

# **Palm Beach County 2019 Federal Agenda**



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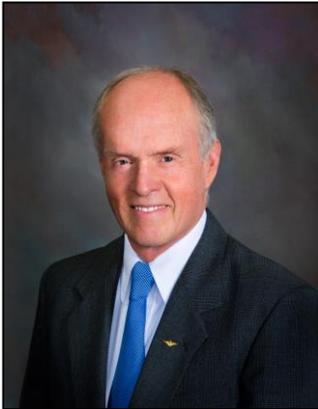
# PALM BEACH COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



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# **TRANSPORTATION**

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## **AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER**

The Palm Beach County Department of Airports is currently preparing an Environmental Assessment for a 1,700-foot extension to Runway 14-32 at F45. The Palm Beach Gardens City Commission agreed not to oppose the 1,700-foot runway extension provided Palm Beach County submits an application to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for the construction of an air traffic control tower (ATCT) and diligently pursues funding the ATCT through completion.

This agreement took the form of an Interlocal Agreement, which was approved by the Board of County Commissioners in 2016. This condition of approval can best be met utilizing the FAA's Federal Contract Tower Program. Under the Contract Tower Program, the FAA contracts air traffic control services to the private sector. The FAA provides oversight and monitoring of these contract towers and the FAA certifies all contract controllers.

The FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 makes contract tower construction and equipment eligible for funding from the Small Airport AIP account. The runway extension and an ATCT at F45 would not only make the airport a more desirable reliever for Palm Beach International Airport, it would also assist in fulfilling a commitment to the neighboring community.

## **OPERATIONS OF LANTANA AIRPORT**

Palm Beach County is seeking relief from temporary flight restrictions (TFRs) that have been imposed on aircraft operations at the Lantana Airport during Presidential visits to Mar-a-Lago. While all county-owned airports are impacted by limitations imposed by TFRs, the Lantana Airport bears an undue burden since it is the only airport that is effectively closed when TFRs are active due to its proximity to Mar-a-Lago.

The County continues to SUPPORT encouraging the United States Secret Service (USSS), Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to continue to work to find a reasonable accommodation to allow limited aircraft operations during TFRs without comprising the safety or security of the President.

## **ROAD CONSTRUCTION, RAIL AND TRAFFIC ENGINEERING**

### **INFRASTRUCTURE PACKAGE**

House Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) Committee Chairman Pete DeFazio (D-OR) has plans to craft an infrastructure package in 2019. The bill would likely include funding for surface transportation, rail and transit among other things. Chairman

DeFazio also has plans to reauthorize surface transportation legislation, which is set to expire in 2020.

Palm Beach County will work with local stakeholders to advocate for and monitor programs and projects that benefit our region in any infrastructure package introduced this session. In addition to transportation infrastructure funding, Congress should look to expand existing grant funding opportunities for water and wastewater infrastructure, including septic to sewer conversion to achieve water quality improvements.

### **FARM TO MARKET ROAD REPAIR**

Agriculture is essential to the economy and to ensure the well-being and nutrition of our citizens. To transport produce from farms to our tables, trucks and other heavy equipment use rural roads which service agricultural communities. These roads experience severe and accelerated wear and tear and are typically located in areas where the resources and funds to repair these roads can be limited.

Palm Beach County SUPPORTS resources being made available to rural communities to assist in repairing these roads as efficiently as possible, so transport of agricultural products can move safely and quickly from farms to consumers.

### **PASSENGER RAIL ON FEC CORRIDOR & US-27 CORRIDOR**

All Aboard Florida is developing a privately owned, operated and maintained intercity passenger rail service. Its first trains began operations between its newly built stations in Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach in January 2018. A station is currently under construction in downtown Miami, and a future Intermodal Station is planned at the Orlando International Airport. Continue to monitor rail development progress on the FEC corridor, and the US-27 corridor to seek opportunities and additional dedicated funding for Tri-Rail service area expansion, mitigation of adverse noise impacts through investment in equipment to establish quiet zones, increased safety, and minimizing traffic impacts where possible.

### **STATE ROAD 7 EXTENSION**

State Road 7 has been on the County's Thoroughfare Plan and Long Range Transportation Plan since 1972. It is shown on the County's Comprehensive Plan extending from Okeechobee Boulevard to Northlake Boulevard. The County has already constructed a portion of this roadway from Okeechobee Boulevard north to 60th Street. This roadway extension is considered a necessary connection for adequate traffic flow in the central/western area and will be an important safety/evacuation route. SUPPORT efforts to continue the extension of State Road 7.

