

PALM BEACH COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



Meeting Date: December 15, 2020 [] Consent [X] Regular [] Public Hearing

Department: Administration

Submitted For: Legislative Affairs Office



I. EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Motion and Title: Staff recommends motion to Approve: the proposed 2021 State Legislative Agenda.

Summary: The 2021 State Legislative Agenda outlines issues that the County's Legislative Affairs and Intergovernmental Affairs Offices, in conjunction with the County's contract state lobbyists, will advocate for during the upcoming 2021 state legislative session. The 2021 State Legislative Agenda includes general government and environmental & natural resources issues with a focus on items related to economic development, substance use and mental health, affordable housing, homelessness, transportation and water and environmental restoration. Countywide (CK)

Background and Policy Issues: Each year the Board of County Commissioners adopts a program of legislative and appropriation priorities for the State Legislative Session.

Attachments:

- 1. Proposed 2021 State Legislative Agenda – General Government Issues
2. Proposed 2021 State Legislative Agenda – Environmental & Natural Resources



Recommended by: [Signature] Department Director Date 12/7/20

Approved By: [Signature] County Administration Date 12/7/2020

II. FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

A. Five Year Summary of Fiscal Impact:

Fiscal Years	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Capital Expenditures	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Operating Costs	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
External Revenues	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Program Income (County)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
In-Kind Match (County)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
NET FISCAL IMPACT	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
No. ADDITIONAL FTE POSITIONS (Cumulative)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Is Item Included In Current Budget? Yes _____ No _____
 Budget Account No.: Fund _____ Department _____ Unit _____
 Object _____ Reporting Category _____

B. Recommended Sources of Funds/Summary of Fiscal Impact:

C. Departmental Fiscal Review:
 There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

III. REVIEW COMMENTS

A. OFMB Fiscal and/or Contract Dev. and Control Comments:

Balegon Brown 12/7/2020
 OFMB
 12/7
J. J. Jacob 12/18/2020
 Contract Dev. and Control
 12-8-20 TW

B. Legal Sufficiency:

Jean-Adel Williams
 Assistant County Attorney

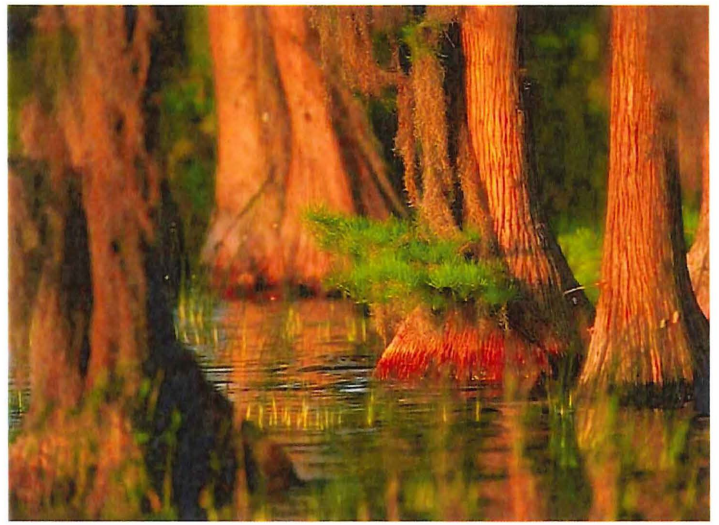
C. Other Department Review:

 Department Director

PALM BEACH COUNTY

2021 STATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

GENERAL GOVERNMENT ISSUES



Board of County Commissioners

Dave Kerner, Mayor

Robert S. Weinroth, Vice Mayor

Maria G. Marino

Gregg K. Weiss

Maria Sachs

Melissa McKinlay

Mack Bernard

**Verdenia C. Baker,
County Administrator**

PALM BEACH COUNTY

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



DAVE KERNER
MAYOR
DISTRICT 3
561/355-2203
DKERNER@pbcgov.org



ROBERT S. WEINROTH
VICE MAYOR
DISTRICT 4
561/355-2204
RWEINROTH@pbcgov.org



MARIA G. MARINO
DISTRICT 1
561/355-2201
MMARINO@pbcgov.org



GREGG K. WEISS
DISTRICT 2
561/355-2202
GWEISS@pbcgov.org



MARIA SACHS
DISTRICT 5
561/355-2205
MSACHS@pbcgov.org



MELISSA MCKINLAY
DISTRICT 6
561/355-2206
MMCKINLAY@pbcgov.org



MACK BERNARD
DISTRICT 7
561/355-2207
MBERNARD@pbcgov.org

2021 STATE LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.....	7
GLADES REGIONAL INITIATIVES.....	7
FLORIDA’S FILM, TELEVISION, AND DIGITAL MEDIA.....	7
BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH FUNDING.....	8
ENTERPRISE FLORIDA.....	8
JOB GROWTH GRANT FUND.....	8
VISIT FLORIDA.....	8
BLUEWAY TRAIL.....	8
PEANUT ISLAND	8
COVID-19	9
SUBSTANCE USE AND MENTAL HEALTH.....	9
SUBSTANCE USE AND MENTAL HEALTH FUNDING.....	9
OPIOID AND SUBSTANCE USE.....	10
SOBER HOMES.....	10
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AND HEALTHCARE.....	11
AFFORDABLE HOUSING.....	11
HOMELESSNESS.....	11
HOMELESS RESOURCE FACILITIES.....	12
TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED PROGRAMS.....	12
PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTION FOR HOMELESS POINT IN TIME COUNT IDENTIFYING DATA.....	12
CHILD WELFARE.....	13
SENIOR WELFARE.....	13
ADULTS/STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.....	14
RETINOBLASTOMA.....	14
DENTAL ACCESS.....	14
STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES.....	15
PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTION FOR MEDICAL EXAMINER.....	15
BUDGET & TAXATION POLICY.....	15

UNFUNDED MANDATES.....	15
ARTICLE V.....	16
INTERNET SALES TAX.....	16
VACATION RENTALS.....	16
TOURIST DEVELOPMENT TAX.....	17
ARCADES.....	17

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE..... 18

GROWTH MANAGEMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE.....	18
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (FDOT) GRANT PROGRAMS.....	18
NATURAL GAS FUEL REBATE PROGRAM.....	19
RAIL TRANSPORTATION.....	19
AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES/TECHNOLOGY ADVANCEMENTS.....	19
INVESTMENTS IN HYBRID AND ELECTRICAL BUSES.....	19
COVID-19 SPENDING FLEXIBILITY	20
TRANSPORTATION NETWORK COMPANIES (TNCS).....	20
5G INSTALLATION PRE-EMPTION.....	20
VW SETTLEMENT TRUST FUND LAWSUIT	20
BROADBAND ACCESS	20
SR 715 NAME DESIGNATION.....	21

PUBLIC SAFETY..... 21

REENTRY FOR NON-VIOLENT OFFENDERS.....	21
REGULATION OF DRONES NEAR CRITICAL COUNTY FACILITIES.....	21
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTIONS.....	22
MARSY’S LAW AMENDMENTS	22
LICENSING PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTION.....	23
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS ISSUES.....	23
VICTIMS’ SERVICES.....	24
BATTERERS’ INTERVENTION PROGRAMS (BIPS).....	25
HEALTH CERTIFICATES.....	25
DANGEROUS DOGS.....	25
ANIMAL CARE AND CONTROL PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTION.....	26
LIFEGUARD CERTIFICATION AND TRAINING.....	26

