BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

DATE: January 29, 2013
AGENDA ITEM NO. 15

Consent Agenda ☐ **Regular Agenda** ☑ **Public Hearing** ☐

County Administrator's Signature:

Subject:

Adoption of the 2013 State Legislative Program

Department:

County Administrator

Staff Member Responsible:

Carl Harness, Assistant County Administrator

Recommended Action:

I RECOMMEND THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISIONERS (BOARD) ADOPT THE ATTACHED 2013 STATE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM.

Summary Explanation/Background:

This document represents the Board's State Legislative Program for the 2013 Legislative Session. It is understood that it is not an exhaustive list and other issues may evolve that may require the Board's action to revise the program.

County staff will closely monitor these items as the legislative process progresses. The day-to-day issues will be managed by our state lobbying team from the Pennington Law Firm in Tallahassee.

Fiscal Impact/Cost/Revenue Summary:

Not Applicable

Exhibits/Attachments Attached:

2013 State Legislative Program

Pinellas County
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

2013 STATE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

Adopted January 29, 2013

PINELLAS COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
2013 STATE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

UNFUNDED MANDATES

- Oppose state unfunded mandates that negatively impact local government budgets and control which also compromises Pinellas County's ability to provide other needed services to the community. These mandates are usually imposed without discussion or consensus from the local governments on the impacts that they will have on available resources or methods of implementation.

ITEMS OF GENERAL CONCERN

Beach Renourishment

- Support legislation that maintains a state funding source for beach restoration projects throughout Florida.

Department of Health Reorganization

- Support continued funding for the Pinellas County Health Departments, thus maintaining their ability to provide primary care and direct patient care services within our community.
- Oppose any state reductions to the County Health Department Trust Funds and any legislation which proposes to reduce or eliminate the provision of primary health care services by the County Health Departments.

Department of Juvenile Justice Billing

- Support juvenile justice reforms that reduce county financial obligations for detention, revise the current billing structures, and provide for more accountable juvenile justice operations.
- The Board supports the need for greater collaboration and incentives to benefit youth and reduce detention cost waste. The Board opposes new cost obligations to the county.

Designer Drugs/Synthetics

- Support additional legislation and rule making that clearly addresses this evolving problem for effective regulation, consistent enforcement, and proactive, rapid elimination of emerging products.
- The Board is committed to addressing the ongoing and emerging trends of designer drugs and their impacts within our community.

Fertilizer Ordinance

- Oppose legislation that would pre-empt any local fertilizer ordinances established prior to July 1, 2011.

Florida Association of Counties

- Support the policy statements of the Florida Association of Counties' 2013 Legislative Program which are not contrary to the policies of Pinellas County.

For more information, contact Carl Harness at (727) 464-3724, or charness@pinellascounty.org.

Florida Retirement System (FRS)

- Oppose any benefit change that results in a substantial increase in the county's FRS contribution rate.
  Background: On March 6, 2012, a Leon County Circuit Court Judge ruled in favor of a challenge brought forth by a group of state, county and school board employees. The Court found that the FRS reform law violated several constitutional provisions. The state immediately appealed the ruling. On January 17, 2013, the Florida Supreme Court upheld the law requiring public employees to contribute 3 percent of their pay to the state's pension plan.

Infrastructure Sales Tax (Penny for Pinellas)

- Support a general statute amendment allowing the county to have more discretion for utilizing Penny funds for operations or maintenance expenditures.

Inmate Medical Expenses

- Support legislation that reduces expenses to the county that limits county or municipal medical costs of an in-custody pretrial detainee or sentenced inmate to 110 percent of the Medicare allowable rate.
- In addition, the Board supports any administrative rule changes that would allow for inpatient medical services provided to Medicaid eligible inmates to be billed to Medicaid.

Jail Impacts

- Oppose actions by the state to adjust detention responsibilities and maintain greater numbers of sentenced inmates in local jails.
  Background: The Department of Corrections has proposed an amendment to F. S. 944. 17(3)(a) that would require only persons with one year or more left on their sentences (at time of sentencing) are to be sent to prison. Such a change would increase jail populations and shift financial responsibility for these inmates from the state to the counties.

Local Business Tax

- Oppose legislation seeking to repeal Chapter 205, F.S., which would prevent local governments from collecting a local business tax. The county does not currently collect the tax; however, a repeal of Chapter 205, F.S., would impact our ability to take advantage of this alternative revenue source in the future.

Medicaid Billing

- Support the revision of the current county-state Medicaid billing system in exchange for requiring the state to develop a new equitable billing process in consultation with the counties.
- Support the continuation of the advance refund request process which is scheduled to expire in April 2013. This would affect the county's ability to review their bills prior to submitting payment.

Prescription Drugs

- Support additional legislation and rule making that provides for the appropriate prescribing practices, prescription use, and proper accountability in prescribing drugs.
- The Board opposes any state action that seeks to preempt local regulatory options to curb the ongoing prescription problem and to protect our community. The Board is committed to addressing the continuing social and medical problems of prescription abuse and treatment within our community.

Pretrial Release

- Oppose legislation that would restrict or eliminate local control over coordinated, highly effective local pretrial services that might increase the local jail population and therefore increase the County's expenses.
- Specifically, the Board opposes legislation that restricts pretrial services to only indigent clients.

Title V Funding for Local Air Quality Program

- Oppose any legislation that would drastically reduce or eliminate the local air quality control contract.

Water Quality / Numeric Nutrient Criteria

- Support science-based numeric nutrient criteria for Florida's waters.
- Oppose any new rule promulgated by the EPA or DEP that imposes unnecessary costs to county governments.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Assault Weapons

- Support any statewide legislation banning military-type assault weapons capable of firing high-velocity rounds with extended ammunition clips.
- Oppose any action by the state preempting local governmental entities from establishing similar bans within their jurisdictions.

Express Lanes (Lexus Lanes) in Pinellas County

Gas Tax Indexing