### **GLADES AREA ROAD CONSTRUCTION/STREET REPAIR**

More than any other issue facing Belle Glade, South Bay and Pahokee today, the repair and rebuilding of streets are the cities' number one concern. The three cities have outlined road resurfacing and reconstruction projects on Collector/Residential Roadways. SUPPORT the tri-cities request to continue repair and maintenance on these roads essential for future economic recovery in the region.

### **TRUCK SIZE AND WEIGHT**

There is concern that Congress is considering changes to federal standards that would increase the allowed truck size and weight on roads. Longer and heavier trucks accelerate the deterioration of roads and bridges, putting additional pressure on financially strained local governments to fund infrastructure. Since most truck trips begin and end on the local road system, local government agencies would face increased responsibility for impacts and repairs. Taxpayers subsidize heavy truck operations by nearly \$2 billion each year on federally funded roadways, and an equal amount annually on state and locally funded roadways, since truck fees do not cover the damage that trucks do to roads and bridges. Additionally, road safety would be strongly affected. Longer trucks are harder to steer and have poorer stability, a longer stopping distance, and a larger crash footprint. These characteristics contribute to them having a higher fatal accident involvement rate than smaller trucks.

OPPOSE any legislation that seeks to increase truck size or weight limits beyond those in current federal law because of the tremendous highway safety, infrastructure damage, and transportation funding implications.

### **PALM TRAN**

#### **FAST ACT**

Palm Beach County SUPPORTS attempts to increase the appropriations under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act similar to FY17 and FY18 levels, which both saw nearly \$1 billion increases over the prior fiscal year. Palm Beach County SUPPORTS continued funding appropriations for the following Federal Transit Administration grant programs funded through the FAST Act:

- Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities Grant Funds—This grant makes federal resources available for designated recipients to replace, rehabilitate and purchases buses and bus-related equipment. Palm Tran received \$1,616,858 in grants for Bus and Bus Facilities in FY17.
- Section 5310 Senior and Disabled Individual Grant Funds—One-third of Palm Tran's budget is allocated to Palm Tran Connection, a division that provides transportation for seniors, disabled and individuals that are transportation disadvantaged. Palm Tran is currently seeking \$1,218,851 in grants to overhaul the paratransit fleet.

- Section 5311 Rural Grant Funds—Palm Tran received \$626,758 in Section 5311 grant funds in FY18 to assist with providing service to Palm Beach County residents in the Glades region.
- Section 5324 Emergency Relief Grant Funds—Palm Tran has applied for grant funds under this section in the amount of \$1,297,034 to cover costs of emergency operating expenses for evacuations, temporary emergency service, disaster preparation, emergency repairs and protective measures related to Hurricane Irma in September 2017.

Palm Beach County, with the help of funding available through the FAST Act, is planning to undertake the following projects:

### Fare Interoperability

Palm Beach County is pursuing regional interoperable implementation of the latest fare technology available. Palm Beach County plans to make travel throughout the region seamless and is working with our transit neighbors at the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (SFRTA), Broward County Transit (BCT) and Miami-Dade Transit (MDT) to make this a reality. Palm Beach County is requesting \$7 million for the procurement, installation and integration of various technology programs to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of transportation services.

### Palm Tran Connection Efficiencies Initiative

After a successful implementation of Palm Tran’s Route Performance Maximization (RPM) Project, which was a comprehensive evaluation and system-wide redesign of the bus network, Palm Tran is embarking upon a similar overhaul for Palm Tran Connection. Besides Miami-Dade Transit, Connection provides more paratransit trips than any other provider in the State of Florida. Palm Tran is seeking to revamp the process for eligibility determinations, reservation procedures, existing policies and future growth strategies. In addition, Connection seeks to implement its fleet replacement schedule making it more nimble and adaptable to the quickly changing transit landscape.

Palm Tran Connection is a vital service in the community. Palm Tran will revamp the service in order to control growth and continue meeting the needs of the community. Palm Beach County is seeking \$500,000 for the procurement of consulting assistance on this project.