CRIMINAL JUSTICE..... 26

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.....	26
------------------------	----

CENTER FOR YOUTHFUL OFFENDERS.....	27
JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER.....	27
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES GLADES REGION FACILITY.....	27
MARCHMAN ACT REVISIONS.....	27
PRE-TRIAL RELEASE.....	28
REGAIN LOCAL ABILITY FOR LIMITED GUN REGULATION.....	29
BRITTANY’S LAW - DRIVER SAFETY FOR MINORS.....	29
PRESUMPTION OF IMPAIRMENT WHILE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THC AND OFFICER TRAINING.....	29
FIRE RESCUE.....	30
FLAVOR PICT ROAD FIRE STATION.....	30
CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS.....	30
MOBILE INTEGRATED HEALTH.....	30
FIRE CODE ENFORCEMENT.....	31
CONSUMER SERVICES.....	31
TOWING BILL.....	31
MOBILE HOME DISCLOSURE.....	31
LOCAL GOVERNMENT/ADMINISTRATIVE.....	31
VALUE ADJUSTMENT BOARD.....	31
DISCRIMINATION PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTION.....	31
PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTION FOR SOLICITATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.....	32
PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTION FOR COUNTY ATTORNEY’S AND COUNTY ADMINISTRATORS.....	32
PUBLIC RECORDS REQUESTS ABUSE.....	32
TESTIMONIALS FOR PUBLIC OFFICIALS.....	32
SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY.....	32
EDUCATION.....	33
HIGHRIDGE FAMILY CENTER IMPROVEMENTS.....	33
STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES	
STATE LIBRARIES.....	33
SMART HORIZONS CAREER ONLINE SCHOOL.....	34
EARLY LEARNING COALITION.....	35
PALM BEACH COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT.....	35

PALM BEACH STATE COLLEGE FUNDING..... 35
FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY FUNDING..... 36
CULTURAL ARTS AND HISTORIC GRANTS FUNDING..... 36

AGRICULTURE..... 36

FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAMS..... 36
HUNGER RELIEF PLAN..... 37

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 for improvements to existing affordable housing units as well as the development of new affordable housing units
- Funding for storm water improvements to enhance economic and housing development as well as improve water quality and prevent flooding
- 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

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 ROI 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** allocating funds for the Florida Job Growth Grant Fund (Section 288.101, F.S.) which expired on June 30, 2020, or other incentive programs to support the development of infrastructure and workforce training related to the expansion of economic development throughout the state. \$20 million appropriation was vetoed in 2020.

VISIT FLORIDA

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** full funding for Visit Florida, and will also **MONITOR** discussions regarding the future of the program. 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.

PEANUT ISLAND

Peanut Island is a 79-acre island at the mouth of the Lake Worth inlet which 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 as 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 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 to safeguard this valuable workforce for one of the state's largest industries. Support potential funding distributions from the Federal HEROES ACT or similar legislation that would provide additional resources for local governments and businesses around the state.

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 abuse 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 numbers from the Medical Examiner, opioid overdose deaths have declined approximately 40%. PBC Fire Rescue overdose responses similarly declined by 40%. In the first 6 months of 2019, the Medical Examiner indicated an additional 20% decline. In addition, the Task Force was instrumental in the passage of landmark legislation addressing the treatment industry in 2017 and 2019.

Reports collected in real time by the University of Baltimore confirms that drug overdoses are spiking during the 2020 coronavirus pandemic, rising by 18% with cluster shifting from traditional centralized urban locations to adjacent and surrounding suburban and rural areas.

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 2021 session, including:

- Giving DCF the ability to collect administrative fines imposed for administrative fines for violations imposed pursuant to s. 397.411.

- Making it a felony offense to willfully, knowingly or intentionally, make a material false representation or omission in applying for licensure as a service provider.
- Background screening: Extending the same exemptions from disqualification currently available to service providers to owners, directors, and chief financial officers of certified recovery residences.
- Giving DCF the ability to collect administrative fines imposed for unlawful referrals to and from recovery residences that are not certified.
- Requires the establishment of uniform fire safety standards that apply to recovery residences.

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 \$115.4 million for SHIP. This amount was vetoed by Governor DeSantis as a result of an expected revenue drop due to the COVID pandemic.

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

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** an audit of the Belle Glade Housing Authority and all rural housing authorities utilizing USDA funding by the Joint Legislative Auditing Committee.

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.

The County is also seeking funding to continue operation of the Homeless Resource Facility in the Glades community.

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.

RETINOBLASTOMA

Retinoblastoma is a disease that causes the growth of malignant tumors in the retinal cell layer of the eye and affects one in every 12,000 children. Most cases occur in the first two years of life, which is why it is important that screening of this disease take place between birth and 5 years of age. Worldwide, over 7,000 children die each year due to lack of early detection. Only the State of California has passed legislation that requires eye pathology screening of newborns and infants. In infancy, eye dilation is needed in order for an ophthalmoscope to detect 100% of the tumors. The use of a photograph of the child from parents and/or physicians can aide in the determination of utilizing eye drops necessary for eye dilation. This ten second exam will also detect other ocular diseases that affect newborns, infants and toddlers such as congenital cataracts.

The Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners continues to issue an annual proclamation declaring December as “Joey Bergsma Retinoblastoma Awareness Month” to raise the awareness of this disease. In addition, the Board passed a resolution urging the Legislature to require exams for early detection of Retinoblastoma in newborns and infants.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** efforts to amend Florida Statutes to “require the receiving of certain eye examinations that screen for retinoblastoma.”

Additionally, Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** development of an education handout by the Agency for Health Care Administration to educate parents.

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.

INTERNET SALES TAX

In 2018, the Supreme Court ruled in Wayfair v. South Dakota that states can require online merchants to collect sales taxes for online purchases. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** clarifying and enforcing the existing law relating to the collection of sales tax on taxable items purchased via Internet. Currently, individuals in the State of Florida are obligated to pay taxes on goods purchased online. The burden lies on the individual to remit to the Department of Revenue the tax incurred for online purchases unlike “brick and mortar” businesses where the business is required to collect and remit to the state. The Legislature should clarify law to require all businesses to collect and remit appropriate sales tax on goods purchased online.

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 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.

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 (Florida Statutes § 849.08 and § 849.16). Further, Florida Statute 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 are 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.

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

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 also 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 Belle Glade Flex Pilot is qualified to receive funding from this grant 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 2021/2022.

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 did not fund the program in 2019 or 2020.

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 revenues 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 has begun planning and developing the groundwork for more sustainable transit buses in order to reduce its environmental impact. The new South County Palm Tran Facility, slated to open in early 2021, will feature infrastructure for electric bus charging stations. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** initiatives and cost-share programs that aid transit agencies seeking to replace diesel buses with an electric/hybrid fleet.

Palm Tran **SUPPORTS** any legislation that increases funds deposited into the State Transportation Trust Fund (STTF), 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.

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 safe transit options for our residents. **MONITOR** Legislative efforts to reclassify TNC drivers from 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.

VW SETTLEMENT TRUST FUND LAWSUIT

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection released its Diesel Emissions Mitigation Program which utilizes funds from the settlement. Florida's share of VW settlement funds are to be used for projects aimed at reducing NOx emissions and improving air quality. \$116.4 million (70%) has been allocated toward programs aimed at "School, Transit and Shuttle Buses."

