collaborate on programs to ensure that students are college and career ready.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** efforts to increase funding for mental health services at the College.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** the legislature allocating \$25 million in PECO funding for PBSC's proposed Dental & Medical Services Technology Building, which will be located on the Loxahatchee Groves Campus. The legislature appropriated \$5 million towards the project in 2017. The funding request is to construct an 80,000 square foot facility that will house the College's Dental Hygiene, Dental Assisting, Surgical Technologist and Physical Therapy Assistant programs along with the Atlantic coast Dental Research Clinic.

FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** Florida Atlantic University as it pursues its goal to be a Top 100 (U.S. News and World Report) Public Research University. The University is seeking resources to assist in sustaining excellence and accelerate its progress along the journey to being a Top 100 institution.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** Florida Atlantic University's "University of Distinction" designation in Applied Artificial Intelligence and Big Data Analytics (AI/Data). These innovative degree programs and training curriculum will educate students and train professionals to develop new skills for jobs that are at the forefront of this technological revolution, and be part of the first generation of an AI/Data workforce.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** FAU's request for PECO funding for its Health Sciences Training and Clinical Research Facility. The Health Sciences Facility will be co-located on FAU's main campus in Boca Raton near the Colleges of Nursing, Engineering and Computer Science, Medicine, Science and Social Work. It will have state of the art training and research space, including rooms for patient care, a simulation center, an engineering lab to make apps/sensors/wearable devices, a gait analysis lab and exercise physiology studies, and a wet lab for analysis of patient samples and cellular/molecular research labs.

CAREER EDUCATION FUNDING

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) curricula has been predominantly taught in colleges or post-secondary institutions in Florida. Based upon the need for qualified candidates within the STEM fields, Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** efforts to expand, enhance and provide adequate funding of STEM programs to public career academies, K-12 educational programs, and career programs in higher education.

Palm Beach County also **SUPPORTS** funding efforts to expand and enhance vocational training programs.

CULTURAL ARTS AND HISTORIC GRANTS FUNDING

The Florida Division of Cultural Affairs (DCA) at the Department of State recommends to the Legislature a ranked list of qualified grant applicants for Cultural and Museum Grants, Cultural Projects, Cultural Facilities, and the Cultural Endowment Program. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** full funding of the Cultural Grant application list as approved by the DCA.

GLADES CAREER READINESS ROUNDTABLE

SUPPORT the continuation of the adult Commercial Vehicle Driving program that was established with \$250K from the Governor’s Contingency Fund. The program was placed on hiatus for retooling in September. The GCRR and West Technical Education Center are seeking funding to reconstitute the program.

AGRICULTURE

FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Integrated Farm to School programs have the ability to positively affect entire communities. One of the most valuable components of supporting Farm to School initiatives is the opportunity to increase access to fresh produce within a domestic food assistance program that services low-income families. Farm to School programs encourage a lifelong appreciation for healthy eating habits by creating an environment that exposes children to a variety of fruits and vegetables. Aside from the nutritional benefits of increasing the availability of fresh produce in school meals, the local economy benefits from an additional marketplace and could indirectly promote job creation in the agricultural community.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** legislation that would assist in integrating locally grown produce into school meals.

HUNGER RELIEF PLAN

Hunger can — and does — exist in the midst of plenty. Nationally, more than 49 million Americans have trouble regularly putting nutritious food on the table. Despite its wealth, more than 200,000 residents in Palm Beach County struggle with hunger. People can’t always feed themselves and their families because they have too little money, too little access both to federal nutrition programs and to sources of affordable healthy food, and too little information about how their challenges can be overcome. For over a decade, Palm Beach County partners increased the availability of fresh produce that would otherwise go to waste through gleaning events. Gleaning occurs from November through July, weather permitting. Support continued efforts to allow for gleaning activities.

According to Feeding America, 20 billion pounds of fruits and vegetables are discarded on farms or plowed under. The USDA has estimated that 35 million pounds of food are needed annually to feed the hungry in Palm Beach County.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** legislation and funding to help support the Palm Beach County Hunger Relief Plan, local non-profits and local farmers.

APPROPRIATION REQUESTS

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Everglades Workforce Training Program	\$ 1,700,000
Peanut Island Restoration	\$ 1,500,000
Central Palm Beach County Infrastructure	\$ 1,000,000
Transportation Disadvantaged Bus Passes	\$ 2,000,000
Briny Breezes Pocket Drainage Study	\$ 100,000
RESTORE Reentry	\$ 500,000
Homeless Resource Center 2	\$ 1,000,000
Palm Beach County Glades Region Infrastructure	\$ 3,000,000
Palm Beach County Lake Okeechobee Shoreline Restoration	\$ 1,600,000
Green Cay Phase 2	\$ 3,000,000
C-51 Boat Lift	\$ 3,000,000
Palm Beach Co. Fire/Rescue – Urban Search and Rescue Equipment	\$ 1,100,000
Palm Beach Co. Fire/Rescue – Central Ag. Reserve Fire Station	\$ 2,100,000
Palm Beach Co. Fire/Rescue – Station 24 Rebuild	\$ 2,100,000
Palm Beach Co. Fire/Rescue – Bunker Gear Contamination	\$ 821,400

LAKE WORTH LAGOON INITIATIVE

City of Lake Worth Beach	18th Ave. North & Wellesley Drive Lagoon Enhancement	\$ 250,000
Palm Beach County	Bonefish Cove Env.. Enhancement	\$ 500,000
Town of Hypoluxo	Hypoluxo Septic to Sewer Conversion	\$ 1,078,125
Town of Lake Clarke Shores	West Water Quality Improvement Project	\$ 1,700,000
Palm Beach County	Providencia Cay Habitat Restoration Project	\$ 500,000
Palm Beach County	Singer Island Submerged Land Acquisition	\$ 250,000

LOXAHATCHEE RIVER PRESERVATION INITIATIVE

Martin County	Cypress Creek Floodplain Restoration Project	\$ 750,000
Town of Jupiter	Pennock Point Industrial Stormwater Improvements	\$ 150,000
Jupiter Inlet District	Lox River Mile 6 Gap Closure and Oxbow Maintenance	\$ 377,500
Lox River Env Con District	Environmental Education Facilities at the JLONA	\$ 320,000
Town of Jupiter	Sims Creek Preserve Hydrologic and Env. Restoration	\$ 100,000
Town of Jupiter	Bush Road Stormwater Improvements	\$ 94,500
P.B. County Parks & Rec	Loxahatchee River Battlefield Park Culvert Replacement.....	\$ 125,000
SIRWCD	Canal C Storage Project	\$ 315,500
Hobe - St. Lucie Conserv. WCD	Unit 3 Water Control Structure	\$ 40,000

SUPPORT

South Florida Fair Agriplex/Shelter	\$ 1,000,000
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