### Bus Driver and Pedestrian Protection Act

Palm Beach County SUPPORTS legislation designed to protect bus operators and reduce vehicular and pedestrian accidents involving buses. The County would propose, however, removing any mandates that grant recipients cooperatively develop risk reduction plans with collective bargaining unit representatives as this might thwart the implementation of such risk reduction plans.

### Bus Shelter Expansion

Palm Beach County is requesting \$11.8 million to completely overhaul our bus shelter inventory. This includes replacing 334 existing shelters that are between 10 and 15 years old, and 250 additional shelters for a new total of 584. Currently, only 10% of our 3,200 stops have shelters. The existing shelters are deteriorating and need replacement as well as upgrades to shelter pads to maintain ADA compliance. Additional shelters are necessary to protect riders from the weather, especially during the summer months and rainy season.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL & NATURAL RESOURCES**

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### **GLADES CITIES WATER INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT**

The Cities of Belle Glade, Pahokee and South Bay are located in a socio-economically disadvantaged area of Western Palm Beach County. Prior to 2008, their source of water was Lake Okeechobee, an unreliable and poor quality source. The County constructed a \$58 million regional water plant using a reliable brackish water source and reverse osmosis technology to improve water supply delivery in the area. Unfortunately, the water infrastructure (pipelines) in all three cities is aged, was poorly constructed, and has greatly increased the costs in providing high quality potable water to the population of the region. As much as 40% of the water being produced by the plant is leaking into the ground, compromising overall water quality. Furthermore, the deteriorating and undersized pipes of the system have problems providing adequate pressure during maximum daily flow conditions, particularly during fire flow events. There is considerable piping in each community that needs to be replaced to stem the leakage and improve operating pressures. These improvements are desperately needed in order to preserve the high quality of the water from the new plant and to maintain adequate fire flow pressures in the system protecting the public health and safety of the citizens of the three cities. The cost to construct these improvements was originally \$25 million and has significantly exceeded this due to the existing conditions of the infrastructure. To assist in the restoration of the infrastructure, the county requests federal matching assistance to ensure the ability to deliver the highest quality water to meet established demands.

Additionally, SUPPORT federal funds to offset the cost of the construction of the J.W. Corbett Levee to restore flood protection and safety to the residents served by the Indian Trail Improvement District.

### **BEACH RESTORATION**

The County SUPPORTS additional funding programs and regulatory relief for the provision

of storm protection, recreation and habitat on eroded beaches, including supplemental funding for those areas impacted by tropical storm events. The County SUPPORTS the authorization of and appropriations for vital federal beach nourishment projects that provide resiliency from extreme storm events, including the initiation of a General Re-evaluation Report for the Juno Beach Shore Protection Project and authorization of federal participation in the Project.

The County seeks continued federal support for the implementation of Section 1106 of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2016, which allowed for the Army Corps of Engineers to enter into agreements to assume the operations and maintenance costs of an alternative project to maintenance dredging for a federal navigation channel if the costs of the alternative project are less than the costs of maintaining the channel without the project.

### **WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS**

SUPPORT the County proposed Continuing Authorities Projects for habitat restoration in Lake Okeechobee and Lake Worth Lagoon through funding for the required Appraisal Reports and the initiation of the required feasibility studies.

SUPPORT a study of the feasibility of using foreign sand in beach renourishment projects

### **NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT**

Inefficient administration of the **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)** has resulted in delays and increased costs in many County habitat restoration activities. The County seeks changes to NEPA to address these reoccurring issues.

1. SUPPORT amendments to existing laws and regulations to hold Agencies accountable for their review timelines.
2. SUPPORT a revision to 40 CFR 1508.7 allowing flexibility in the interpretation of NEPA language to allow counties to utilize non-traditional alternatives to beach maintenance. The following language is suggested: **“Where cumulative impact uncertainties remain or multiple resource objectives exist, adaptive management provisions for flexible project implementation, such as pilot project configuration, may be incorporated into the selected alternative.”**

### **ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS REGULATORY CHANGES**

Corps regulations contain timeframes for issuing or denying permits. However, federal commenting agencies often exceed regulatory timeframes when reviewing permit applications. When the Corps’ process (including waiting on required comments from other agencies) exceeds the regulatory timeframes, there is currently no consequence or avenue for relief.

The County SUPPORTS an amendment to 33 CFR Part 325 (d) (10) such that a complete application (public notice) starts not only the Corps' internal timeframes for review but also the NEPA Section 7 Consultation timeframes of commenting agencies as well.