Palm Beach County will **MONITOR** the allocation made to the State of Florida.

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.

PUBLIC SAFETY

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 2020 Legislative Session, Palm Beach County's RESTORE: Re-entry program was appropriated \$470,000. 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 Section 395.0193, 395.1055, 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. Disaster Response

Formerly, the American Red Cross managed the operations of emergency shelters, with Palm Beach County Emergency Management providing support. Currently, Palm Beach County Emergency Management operates and oversees emergency shelters, thus leaving identifying information open to public record and subject to public inspection during a vulnerable time.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** legislation to amend Section 252.355(4), F.S.; to provide for an exemption for identifying data collected at county-run shelters.

3. 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 s. 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 s. 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.

LICENSING PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTION

Palm Beach County started licensing adult entertainers in 1999 to stop the exploitation of minors. However, now the identifying information of adult entertainers are open to public records requests. This could leave many open to the dangers of human traffickers who use the lists to source victims.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** legislation that would exempt personal and identifying information of adult entertainers from public records requests.

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:

- Legislation that would provide for Rape Kit tracking, which would allow access for survivors to track the status of their kits.
- 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 (BIPS)

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, Florida Statutes.
 - 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.

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.

PRESUMPTION OF IMPAIRMENT WHILE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF TETRAHYDOCANNABINOL AND OFFICER TRAINING

While it is unlawful to operate a motor vehicle or boat while impaired by alcohol or a controlled substance, there is currently no provision within state law that sets a presumptive level of impairment by marijuana, like there is with alcohol. This makes it difficult for judges and juries to determine if a defendant was impaired by marijuana, whether lawfully consumed or not, when a victim is either killed or seriously injured by the actions of the defendant. In light of the passage of the constitutional amendment allowing for the use of medical marijuana, and the Florida Legislature's past actions authorizing medical marijuana, Palm Beach

County **SUPPORTS** amending Section 316.193 and 327.35, F.S., to create a standard for determining a presumptive level of impairment when a person is operating a motor vehicle or boat while under the influence of marijuana, and a victim is either killed or seriously injured by the actions of the driver.

In Colorado, the law specifies that drivers with five nanograms of active tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) in their blood can be prosecuted for driving under the influence (DUI). However, no matter the level of THC, law enforcement officers base arrests on observed impairment.

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

FLAVOR PICT ROAD FIRE STATION

In 2020, a development conveyed a civic parcel for a fire station at the corner of Lyons Road and Flavor Pict Extension. This new station will serve a new and existing development in the central part of the Ag Reserve.

In order to meet National fire protection standards, recommendations uphold the belief that such standards reduce average response time and injuries. If this station opened today, it would serve seven large residential communities many of which are 55 and older communities and cover over 600 medical calls a year with an average response time of 10:02 minutes (77% of those calls have a response time over the County's standard of 7:30 minutes).

Therefore, the proposal will maximize the existing public services in the area. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** funding to help offset costs for LEED Certified construction of the new fire station.

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.

EDUCATION

HIGHRIDGE FAMILY CENTER IMPROVEMENTS

Highridge Family Center is a 3 month, Monday through Friday, trauma-informed residential treatment program for Palm Beach County youth. The County provides services to families with youth ages 11 through 16 years, who are experiencing problems at home, school, with friends, and in the community.

The facility is a residential setting where program participants stay in a dormitory style "house" of up to 12 youth per dorm. The building contains five dorms comprised of 3 male and 2 female dorms that have twenty-four (24) hour supervision. There are also indoor/outdoor recreational areas and the Palm Beach County School District has an on-site school facility to ensure academic progress while participants are in the program.

Major facility improvements are necessary to comply with COVID safety protocols, as well as for some of the indoor and outdoor recreational areas, upgrades to the school facility structures. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** an appropriation for \$1.5 million to help facilitate upgrades to the family center.

STATE LIBRARIES

Local governments receive State support for libraries through three different programs: the State Aid program, the Regional Multitype 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 increased State Aid to Public Libraries by \$1.5 million to \$21.8 million in the 2019 Legislative Session. 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 million 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.

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. Last year, \$1 million in grant funding was allocated. Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** full funding of \$11 million to support all eligible applications for grant funding.

REGIONAL MULTITYPE LIBRARY COOPERATIVES - The Palm Beach County Library System is part of the regional multitype 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. Support for the Cooperatives was increased by \$500,000 to \$2.5 million. Each grantee is awarded up to \$500,000 but it requires a 10% 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 July 30, 2019, 600 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.

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
- School safety and security enhancements
- Investments in Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) to ensure kindergarten readiness
- Base Student Allocation (BSA) increase
- Charter school accountability; and
- Flexibility to make decisions at the local level

Palm Beach County also **SUPPORTS** these COVID-related PBSB priorities:

- Holding the full time equivalent (FTE) harmless for the entire 2020 - 2021 school year.
- Increasing funding for mental health services to specifically address the adverse impact of COVID-19 on the emotional well-being of students and staff.
- Supporting measures that empower local school districts to make their own decisions during emergency situations.

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 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 \$27 million in (Public Education Capital Outlay – 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 FUNDING

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 requesting \$12.8 million dollars in recurring operational funding to assist in sustaining excellence and accelerate its progress along the journey to being a Top 100 institution.

A.D HENDERSON/FAU UNIVERSITY SCHOOL

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** funding for FAU's University School. The University has committed to a 1:1 public/private match for this project. A.D. Henderson is a developmental research (lab) school established in 1968 to enhance instruction and research in specialized subjects to improve outcomes for all students in the country.

CAREER EDUCATION FUNDING

STEM, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, 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.

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.

