



Charlotte County

Board of County Commissioners



2018
State Legislative
Program

2018 State Legislative Agenda

Guiding Statement

State and Local Governments are partners in the promotion and protection of the health and welfare of the community. To preserve this partnership Charlotte County will:

- Support state policies which benefit the economic development, environmental and social health of Charlotte County and its citizens.
- Oppose legislative changes or fiscal decisions which impact County revenues such as unfunded mandates, revenue limitations, trust fund diversions or cost shifts.
- Support local flexibility to address problems by honoring home rule and avoiding unnecessary preemptions of local authority.

CHARLOTTE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



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Charlotte County works in partnership with Florida's 67 counties via the Florida Association of Counties (FAC). Policy statements adopted by the FAC membership for the 2018 Florida Legislative Session have been incorporated throughout Charlotte County's State Legislative Agenda.

2018 State Legislative Agenda

Policy Statements

Economic Development

- **Support** funding for the expansion of Toledo Blade Blvd. to accommodate additional traffic and development of the area associated with two large mixed-use developments as well as a future business and technology park for the promotion of workforce development and training in targeted industries in Charlotte County.
- **Support** funding to construct necessary water and wastewater infrastructure along Piper Road to attract and support new business recruitment of targeted industries within the Airport ECAP.
- **Support** funding for the construction of necessary classroom facilities to support the creation of the first sustainable brewing program in the state of Florida.
- **Support** state funding that allows for creative approaches for local government partnerships with K-12, technical and post-secondary educational institutions in the creation of job training programs and innovation clusters that increases economic development opportunities.
- **Support** legislation and appropriation that enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of the state and local government partnership in economic development through the greater use of targeted strategies and strategic investments to induce and retain sustainable economic activity resulting in a consistent positive return on investment for both state and local governments.
- **Support** legislation that would enhance the current incentives program to support and incentivize local governments to create and maintain a more sustainable and competitive physical and financial environment for attracting film, television, digital and new media related entertainment production in the State of Florida that promotes and is tied to infrastructure and workforce education in science, technology, engineering, arts and math.
- **Support** efforts to maintain or increase funding for local government affordable housing programs.
- **Support** changes to s.286.0113 and s.288.075, F.S. that would allow the Board of County Commissioners to deliberate in private regarding an economic development proposal and preserve the confidentiality of confidential information in the possession of an economic development agency.
- **Oppose** efforts that seek to sunset or eliminate existing Community Redevelopment Agencies.

Budget & Taxation

- **Support** local bill that allows commercial taxpayers who reside in a neighboring county, but have a vested interest in the development of tourism in Charlotte County to serve on the Tourist Development Council.
- **Support** legislation to allow collection of a special assessment in a MSBU that will allow for the implementation of a workplan to extend to 10 years or beyond before the benefit is realized.
- **Support** measures that enhance the effectiveness of existing local revenue sources to meet current and future public service demands.
- **Support** methods to enable local efforts to collect due and payable local taxes, fees, fines and other revenues.
- **Support** continued state efforts for tax reform provided that such efforts remain revenue neutral for local government.

- **Support** continued revision to current law regarding the Communication Services Tax in a manner that is: 1) revenue neutral; 2) simplifies administration and collection of the current tax; 3) provides for a broad and equitable tax base; 4) provides for enhanced stability and reliability as an important revenue source for local government; and 5) provides the opportunity for market-based growth.
- **Support** legislation that would phase-in a reduction and eventual exemption of state sales tax on commercial leases, but preserving and “grandfathering-in” existing local (county) option sales taxes.
- **Support** legislation that allows senior staff to participate in executive sessions as subject matter experts to provide board members with technical knowledge necessary to make informed decisions.
- **Oppose** shifting costs for state programs to local governments without a permanent identified funding source.
- **Oppose** any efforts that seek to modify or weaken the powers and duties of local governments granted under Chapter 125 & Chapter 200, Florida Statutes.

Natural Resources & Growth Management

- **Support** funding request for the Charlotte County Central Sewer Expansion project which includes constructing central wastewater service to 358 properties with aging and failing On-Site Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems (septic tanks) that are contributing to the pollution of the impaired water bodies of Charlotte Harbor, the Peace River and the Myakka River.
- **Support** funding request for the design and construction of the Manasota Key 10-year Renourishment plan which provides initial restoration and periodic beach nourishment for two and a half miles of eroding gulf shoreline within Charlotte County.
- **Support** the funding of the Water Protection and Sustainability Program within the Department of Environmental Protection and Water Management Districts for the development of alternative water supplies, water quality improvement projects, and comprehensive water infrastructure needs.
- **Support** legislation that enhances regional and local financial capability to address water supply development with allocation flexibility in all available funding sources.
- **Support** legislation that requires or incentivizes property owners to connect to reclaimed water lines when such lines are available and efforts to limit the issuance of permits for use of ponds and wells on sites where reclaimed water lines are available.
- **Support** a balanced distribution of funds for land acquisition and for water quality and quantity projects throughout the state, with equitable allocation irrespective of a project’s urban or rural nature, or its coastal or inland location.
- **Support** legislation to amend Section 159.17, Florida Statutes, to authorize counties – as well as municipalities – that issue revenue bonds, to place liens that are prior to and on parity with state, county and municipal tax liens, on properties served by any water, sewer or gas systems for service charges until paid in full.
- **Support** legislation that allows a county to opt out from mandatory membership in a regional planning council.
- **Support** the creation of a new dedicated and recurring statutory funding source for beach renourishment projects which accurately reflects the increase in participating programs and future beach and inlet project funding needs.