### **SAND TRANSFER PLANT**

The Sand Transfer Plant plays an integral role in maintaining the Lake Worth Inlet federal channel, but presently at the sole cost of the local sponsor. As the Army Corps does provide for annual channel dredging in its O&M budget, the addition of approximately \$300,000/year is far less than the alternative of having to fund an additional dredging event.

The County seeks federal support for the implementation of Section 1106 of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2016, which would allow the Army Corps of Engineers to enter into agreements to assume the operations and maintenance costs of the Sand Transfer Plant if the costs to operate it are less than the costs of maintaining the channel without the project.

### **CLIMATE COMPACT**

#### **SOUTHEAST FLORIDA REGIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE COMPACT**

##### **Background**

Southeast Florida is one of the most vulnerable areas in the country to climate change and sea level rise. Recognizing their shared challenges, Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe counties ("Compact counties") adopted the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact ("Compact") in 2010. The Compact includes a commitment to develop and advocate for joint state and federal legislative policies. Accordingly, the Compact counties have adopted a *Federal Energy and Climate Legislative Program* each year since 2011. The Compact has adopted as part of the Program the *2017 Federal Energy and Climate Legislative Principles* to articulate the overarching goals for the Program, as well as *Federal Energy and Climate Legislative Priorities* to identify those legislative issues that Compact members will support in the upcoming legislative session.

##### **The County is committed to supporting the Principles and Priorities established by the Compact in the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact Counties 2019 Federal Legislative Priorities and Principles with the top priorities as:**

SUPPORT efforts to reauthorize, improve, and strengthen the National Flood Insurance Program with provisions that limit premium rate increases and protect affordability, encourage greater program participation, expand the Increased Cost of Compliance Program, emphasize and increase funding for mitigation, and develop accurate flood maps.

SUPPORT action by the US Army Corps of Engineers to reassess the Central and South Florida Flood Control Project given changing climate conditions, especially sea level rise.

SUPPORT reauthorization of the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000 and increased funding for coral reef health, protection, and restoration.

SUPPORT the establishment of a national price on carbon, especially revenue-neutral and public dividend proposals.

OPPOSE weakening of vehicle fuel-economy standards and revocation of the waiver allowing California to set its own fuel-economy standards.

OPPOSE the “Affordable Clean Energy” plan for existing power plants proposed by the Trump Administration and any federal restrictions on state-level action to regulate emissions from power plants.

### **COMPREHENSIVE EVERGLADES RESTORATION PROJECT/HERBERT HOOVER DIKE**

The federal share of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) should be sufficient to fully implement all plan components at the agreed upon cost share in accordance with adopted project schedules.

The failure of the Herbert Hoover Dike surrounding Lake Okeechobee could have severe effects on the surrounding region, including Palm Beach County. The Dike is currently undergoing rehabilitation with an estimated date of completion of 2022. The Board SUPPORTS any and all actions by the federal government to expedite full rehabilitation of the Herbert Hoover Dike. The State of Florida contributed \$50 million to help expedite the necessary work on the Dike during the 2017 Legislative Session and an additional \$50 million during the 2018 Legislative Session.

The County SUPPORTS continued appropriations for the Hoover Dike rehabilitation and Everglades Restoration at levels that accelerate the current pace of construction and fulfill the federal government’s responsibility for cost share for CERP and the protection of the public health, safety, and welfare of those communities around Lake Okeechobee and OPPOSES any redirection of these funds for other federal projects.

The County additionally supports the re-examination of the Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule by the United States Army Corps of Engineers to ensure that the management of Lake Okeechobee optimizes environmental benefits while maintaining the original purposes of the Central and Southern Florida Project for Flood Control and Other Purposes (1948) to provide flood control and water supply to the citizens of South Florida.

### **WATERS OF THE US (WOTUS)**

Palm Beach County SUPPORTS the efforts of the Trump administration to further clarify the definition of “Waters of the United States” under the Clean Water Act. The County SUPPORTS legislative and regulatory efforts to balance the needs of a growing population and economy

with the need to protect and preserve those natural resources that are vital to support that growth. Palm Beach County understands the meaning and purpose of the Clean Water Act and the agencies' goal of protecting our nation's water resources while providing clarity and certainty for the regulated community. Any approach to protecting water quality in America must be accomplished through the Clean Water Act's vision of cooperative federalism, including partnerships at the local, regional and state levels. Palm Beach County continues to welcome the opportunity to work with the EPA, the Corps and our local, regional and state governments in promulgating a reasonable and rational rule that will achieve the protection of our nation's water resources while recognizing the practical realities of specific regions.