PALM BEACH COUNTY

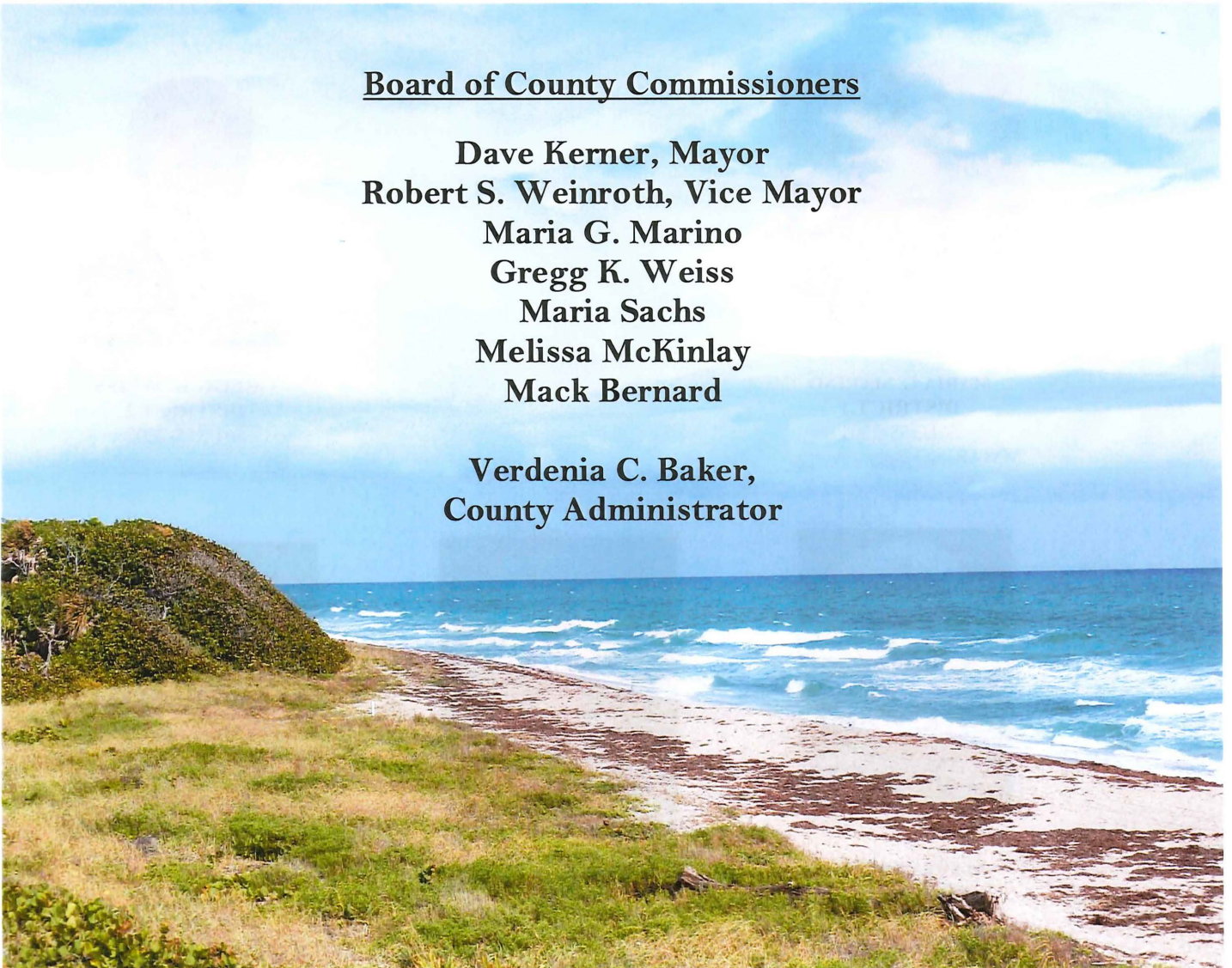
**2021 STATE
LEGISLATIVE AGENDA**

**ENVIRONMENTAL AND
NATURAL RESOURCES ISSUES**

Board of County Commissioners

Dave Kerner, Mayor
Robert S. Weinroth, Vice Mayor
Maria G. Marino
Gregg K. Weiss
Maria Sachs
Melissa McKinlay
Mack Bernard

Verdenia C. Baker,
County Administrator



Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners



DAVE KERNER
MAYOR
DISTRICT 3
561/355-2203
DKERNER@pbcgov.org



ROBERT WEINROTH
VICE MAYOR
DISTRICT 4
561/355-2204
RWEINROTH@pbcgov.org



MARIA G. MARINO
DISTRICT 1
561/355-2201
MMARINO@pbcgov.org



GREGG K. WEISS
DISTRICT 2
561/355-2202
GWEISS@pbcgov.org



MARIA SACHS
DISTRICT 5
561/355-2205
MSACHS@pbcgov.org



MELISSA MCKINLAY
DISTRICT 6
561/355-2206
MMCKINLAY@pbcgov.org



MACK BERNARD
DISTRICT 7
561/355-2207
MBERNARD@pbcgov.org

2021 STATE LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

LAKE OKEECHOBEE RESTORATION.....	4
LAKE OKEECHOBEE WATERSHED RESTORATION.....	4
LOXAHATCHEE RIVER WATERSHED RESTORATION.....	4
GLADES REGION INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM:	5
BEACH AND INLET MANAGEMENT PROJECT APPROPRIATIONS	6
LOXAHATCHEE RIVER PRESERVATION INITIATIVE	7
LAKE WORTH LAGOON INITIATIVE.....	8
LAKE OKEECHOBEE RESTORATION	9
PHASE II OF THE J.W. CORBETT LEVEE SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PROJECT.....	9
MOSQUITO BORNE DISEASE FUNDING.....	10
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION - LAND MANAGEMENT.....	10
PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS TO IMPROVE WATER QUALITY.....	11
SEPTIC TO SEWER CONVERSION.....	11
PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS TO SUPPORT CORAL REEF PROTECTION.....	11
PETROLEUM STORAGE TANK COMPLIANCE LOCAL PROGRAM FUNDING.....	12
MAINTAIN FUNDING FOR THE STATE PETROLEUM CLEANUP PROGRAM.....	13
RESILIENCE/SOUTH FLORIDA CLIMATE CHANGE COMPACT.....	13
MODIFICATION OF THE STATEWIDE RECYCLING GOAL.....	14
EXPANSION OF RECLAIMED WATER.....	15
ALTERNATIVE WATER SUPPLY, WATER RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING.....	15
UTILITY WORKER SAFETY AND EMERGENCY RESPONDER STATUS.....	16
DERELICT VESSEL REMOVAL.....	17
FLORIDA RECREATION DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.....	17
CENTRAL COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING.....	18

LAKE OKEECHOBEE RESTORATION

Lake Okeechobee is a critical component in achieving environmental restoration, water supply, agriculture, tourism, and recreation objectives in South Florida. The Lake is essential and interconnected to communities, businesses, public water supplies, and ecosystems. Palm Beach County residents, taxpayers and visitors depend on healthy and predictable lake levels to sustain a robust and diverse economy. As such, Lake Okeechobee operations are a high priority for the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** an open, transparent and inclusive public process to re-evaluate Lake Okeechobee operations. Palm Beach County is actively working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on their re-evaluation of Lake Operations, referred to as the Lake Okeechobee System Operating Manual or LOSOM.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** efforts by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Florida Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services and the South Florida Water Management District to ensure future Lake Okeechobee operations are appropriately evaluated, maximize the protection of water supplies, minimize the potential for water use restrictions, avoid widespread damage to the economy and ecosystems such as Lake Okeechobee, the Lake Worth Lagoon estuary and the Loxahatchee River, and comply with state law.

LAKE OKEECHOBEE WATERSHED RESTORATION

Excess freshwater during the wet season and inadequate freshwater during the dry season along with excess nutrients in surface water bodies is a widespread, complex, multi-dimensional problem that requires focused investment and regional-scale and local-scale water storage infrastructure and water quality treatment strategies. The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) is the roadmap to addressing these issues. However, the pace of CERP implementation has been disappointingly slow, with many projects delayed indefinitely or re-formulated with reduced scopes.

No estuary or community should have to endure short-term toxic algae bloom conditions or long-term water quality degradation that have resulted due to the cumulative impacts of decades of excess stormwater flows via the regional water management system. Unfortunately, instead of looking toward a comprehensive regional strategy, much recent discussion has focused on drastically lowering Lake Okeechobee. Drastically lowering Lake Okeechobee has the potential to negatively affect public water supply utilities, businesses and communities throughout Palm Beach County.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** a renewed focus on the implementation of regional-scale and local-scale water storage and water quality treatment projects in Lake Okeechobee tributary basins north of Lake Okeechobee consistent with and/or compatible with CERP prior to Congressional authorization and appropriation of the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Restoration Project.