- **Support** a statutory change to Section 163.3178 that clarifies for state and local officials how risk reduction is evaluated in special flood hazard areas (SFHA), as shown on FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs).
- **Oppose** legislation that would preempt the ability of local governments to regulate short-term rentals in residential neighborhoods.
- **Oppose** any state-wide water commission or “water czar” which would create another layer of decision making and review of water projects or redefine existing water supply relationships among the state, regional water management districts, and local governments.

Health & Human Services and Healthcare

- **Support** funding to maintain a Community Action Team (CAT) in Charlotte County to provide comprehensive, community-based services to children aged 11 to 21 with a mental health diagnosis or co-occurring substance abuse diagnosis as a lower cost alternative to state funded foster care, residential behavioral health treatment and juvenile justice incarceration.
- **Support** funding for community-based free and charitable clinics that provide emergency room diversion and basic safety net health services for the uninsured and indigent.
- **Support** increased funding for core mental health and substance abuse services.
- **Support** legislation that repeals the state statutory preemption of smoking regulation by allowing local governments to enact local regulations that exceed state standards. In lieu of a total repeal of the preemption, **Support** legislation granting local governments the authority to restrict smoking in areas where children are present.
- **Support** efforts to increase supportive housing, employment and education initiatives for people with behavioral health issues and/or disabilities.
- **Support** diverting, medically assisting, or treating mentally ill persons outside of the criminal justice system through alternative community programs, such as Crisis Intervention Teams.
- **Support** providing life-saving interventions, medically-assisted detoxification programs, and diversions from the criminal justice system for those suffering from opioid addiction.
- **Support** establishing a cap on growth in the individual county Medicaid costs under s. 409.915, F.S. to address the cost shifts that result from the transition to a Medicaid enrollee based cost-sharing system.

Transportation & Infrastructure

- **Support** funding through the State Library Construction Grant program to provide furniture, fixtures and equipment for the South County Library & Archive. This library that will meet the current and future needs of the community in Punta Gorda/South Charlotte County.
- **Support** funding for the expansion of recreational facilities at Sunrise Park that will honor the memory of Corporal William Gaines, a local resident of Charlotte County who was killed in the line of duty in the October 23, 1983 bombing of Marine barracks in Beirut during the Lebanese Civil War.
- **Support** funding for improvements to River Road in Sarasota County. River Road is a regional interstate connector and a critical evacuation route for Charlotte County residents.
- **Support** a preservation of or increase in funding for the Small County Outreach Program (SCOP). This valuable grant program provides essential funding for critical roadways among eligible counties.

- **Support** efficient and effective government by reducing the requirement for mandatory independent construction engineering and inspections (CEI) services on projects that have less than 50% in state funding.
- **Support** a restructure of the formula and methodology used in the distribution of gas tax funds and a review of the methodology of state prioritization (criteria) and funding for transportation projects.
- **Support** a review of state criteria for roads to be designated SIS (state roads). Charlotte County believes there are roads within our jurisdiction that meet the criteria and should be designated state roads as a part of the SIS.

Public Safety

- **Support** funding to purchase and/or build an Airport Rescue and Fire Fighting training prop to provide regional training opportunities for all ARFF fire fighters to meet the training requirements of the FAA and FAR 139.
- **Support** legislation that provides a comprehensive health-based regulatory system where the Department of Health is responsible for licensing cultivation sites, dispensing facilities and manufacturers of marijuana for medicinal purposes subject to local ordinances, including but not limited to occupational licensing, regulation and zoning laws.
- **Support** long-term and stable funding for the Clerk of Courts.
- **Oppose** legislation that limits the ability of county EMS providers to be reimbursed for out-of-network transports.
- **Support** maintaining a countywide regulatory system for EMS through the current Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (COPCN) process.
- **Support** efforts to stop opioid trafficking and increased penalties for dealers and traffickers whose actions result in loss of life.
- **Support** legislation that reduces jail expenses by setting a reimbursement amount paid by counties to medical providers for health care services for inmates and arrestees at no higher than the established Medicare rate plus 10%, the same rate as currently charged to the Department of Corrections, unless there is an existing contract in place or a business practice providing a lower rate.
- **Support** continued efforts to obtain Medicaid eligibility for persons incarcerated in county jails while waiting disposition of their cases and to ensure that existing Medicaid benefits are not terminated during incarceration.

Constitution Revision Commission

- **Monitor** the progress of the Constitution Revision Commission and engage in advocacy efforts that support the guiding statements of Charlotte County's Legislative Agenda.