### **OFFSHORE OIL DRILLING**

In November of 2018, the citizens of the state of Florida passed Amendment 9, which is a ban on offshore drilling for oil and natural gas on lands beneath all state waters. The County SUPPORTS federal legislation that will establish an Act prohibiting offshore drilling on the outer continental shelf off the State of Florida. The County OPPOSES sonic blasting off the Atlantic coast that is known to damage ocean wildlife.

### **DERELICT VESSELS**

A vessel is considered derelict when it is left stored or abandoned in a wrecked, junked or demolished condition on public waters or private property without the consent of the property owner. Derelict vessels cause harm to waterways and danger environmental stability.

Palm Beach County SUPPORTS any grant or funding opportunities to assist in derelict vessel removal.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY & DISASTER RELIEF**

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### **SOBER HOMES**

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is charged with the interpretation of the Fair Housing Amendments Act. There is an urgent need for clarification from HUD regarding the language within the Fair Housing Amendments Act ("the Act") and its application to sober homes. The courts have applied the Act inconsistently over the years and this has caused a great burden to be placed upon the states and local governments, some of which are currently facing over-concentration of sober homes in their single-family residential communities, as well as rampant abuse of vulnerable residents with substance use disorder who have been exploited by unscrupulous sober home owners and managers.

While the County has made strides with supported changes to federal rules and state funding

of a local Sober Homes Task Force, there is much work still to be done. With a lack of standards and/or oversight of such homes or their operators, there has been increasing abuse and exploitation of the patients/residents in sober homes by the operators. Therefore, there is a real need for additional clarification from HUD regarding what actions related to sober homes may be taken by states and local governments in order to protect the health, safety, and welfare of both the residents of the homes and the surrounding areas where homes are located.

The County SUPPORTS the following clarifications to the Fair Housing Amendments Act:

- provide a better definition of “currently using drugs or alcohol”
- allow state and/or local governments to require that sober homes be certified or sanctioned by non-profit entities that provide nationally accepted standards to protect residents from exploitation and abuse.

### **OPIOID ABUSE / SUBSTANCE ABUSE DISORDER**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that more than 140 Americans die every day from drug overdoses—including, on average, 91 specifically from opioids.

The Cures Act passed in both the House of Representatives and Senate with strong support and was signed into law in December of 2016. The Cures Act provides multiyear funding to reduce opioid/substance abuse, mental research and drug development. The funding will total \$4.8 billion over the next ten years; however, the funding must be appropriated every year.

Palm Beach County SUPPORTS continued full-funding of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures Act, and will continue to monitor the activities of the federal Opioid Task Force.

### **HURRICANE RELIEF SUPPORT**

FEMA has typically reimbursed for Category B (i.e., protective measures) at 100% cost for the first 30 days of the hurricane relief efforts in declared storms. For Hurricane Michael, however, the timeframe was reduced to 5 days. Palm Beach County SUPPORTS maintaining FEMA reimbursement for Category B at 100% cost for the first 30 days of the hurricane relief efforts in declared storms.

The County continues to SUPPORT expedited funding relief efforts to industries and individuals affected by natural disasters.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE FUNDING**

Palm Beach County SUPPORTS budget requests and funding for important criminal justice programs such as the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act (VAWA), to build on current protections and increase access to justice and safety for all survivors.

Palm Beach County SUPPORTS workplace and community training grants for incarcerated individuals as well as additional funding that promotes re-entry programs.

### **TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS**

Continue to monitor and request for the continuation of the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Haitians living in Florida who have been displaced due to economic instability and natural disasters in their country.

### **CYBER SECURITY**

Cyberspace and its underlying infrastructure are vulnerable to a wide range of risk stemming from both physical and cyber threats and hazards.

A range of traditional crimes are now being perpetrated through cyberspace. This includes child exploitation conspiracies, banking and financial fraud, intellectual property violations, and other crimes, all of which have substantial human and economic consequences.

Palm Beach County SUPPORTS legislation to strengthen the security and resiliency of cyberspace.