LOXAHATCHEE RIVER WATERSHED RESTORATION

In 1985, the U.S. Department of the Interior designated the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River as authorized by Congress and included several projects to restore the river. The goal of the Loxahatchee River National Wild and Scenic River. In 2000, the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) was Watershed Restoration Project is to improve flows to the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River and restore wetlands that form the historic headwaters of the river.

Joint state and federal planning efforts related to the Loxahatchee River Watershed Restoration Project began in 2003 (then referred to as North Palm Beach County - Part 1), were put on hold in 2011 and re-started in 2015, with a much reduced project scope. County staff have been engaged in every iteration of Loxahatchee River restoration and Palm Beach County has acquired and restored almost 28,000 acres of natural areas and wetlands within the Loxahatchee River watershed for the benefit of the ecosystem.

Unfortunately, there are many project elements and benefits that were envisioned in CERP, approved by Congress in 2000, that are not included in the current Loxahatchee River Watershed Restoration Project, most notably storage features to reduce damaging discharges of excess freshwater to the Lake Worth Lagoon estuary and provide a source of freshwater to enable beneficial dry season deliveries to improve salinity conditions in the Lake Worth Lagoon estuary. In addition, the County along with some local stakeholders continue to have concerns with some of the proposed project features, the lengthy implementation schedule and the high cost.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** efforts by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the South Florida Water Management District to collaborate with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the County and other key local stakeholders to implement elements of the Loxahatchee River Watershed Restoration Project in advance of Congressional appropriations that are supported by County and local stakeholders in an effort to achieve early restoration benefits and to reduce additional ecological impacts to the Loxahatchee River Watershed.

Palm Beach County also **SUPPORTS** efforts to advance projects within Palm Beach County that provide benefits to the Lake Worth Lagoon estuary, reduce potential flood damages, and increase the availability of water supplies, similar to those originally envisioned in CERP.

GLADES REGION INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM: \$3 MILLION

Infrastructure in the Glades Region of Palm Beach County (including the economically distressed cities of Belle Glade, South Bay and Pahokee) suffers from a history of inadequate design, substandard construction, the utilization of improper materials and a severe lack of investment for replacement and repair. This results in the inadequate provision of water pressure and quality, chronic wastewater overflow issues due to infiltration of stormwater into the wastewater collection system, and the inability to provide adequate flows for fire protection. The continued deterioration of the infrastructure has resulted in threats to the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the Glades Region and has also curtailed the ability of Palm Beach County and the municipalities of the Region to attract economic development and business expansion, as well as supporting residential and commercial development. As a result of the infrastructure deficiencies, and to develop a strategy for economic development for the Glades Region, the County finalized the Glades Region Master Plan, which detailed specific Infrastructure Improvement Projects (Projects) that are required in order to repair and restore the water, wastewater, stormwater, and transportation infrastructure of the Glades Region to a level that will protect the health, safety and welfare of the public and businesses of the Region and improve the economic development outlook for the citizens of the area. The Projects additionally include features designed to improve the resiliency of the infrastructure in the face of increased impacts from tropical storm events. The proposed projects are prioritized in the Glades Region Master Plan and are coordinated to provide a multi-faceted

approach to foster economic development through the improvement of basic infrastructure throughout the Region.

2021 Session Funding Request		
Project Name	Estimated Project Cost	Requested State Allocation
Glades Region Infrastructure Improvement Program	\$30,000,000	\$3,000,000

BEACH AND INLET MANAGEMENT PROJECT APPROPRIATIONS: \$2,224,804

Florida’s beaches are the focus of our tourism industry and are critical in maintaining Florida’s tourism brand. Their role in providing upland property protection against storm damage makes them key components of our economy. The benefits to property values, tourism, and jobs by maintaining healthy beaches far outweigh the investment needed to combat coastal erosion. 70% of beaches in Palm Beach County are designated as critically eroded by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. State matching grants are a vital component of the funding required to maintain this essential infrastructure, but state budgetary restrictions continue to force many communities to advance the necessary funding for projects without a guarantee of future reimbursements. The County is requesting inclusion of the following Palm Beach County shore protection projects in the State’s Beach Management Funding Assistance Program:

2021 Session Beach & Inlet Management FUNDING REQUESTS					
No.	Project Name	Description	Grant Funding Request	Local Match	Estimated Project Cost
1	Coral Cove Dune Restoration	Monitoring	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$70,000
2	Singer Island Dune Restoration	Design, Construction, Monitoring	\$839,804	\$1,502,092	\$2,341,896
3	South Lake Worth Inlet Management	Design, Construction, Monitoring	\$1,350,000	\$500,000	\$1,850,000
	TOTAL		\$2,224,804	\$2,037,092	\$4,261,896

LOXAHATCHEE RIVER PRESERVATION INITIATIVE

The Loxahatchee River is the southernmost tributary of the Indian River Lagoon and includes the North Fork of the Loxahatchee River, one of two nationally designated Wild and Scenic Rivers in Florida. Despite its Federal designation as a Wild and Scenic River and the protective status associated with classification as an Outstanding Florida Water, significant problems need to be addressed.

The Loxahatchee River Preservation Initiative (LRPI) is the outgrowth of a watershed management effort started by the FDEP in 1996. LRPI has a long history of working with both the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to request and receive legislative appropriations to complete essential restoration. SFWMD is a local presence in the region that understands the system and the benefit each of these projects provide to the River. Projects are ranked and prioritized by the LRPI Board, including representatives of the state agencies.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** legislative funding for the priority list of projects as established by the steering committee of the LRPI.

No.	Project Name	Entity	Grant Funding Request	Local Match	Estimated Project Cost
1	Sawfish Island Restoration Project	Palm Beach County Environmental Resources Management (ERM)	\$500,000	\$1,021,295	\$1,521,295
2	Seminole Avenue Stormwater Basin Improvements	Town of Jupiter	\$870,000	\$2,800,465	\$3,670,465
3	Pennock Industrial Park Stormwater Improvements	Town of Jupiter	\$231,855	\$324,555	\$556,410
4	Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area (JILONA) Living Shoreline	Jupiter Inlet District	\$323,250	\$323,250	\$646,500
5	Loxahatchee River Mile 6 Gap Closure and Oxbow Restoration Maintenance	Jupiter Inlet District	\$377,500	\$377,500	\$755,000
6	Sims Creek Preserve Hydrologic Restoration	Town of Jupiter	\$100,000	\$300,000	\$400,000
7	Section 7 Drainage Improvement Project	South Indian River Water Control District	\$353,650	\$353,650	\$707,300
8	Loxahatchee River Sediment Study	Jupiter Inlet District	\$55,104	\$55,104	\$110,208
	TOTAL		\$2,811,359	\$5,555,819	\$8,367,178

LAKE WORTH LAGOON INITIATIVE

The Lake Worth Lagoon (LWL) estuary stretches 20 miles along the shores of 13 municipalities from North Palm Beach to Ocean Ridge and has been subjected to pollution and habitat losses for decades. The Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative is supported by Palm Beach County, South Florida Water Management District, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Inland Navigation District and the League of Cities, which have endorsed the LWL Management Plan to restore the Lagoon. This plan includes projects to restore sea grasses, mangroves and oysters, cap muck sediments and construct stormwater control projects and septic to sewer conversions. Revitalizing this important waterbody provides long-term environmental, recreational and economic benefits to the region.

The Initiative was created to define and evaluate the status of the entire LWL watershed and propose actions that would improve and protect the natural resources within the lagoon and watershed. Each State dollar is matched at the local level on a minimum 50:50 cost-share basis. Through this program, over \$22 million in State funds and \$65 million in local funds have been dedicated to restoring the Lagoon. The projects below were prioritized by Initiative members and funding partners.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** legislative funding for the priority list of projects as established by the steering committee of the Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative.

No.	Project Name	Entity	Grant Funding Request	Local Match	Estimated Project Cost
1	Lake Worth Lagoon CAP Section 1135 Project	Palm Beach County Environmental Resources Management (ERM)	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000
2	Lake Worth Lagoon Monitoring	Palm Beach County Environmental Resources Management (ERM)	\$247,530	\$247,530	\$495,060
3	Singer Island Submerged Lands Acquisition	Palm Beach County Environmental Resources Management (ERM)	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$500,000
4	Lake Shore Drive Drainage Improvements	Town of Lake Park	\$700,000	\$700,000	\$1,400,000
	TOTAL		\$2,197,530	\$2,197,530	\$4,395,060

LAKE OKEECHOBEE RESTORATION: \$1.6 MILLION

Lake Okeechobee’s sloping shoreline and wetland habitat were forever altered with the construction of the Herbert Hoover Dike and subsequent lake level fluctuations. These system alterations have resulted in habitat losses, water quality degradation, increased turbidity and sedimentation. These changes have impacted the lake’s environmental resources and the economies of the adjacent communities. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has approved an Integrated Feasibility Report & Environmental Assessment for Pahokee Restoration through the USACE’s Continuing Authorities Program, Section 1135. The report recommends a large-scale project to restore nearshore habitat within the lake by creating islands and wetland habitat. Palm Beach County is the Local Sponsor and requires a local match of 25% or \$3.2 million to match the upcoming 75% federal appropriation of <\$10 million.

2020 Session Lake Okeechobee FUNDING REQUESTS			
Project Name	Grant Funding Request	Local Match	Estimated Project Cost
Lake Okeechobee Pahokee Restoration/Habitat Construction, USACE Continuing Authority Program, Section 1135	\$1,600,000	\$1,600,000	\$3,200,000

PHASE II OF THE J.W. CORBETT LEVEE SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

In August 2012, Tropical Storm Isaac brought nearly 15 inches of rain over a 72-hour period in areas of central Palm Beach County, including communities served by the Indian Trail Improvement District (ITID). The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) took immediate action to respond to flooding in support of local relief efforts, including taking around-the-clock measures to strengthen the ITID berm that borders the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission’s J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area. In September 2012, Governor Rick Scott directed the SFWMD to convene a multiagency working group to determine a timely plan to further strengthen the integrity of the berm.

The planning efforts resulted in the J.W. Corbett Levee System Improvement Project that will enhance flood protection and safety for the residents of the ITID from waters impounded within the J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area, which includes adding a levee north of the existing berm. During the 2013 legislative session, \$4 million was appropriated to improve the J.W. Corbett Levee System and help improve water drainage and flow in the region. Approximately \$6.8 million in additional funding is required to complete the second phase of levee construction and provision of flood protection for the surrounding residents and commercial businesses. Palm Beach County was able to secure \$500,000 towards the second phase of the Project during the 2016 Legislative Session. In September 2020, ITID applied to the Florida Department of

Economic Opportunity's Rebuild Florida Mitigation General Infrastructure Program for approximately \$6.8 million in funding to complete the Corbett Levee Improvement Project.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and SFWMD in securing the remaining funding to complete Phase II of the Project.

MOSQUITO BORNE DISEASE FUNDING

Heightened concerns regarding mosquito-borne diseases such as Dengue, Chikungunya and Zika Virus continue to be especially challenging for local government mosquito control programs. The mosquito that transmits these three diseases is a daytime active container breeding mosquito species requiring daytime inspection of properties, elimination of artificial breeding sites, hand-fogging residences, immediate response to suspect cases, and public education. While reported cases of Zika virus appear to be on the decline, imported cases of Dengue have increased, requiring sustained attention given to the sources of those disease vectors. The virus that causes dengue occurs in four strains, with a recently discovered fifth strain, which means it will likely never result in the herd immunity that causes these other diseases to decline. Additionally, West Nile Virus (WNV) has reappeared after a many-year absence. This presents a need to re-establish protocols that have been in disuse since the last WNV outbreak in 2011-12. This year's WNV activity includes human cases in the eastern regions of Palm Beach County, which indicates an unusual vector species that is normally not a significant threat due to its low and seasonal population levels. If this vector continues to escalate in priority, Palm Beach County will require a comparable escalation in its focus toward habitats it frequents.

Current staffing levels and the need for additional equipment and chemicals limits the ability of local governments to operate an integrated program as required under Chapter 388 F.S. in protecting the public's health. Although additional state funding in recent years has allowed mosquito control agencies to address short-term needs, an expanded dedicated funding commitment from the state would allow for long-term program planning and ensure the availability of well-trained staff.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** increased state funding for mosquito control and the eradication of mosquito borne diseases.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION - LAND MANAGEMENT

Palm Beach County and its municipalities manage approximately 48,570 acres of conservation and preserve lands within its Natural Areas and Park properties. Statewide, local governments manage about 10% of the government owned lands. Funding management activities on these lands is an on-going financial commitment, particularly in South Florida where the subtropical climate allows exotic plant and animal species to thrive and necessitate continual treatment to maintain natural areas in their natural condition.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** appropriations from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund for projects that benefit both the environment and residents of Palm Beach County. Such projects includes Everglades Restoration, efforts to benefit Lake Okeechobee, Lake Worth Lagoon, the Loxahatchee River, alternative water supply, and other regional multi-faceted projects.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** inclusion of the Loxahatchee River and Lake Worth Lagoon in legislation establishing dedicated funding for Everglades Restoration within the Land Acquisition Trust Fund, including those local projects under consideration and development as locally preferred projects.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** legislation to provide greater flexibility in the ability of local governments to accomplish vital land management activities, including, but not limited to the expansion of the approved uses of funding under the Florida Communities Trust (Chapter 380, F.S.) to allow for funding of land management activities.

PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS TO IMPROVE WATER QUALITY

Water quality is vital to the ecological and economic health of Palm Beach County. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection is charged with identifying water quality problems and developing and implementing strategies to address those problems. Cyanobacteria, or “blue green algae,” on Lake Okeechobee and connected waterways has recently emerged as a significant issue, resulting in serious impacts to water quality, public health, and economic viability of local businesses. As a result, there is a renewed focus by the State of Florida on reducing excess nutrient inputs to impacted water bodies and priority projects to reduce nutrients are expected to be identified and funded in partnership with local, state, and federal entities.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** appropriations to provide for vital water quality improvement projects to address nutrient pollution and the impacts of harmful algal blooms, including the conversion of properties currently on septic systems to central wastewater in those areas impacted by harmful algal blooms and nutrient pollution, projects to reduce damaging freshwater discharges to the Lake Worth Lagoon, and mandated state water quality improvement projects. Additionally, Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** legislation to provide for effective programs to further address water quality impacts.

SEPTIC TO SEWER CONVERSION

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** state funding assistance and grants to local governments, wastewater utilities and property owners to assist in implementing and expediting septic to sewer conversion projects to mitigate the impacts of excess nutrients on water bodies.

PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS TO SUPPORT CORAL REEF PROTECTION

In 2014 a coral disease outbreak of unknown origin was found offshore of Miami-Dade County and has continued to spread harming more than 50 percent of the coral species present in the Florida Reef Tract, from Key West in Monroe County to the northernmost coral reefs in Martin County. This coral disease has

become an epidemic that has caused near total mortality on the vulnerable species, including species listed under the Endangered Species Act and is an increasing threat to fragile ecosystems that support Florida's fisheries and protect our coasts.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** the passing of United States Senate Bill 2429 and House of Representatives Bill 4160 Restoring Resilient Reefs Act of 2019 that would reauthorize and modernize the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000 and legislation that provides for effective programs that address coral reef disease intervention and restoration efforts.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** funding for scientific studies to further refine the numeric turbidity criterion as part of the Triennial Review of Florida's Water Quality Standards to protect sensitive corals and hardbottom communities without compromising critical shore protection efforts along the coastline.

Palm Beach County **OPPOSES** any changes of the statewide turbidity standard without a comprehensive scientific understanding of the biological tolerances for coral species of concern.

PETROLEUM STORAGE TANK COMPLIANCE LOCAL PROGRAM FUNDING

Since 1988, Palm Beach County has contracted with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) to administer the Petroleum Storage Tank Compliance Verification Program. During 2012, FDEP moved towards a regional approach with the program and this resulted in PBC expanding its program duties into Martin and St. Lucie Counties. The current budget for FDEP's compliance program is \$5,900,000, a reduction from the \$10,000,000 in FY 2010-11. The budget reductions have resulted in most facilities being inspected every 24-30 months instead of annually. The rationale behind this reduction was that all petroleum storage tank systems are now double walled and less likely to leak, therefore requiring less frequent inspections. The reality is:

- Many of these double-walled petroleum storage tanks systems are more than 20 years old and have exceeded their warranty life which makes them more susceptible to failures.
- Historical inspection records show that as tank systems age, equipment failures and maintenance issues occur more frequently. These issues are only discovered by regular site inspections and more comprehensively addressed due to the revised regulations of October, 2018. These revised regulations provided timeframes for testing of equipment and recordkeeping.
- Reduced inspection frequencies greatly increases the chances for petroleum discharges as equipment failures and maintenance issues to persist for longer periods before being discovered by inspectors, as there are facilities that wait until the inspector arrives before conducting maintenance or testing.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** funding for the Division of Waste Management Long Range Plan from the Inland Protection Trust Fund and other potential sources to maintain the current \$5,900,000 budget level to continue local Petroleum Storage Tank Compliance Verification Programs. The Storage Tank Compliance Program provides the first line of defense for protecting the State's drinking water supplies and early

detection of leaks prevents costly cleanup efforts by the property owner.

MAINTAIN FUNDING FOR THE STATE PETROLEUM CLEANUP PROGRAM

Palm Beach County's local petroleum cleanup program provides technical oversight and management of state contractors conducting assessment and remediation of petroleum contamination within the County to support development of impacted properties and protect local drinking water supplies. The Program also provides enforcement and oversight for non-eligible contamination cleanups. The County has a dedicated experienced team of professionals which include Professional Geologists, Hydrogeologists and Professional Engineers to oversee the many phases of the cleanup process in a timely and cost-effective manner. Palm Beach County's Department of Environmental Resources Management implements the Program throughout the County.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** funding for the Division of Waste Management Long Range Program Plan from the Inland Protection Trust Fund and other potential sources to maintain the current budget level to continue the restoration of contaminated sites by local Petroleum Restoration Programs (PRP). The Palm Beach County Local Cleanup Program is committed to assisting the PRP strategic direction to continue to assess all remaining discharges.

RESILIENCE/SOUTH FLORIDA CLIMATE CHANGE COMPACT

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 State Legislative Program each year since 2011. The Compact has adopted State Legislative Priorities to identify legislative issues that Compact members will support in the upcoming legislative session. The Compact has also adopted State Legislative Principles to articulate the overarching goals for the Program.

Palm Beach County is committed to supporting the Priorities and Principles established by the Compact in its entirety. Current Priorities from the Compact Program are:

SUPPORT legislation requiring all state agencies to incorporate climate resilience in all aspects of capital planning and operations.

SUPPORT a carve-out of designated funding for resilience investments from additional revenue generated from application of Florida sales tax to internet merchants, should such legislation advance.

SUPPORT repeal of Section 215.179, F.S., to restore local governments' ability to benefit financially from the federal Section 179D tax deduction for installation of certain energy efficiency features in government-owned buildings.

SUPPORT amendment of the Interlocal Cooperation Act (Section 163.01(18), F.S.) to allow inter-local cooperatives like the Compact to conduct public meetings and workshops by means of communications media technology.

SUPPORT legislation requiring utilities to provide whole-building consumption and billing data to building owners.

OPPOSE any changes that would eliminate or weaken existing policies that support renewable energy deployment and energy conservation in Florida.

In addition, the County has identified its top Principles from the Compact Program as:

OPPOSE preemption of local environmental policies and regulations pertaining to energy, climate, or resilience issues and any infringement on local home rule authority to plan for and adapt to future climate conditions.

SUPPORT development of a statewide climate action plan which includes greenhouse gas emissions reduction, adaptation, and resilience measures.

SUPPORT greater incorporation of adaptation and resilience strategies throughout state government activities, including climate, energy, and resilience investments in low-income and disadvantaged communities that strengthen individual and community resilience.

SUPPORT all opportunities for renewable energy deployment and energy conservation in Florida, including policies to create renewable energy purchasing options, such as community solar and energy co-ops, and energy conservation incentives.

OPPOSE any changes that would reduce or weaken existing policies that support renewable energy deployment and energy conservation in Florida.

SUPPORT electric vehicles and electric vehicle charging infrastructure to serve the public, local governments, and private sector fleets, including grants, rebates, and other financing and funding.

SUPPORT incentives for green and resilient construction standards to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and/or mitigate insurance costs in existing and future building stock.

MODIFICATION OF THE STATEWIDE RECYCLING GOAL

The Florida Legislature, through the Energy, Climate Change and Economic Security Act of 2008, established a statewide weight-based recycling goal of 75% by 2020. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection has since acknowledged in the *Florida and the 2020 75% Recycling Goal: 2019 Status Report Volume 1* that “weight-based goals, as described in the legislation, are aspirational.”

That FDEP report went on to say “While some counties have achieved the interim weight-based goals and are on track to meet or exceed the 75% goal, overall the state did not meet the 2016-60% or 2018-70% weight-based interim goals. To reach the weight-based 75% recycling goal, would require a multi-strategy

approach to capture and recycle a larger portion of the waste stream, which would involve funding and statutory mandates, as well as building additional Waste to Energy facilities that are costly to build.”

Changes to collection methods, shifts in recycling markets including regulatory changes in international demand markets, and the use of lighter weight packaging have significantly impaired the ability of counties to meet the statutory goal. Florida’s 2019 statewide recycling rate was 52%, which still falls short of the 2018 interim recycling goal of 70%.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** modification of the 75% recycling goal to incorporate input from the counties who have a statutory obligation to implement and finance such a goal.