### **UNMANNED AIRCRAFT**

The County is concerned that without a prohibition of drones over or in the proximity of critical county facilities, such as jails, law enforcement facilities, courthouses, and other government buildings, 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 a continued partnership with the FAA to ensure that critical infrastructure facilities are also protected under unmanned aircraft use rules.

### **HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING**

Omnibus legislation could include up to \$1.5 billion for State and Local Programs, which includes funding for several stand-alone DHS/FEMA grant programs, including: state homeland security grants, UASI, and Port Security. The programs are administered primarily through formula allocations to the states, but also entail competitive grants to states and regions for specific policy areas, including critical infrastructure, counterterrorism, and transportation. Palm Beach County SUPPORTS the maintenance of current funding levels, or further enhancement of grant opportunities for security funding.

## **FEMA FUNDING FOR PARKS & RECREATION/PRE-DISASTER MITIGATION PROGRAMS**

Monitor any legislation concerning reauthorization of the Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act particularly language that would have a significant negative impact on parks and recreation areas. Specifically, language should be opposed that denies funding under the Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Act for disaster relief to parks, recreation departments, beaches and other similar entities. Also, monitor any proposals for FEMA to offer pre-disaster mitigation pilot grants in communities throughout the nation.

Also, SUPPORT the National Parks and Recreation Association's legislative platform.

## **MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FUNDING**

The County SUPPORTS the continued appropriation of funds for mental health services. It is estimated that untreated and mistreated mental illness costs American business, government and taxpayers \$113 billion annually. The County SUPPORTS efforts to develop evidence based community care that is accessible to all as well as treatment models that provide for a coordinated continuum of care for patients. Funding efforts should not be solely focused on treating those with the most disabling forms of mental illness, but rather a range of prevention, wellness, and crisis treatment, as well as educational outreach to reduce the stigmatism surrounding mental health. Additionally, the county SUPPORTS protecting the expansion of mental health benefits and parity protections under the Affordable Care Act.

## **FEDERAL CATASTROPHIC INSURANCE**

For years, members of Congress from Florida and other coastal states have proposed creating a regional or national catastrophe fund to pool the risk for states and reduce the burden on taxpayers from natural disasters.

Previous House proposals called for a portion of homeowner's insurance premiums in participating states to be used to create a national fund. They provided reinsurance for state disaster funds, and would create federal financial backing of the fund if necessary.

Federal Catastrophic Insurance could be modeled similar to the Federal Flood Insurance Fund and could cover hurricanes, floods, tornados, earthquakes, and other natural disasters.

The County SUPPORTS amending the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) to allow multi-peril coverage from a national catastrophic insurance fund could help create solvency for the flood program.

## **NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM (NFIP) REFORM**

SUPPORT legislative efforts, policies, and programs that ensure all property owners can receive affordable flood insurance within a program framework that helps the NFIP become financially stable.

## **ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS (ACOE) HERBERT HOOVER DIKE ISSUE**

In December 2014, Palm Beach County drafted a letter to the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) asking them to certify the work done on the South Eastern portion of the Herbert Hoover Dike so FEMA could use that data when drafting an updated flood map for the County. Under the current flood map draft, most of the Glades region of the County is designated a flood area and thus would be subject to increased insurance premiums. Without updated data, FEMA cannot make the necessary changes to the flood map calculations. Demand the ACOE certify completed work on the Dike so it can be used to calculate newly proposed FEMA flood map. Continue to request seclusion from the flood maps for the area abutting the dike under federal rule guidelines until such time as repair work on the Dike is certified by the ACOE.

## **VETERANS/PENSION POACHER**

Individuals known as “pension poachers” are those who charge to ostensibly assist seniors with applying for benefits, but often times are trying to do little more than prey on America's elderly and disabled veterans. It is illegal for anyone who is not an approved agent or attorney to charge veterans a fee for assisting them in filing a claim or appeal with the VA; however, there is currently no penalty for violations. Due to this, veterans are being defrauded, often up to thousands of dollars, by financial predators who charge fees and provide little to no help.

SUPPORT legislation that would make it easier to identify and penalize individuals participating in these types of scams that have compromised a veteran's ability to receive their pension benefits.

## **FUNDING FOR ENHANCED LIGHTING IN HIGH CRIME AREAS**

In an effort to continue promoting safety in high crime areas, grant opportunities should be created to enhance lighting in these areas. According to a systematic review published by the Campbell Collaboration, improved street lighting is thought to affect crime in two ways: by increasing surveillance, thus deterring potential offenders, and by signifying community investment and pride in an area.

In Palm Beach County, Countywide Community Revitalization Team (CCRT) areas are residential neighborhoods generally characterized by infrastructure deficiencies (such as lack of water, unpaved roads or roads in substandard conditions, etc.); a need for neighborhood parks; a high number of code enforcement violations; and a high level of law

enforcement need. These 85 designated areas may also be characterized by a concentration of very low to moderate-income populations and lower property values with an increased neighborhood crime rate.

Palm Beach County has adopted and currently applies Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles in order to use lighting, amongst others, as a crime deterrent and enhance public safety in numerous areas of the County.

### **REIMBURSEMENT FOR COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH PRESIDENTIAL VISITS**

President Donald J. Trump, a part-time Palm Beach County resident, has spent considerable time in our community. It is expected that when the President is in town local law enforcement and other security related functions will be required of the County and other local governments. The County has since received \$1 million in DOJ grants and \$3.4 million in FEMA grants to reimburse for costs associated with Presidential visits. Continue to work with the federal government to ensure that the local costs (i.e. law enforcement, fire rescue, and emergency management) associated with Presidential visits to his home in Palm Beach County are reimbursed by the federal government.

Additionally, work with the Secret Service to minimize the economic impact to the County and area businesses from closures to the Lantana Airport related to those visits.

### **CALLER ID SPOOFING**

In 2010, the federal government passed the Truth in Caller ID Act, which made caller ID spoofing illegal if done “with the intent to defraud, cause harm, or wrongfully obtain anything of value” with exemptions for certain law-enforcement purposes.

Palm Beach County SUPPORTS an expansion of the law to extend to cover persons outside of the United States placing calls into the country through any voice or text messaging medium, include intent to harass and deceive the recipient, and hold liable not only the person making the call but the company who provided the technology to enable the spoof. Legitimate uses of the technology, such as a domestic abuse shelter changing its number to protect an occupant of the shelter, would still be permitted.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & FINANCE**

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### **OPPORTUNITY ZONE DESIGNATIONS WITH THE U.S. TREASURY**

Palm Beach County worked collaboratively with the County's municipalities to submit to the State in March 2018 the request of eligible Opportunity Zones for designation. Approximately half of the requested zones were presented to the U.S. Treasury by the State while the other half were replaced with other eligible zones. Requested zones that were eliminated included some of the most distressed areas in Palm Beach County including Riviera Beach and portions of Belle Glade where incentives for businesses such as this would provide a significant economic boost.

### **SOUTH FLORIDA INLAND PORT**

The development of an inland intermodal logistics complex in Western Palm Beach County, including completion of rail connections serving ports of South Florida and Tampa Bay, would create a significant economic impact to an area that is fiscally and economically depressed. At the same time, it will provide a critical link in Florida's ability to efficiently handle rapidly growing levels of international commerce. Land to accommodate this project in Western Palm Beach County is consistent with recommendations of the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funded Glades Region Master Plan (GRMP). It is located in the Glades Region of Western unincorporated Palm Beach County. The target site of 850 acres can accommodate 10 million square feet, including a rail yard tie-in to the South Central Florida Express track and is within close proximity to an area of high unemployment/underemployment.

This inland facility, which has gained significant regional support, would be a hub for goods assembly, warehousing and manufacturing, as well as furnishing logistics providers with a central intermodal location between ports that lack sufficient waterfront acreage to accommodate trade volumes projected to double by 2020. This would create additional options for freight movement and distribution from Post-Panama ships heading to South Florida. SUPPORT workforce and funding opportunities to further the development of the inland port facility.

### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT**

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program offers a source of grant funding to states, counties, and municipalities used to meet local housing, economic, and community development needs. Palm Beach County focuses its CDBG funds on investments in infrastructure and public facilities including water and sewer systems, roadways and

drainage improvements, and parks and recreational facilities in lower income neighborhoods. CDBG proves particularly important in lower income communities where municipal governments are fiscally constrained and property owners cannot bear assessments for public improvements. The impact of CDBG dollars is amplified by their use to leverage public and private investment in local projects. In Palm Beach County, this is exemplified by the provision of CDBG to non-profit social service agencies which use CDBG to leverage private donations and to meet matching requirements for State and other federal funding programs. CDBG funds are also a vital tool to stimulate economic activity. In addition to the economic activity directly generated by CDBG expenditures, Palm Beach County uses CDBG to support business growth and entrepreneur development through technical assistance, financial sourcing, and other business services.