Palm Beach County further **SUPPORTS** that the FDEP develop rules and propose legislation that focuses on landfill diversion goals, instead of a weight-based or Sustainable Materials Management (SMM) goal or a combination thereof.

EXPANSION OF RECLAIMED WATER

As Florida continues to experience population growth and increasing demands on the water resources of the state, the efficient and effective utilization of reclaimed water is vital to expanding the water pie and providing for the increased impacts of our growth. Over the past few years, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Water Management Districts, industry groups including the Florida Water and Environment Association Utility Council (FWEAUC), and multiple stakeholder groups have engaged in several efforts to improve legislative and regulatory requirements regarding the oversight and funding for alternative water supply projects. Currently, these stakeholders are engaged in the Potable Reuse Commission, which is looking to propose legislative and regulatory language to incorporate more detailed requirements regarding potable reuse into the existing frameworks regarding the traditional utilization of reclaimed water. Additional policy concepts include the clarification of the applicability of impact offset and substitution credits to alternative water supply projects, incentivizing approaches that promote efficiency in the utilization of reclaimed water, and other measures that will allow for the utilization of reclaimed water in the best time, place and manner as suits a given geographic area and local government.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** the legislative concepts proposed by the FWEAUC and concepts offered by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and other stakeholders that will promote the continued effective and efficient implementation of reclaimed water throughout Palm Beach County.

ALTERNATIVE WATER SUPPLY, WATER RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

In 2005, the State Legislature enacted the Water Protection & Sustainability Program, requiring the regional water supply planning function of the water management districts to promote alternative water supply projects and enhance the state’s water supplies. At the beginning of each fiscal year revenues were to be distributed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection into the alternative water supply trust fund accounts created by each water management district. A total of \$100 million was established in

recurring funding. The funds were to be used to assist in funding alternative water supply construction costs selected by each District's Governing Board for priority implementation. In 2008, funding from the Water Protection & Sustainability Program Trust Fund was reduced to \$7.7 million statewide. Funding was further reduced in 2009 to only \$2.2 million. Since 2009, the funding level has been zero.

As water and wastewater infrastructure ages, it becomes necessary to repair or replace aged components of the water infrastructure framework, as well as to integrate innovative technologies and approaches to provide high quality water and wastewater service. In its most recent Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey and Assessment, the United States Environmental Protection Agency identified significant infrastructure Repairs and Replacements (R+R) that will be required in the decades ahead. The assessment identified nearly \$17 billion worth of upgrades needed in Florida. Provision of high quality water and wastewater service provides basic building blocks for economic sustainability and advancement. Municipal and County Governments will require assistance from State and Federal sources to tackle these growing challenges.

The Department of Environmental Protection is currently administrating a Reclaimed Water Work Group that is developing recommendations on a number of policy and funding issues relating to reclaimed water and associated projects, including funding mechanisms to restore funding for alternative water supply and reuse projects.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** restoring previous alternative water supply, water resource development and reclaimed water/reuse funding through existing mechanisms and the creation new statewide funding programs to provide substantial and perennial funding to:

- Enhance regional and local water resource and supply capacity development
- Provide adequate and reliable long-term funding for water and wastewater infrastructure
- Provide funding for alternative water supply development
- Provide funding for water quality protection and treatment of impaired waters
- Establish a system for prioritizing water resource projects to ensure that funding is utilized in the most efficient manner available

UTILITY WORKER SAFETY AND EMERGENCY RESPONDER STATUS

Currently, Florida Statutes provide for the reclassification of the misdemeanor or felony degree of specified assault and battery offenses when those offenses are knowingly committed against law enforcement officers, firefighters, and other specified persons and emergency responders engaged in the lawful performance of their duties. The effect of this reclassification is that the maximum penalty increases. Proposed legislation, as originally filed in previous sessions, would add utility workers (a term defined in the bill) to the list of specified persons and recognize them as first responders in emergency scenarios. Therefore, the felony or misdemeanor degree of certain assault and battery offenses would be reclassified if committed against a utility worker engaged in the lawful performance of his or her duties in the same manner as if those offenses were committed against a law enforcement officer or firefighter engaged in

the lawful performance of his or her duties. The Water Utilities Department has experienced an increase in incidents involving angry and disgruntled customers threatening employees. Since June 2012 there have been several cases of aggravated assault, threats against utility workers and illegal tampering with criminal intent. Each of the cases was investigated as active case files by the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** legislation that would reclassify certain assault and battery offenses committed against a utility worker engaged in the lawful performance of their duties in the same manner as if those offenses were committed against a law enforcement officer engaged in the lawful performance of their duties.

Palm Beach County additionally **SUPPORTS** the recognition of utility workers as first responders in state law given their roles prior to, during and immediately after emergency events to keep vital services running.

DERELICT VESSEL REMOVAL

County staff has experienced numerous instances of at risk and derelict vessels being abandoned or neglected in areas that restrict navigation, impede public access, and degrade the marine environment in and around recreation areas. While local law enforcement and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission assist in processing these vessels for removal, available state funding to assist with the removal costs has annually been inconsistent.

Palm Beach **SUPPORTS** reoccurring appropriations to assist local governments in removing derelict vessels that degrade the marine environment and block the use of public shorelines, berthing facilities, docks, ramps and staging areas.

FLORIDA RECREATION DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection administers the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP). This program is a competitive grant program that provides financial assistance through grants to local governments for the acquisition and development of land for public outdoor recreation purposes. This grant program has two funding thresholds, the Large Project Fund provides grants of up to \$200,000, and the Small Project Fund provides grants of up to \$50,000. In recent legislative sessions, appropriations have been focused on the Small Project Fund, as well as special projects targeted at access for disabled persons and other specialized issues, with few projects off the Large Project List being funded. Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation submitted two FRDAP applications last year for large development projects and while both projects scored well they were not funded.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** appropriations that provide for the funding of the FRDAP Small Project Development list, including two County projects that have been submitted:

- **Paulette Burdick Park** – A FY2020 application was submitted for the construction of a new neighborhood park to serve the residents of the Cam Estates, Meadowbrook and Plantation neighborhoods in central Palm Beach County. Proposed amenities include a playground, basketball courts, a walking trail and fitness equipment.
- **Loggerhead Park** – A FY2021 application will be submitted for the renovation of the playground and picnic area at Loggerhead Park in Juno Beach. Project elements are anticipated to include the demolition and replacement of the existing picnic pavilion and shelters, replacement of the existing playground with modern playground equipment, interior renovation of an adjacent restroom and inclusion of additional picnic tables.

CENTRAL COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

Historically, the twelve cities that comprise Historical Central Palm Beach County grew as residential suburbs of West Palm Beach. These municipalities, all incorporated between 1921 and 1959, were created not as planned communities, but subdivisions of agrarian land converting to residential development and limited commercial strip development.

Generally, these areas developed without planned drainage systems and were affected by surrounding infrastructure projects such as the Florida Turnpike, the Beeline Highway and the commercial and business interests of U.S. Highway One to the east and Military Trail to the west, which mark the traditional boundary of this area. As they continue to redevelop and create new economic development opportunities, the need to enhance their infrastructure has become a top priority.

Palm Beach County **SUPPORTS** collaborative efforts between the State Legislature, local municipalities, special districts, and state agencies to identify and fund projects to repair and update needed water, drainage and sewer improvements in the Historical Central Palm Beach County area.