### **NEW MARKET TAX CREDIT GRANT**

In 2018, Palm Beach County submitted a \$43 million New Market Tax Credit application (Control Number: 18NMA005881). The County's Department of Housing and Economic Sustainability (HES) Loan Programs Experience and Success Rate over the past three years, including programs from HUD, EPA, USDA, DOE, has created over 2000 jobs to date. Of the \$35 million in local loan pool, \$27 million in loans have been made, creating almost \$100 million of private investment in Palm Beach County.

SUPPORT County efforts to secure future NMTC grants.

### **MARKETPLACE FAIRNESS ACT**

SUPPORT Marketplace Fairness Act (MFA) legislation that grants states the authority to compel online and catalog retailers ("remote sellers"), no matter where they are located, to collect sales tax at the time of a transaction - exactly like local retailers are already required to do.

The latest iteration of the Marketplace Fairness Act (MFA) would address a loophole in the current tax code by effectively allowing state and local governments to collect sales tax on online and remote sales, which they are already owed under current law. The legislation would seek to reach a compromise between business community and state/local governments, encouraging states to join a clearinghouse for collecting sales tax.

### **FREE TRADE**

Monitor the implementation of federal trade agreements so that jobs related to Palm Beach County's agricultural industry are not adversely impacted. SUPPORT language in trade agreements that include strict measures to control the spread of animal, insect, and animal pests to protect Florida's crops and close the free trade loophole to protect produce crops.

## **FAIR CHANCE ACT**

The Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs Act of 2017 or “Fair Chance Act” was introduced in April of 2017. The Fair Chance Act would require both the federal government and federal contractors to remove the conviction history question from their job applications and defer any background checks to the end of the hiring process. It includes exceptions for law enforcement and national security jobs, positions requiring access to classified information, and those for which access to criminal history information before the conditional offer stage is required by law.

Palm Beach County SUPPORTS the passage of this legislation.

## **HOUSING - INCOME LIMITS**

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) sets income limits that determine eligibility for assisted housing programs. These income limits are based on median family income estimates and fair market rent definitions. Work with HUD to develop guidelines that separate the Glades region or other local disadvantaged communities from the overall county calculations if those calculations are beneficial to securing additional housing funds and resources to the region. In addition, SUPPORT efforts to maintain and expand USDA rural housing options, as well as, SUPPORT for senior housing initiatives.

## **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

### **CADILLAC TAX UNDER THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT**

The "Cadillac tax" is a component of the Affordable Care Act that will trigger a 40 percent excise tax on health benefits that exceed a certain threshold. The tax was developed as an alternative to placing a cap on the existing tax exclusion for health benefits. Changes in federal law during 2015 extended the effective date of the tax from 2018 to 2020, but employers are already taking action to plan for and/or avoid the tax. It was further extended to 2022 under the tax package recently signed by President Trump. Affected employers will pay an average of \$2,700 per employee that year.

Continue to monitor additional developments related to the Cadillac Tax.

### **TITLE IV-E FUNDS**

Every state’s largest source of funding for child welfare services comes from federal Title IV-E funds. In nearly every state, these funds can only be expended after the government removes a child from a home due to unsafe conditions. In 2005, Florida recommended another solution to the federal government: Allow flexibility in the use of Title IV-E funds so

necessary services could be provided to children and families before safety is threatened, and before children endure the trauma of being removed from their families. Florida's Title IV-E Waiver is set to expire September 2019. Palm Beach County SUPPORTS the reauthorization of Florida's Title IV-E Waiver.

### **VETERANS' HOMELESSNESS**

According to the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, over 40,000 veterans are homeless on any given night. In Palm Beach County, there has been a 73% increase in homeless veterans over the previous year.

Palm Beach County SUPPORTS efforts and programs put forth by the federal government to assist in ending homelessness for our veterans.

## **EDUCATION**

### **INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICES (IMLS)**

In the President's Proposed Budget to Congress for FY 2019, there is a proposal for the closure of the Institute of Museum and Library Sciences.

Without IMLS funding for museums and libraries, it could become more difficult for people to gain access to the internet, continue their education, learn critical research skills, and have the resources to help them find employment.

Palm Beach County SUPPORTS continued funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services.