RESOLUTION 2018-01

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF ST. PETE BEACH, FLORIDA, SUPPORTING THE 2018 FLORIDA LEAGUE OF CITIES LEGISLATIVE ACTION AGENDA; PRIORITIZING AGENDA LEGISLATION REGARDING MAINTAINING MUNCIPAL HOME RULE, LEGISLATION REQUIRING CERTIFICATIONS WITH REGARD TO SOBER HOMES AND LEGISLATION REFORMING THE COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES TAX; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the City of St. Pete Beach wishes to engage in productive, focused dialogue with the Florida State Senate and House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS, the State of Florida 2018 Legislative Session will convene on January 9, 2018; and

WHEREAS, the City of St. Pete Beach is an active member of the Florida League of Cities and participated in the development of priorities for the 2018 Legislative Action Agenda; and

WHEREAS, the City of St. Pete Beach prioritizes legislation which maintains Municipal Home Rule, Sober Homes and Communications Services Tax Protection.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Commission of the City of St. Pete Beach, that:

Section One: The above recitals are true and correct and are incorporated herein by reference.

Section Two: The City Commission hereby adopts the 2018 Florida League of Cities Legislative Action Agenda attached hereto and incorporated as "Exhibit A" as part of the legislative priorities for the City of St. Pete Beach.

Section Three: The City Commission hereby adopts as priorities legislation which maintains Municipal Home Rule, legislation requiring certification for all recovery residences and recovery residence administrators, legislation reforming the Communications Services Tax in a manner that is revenue neutral, provides for a broad and equitable tax base, provides for enhanced stability and reliability as an important revenue source for local government and provides a uniform method for taxing communication services.

Section Four: The City Clerk is directed to forward a copy of this resolution to the members of the Pinellas County Legislative Delegation.

Section Five: This resolution shall take effective immediately upon its adoption.

Passed this 9th day of January, 2018 by the City Commission of the City of St. Pete Beach, Florida.

* * * * *

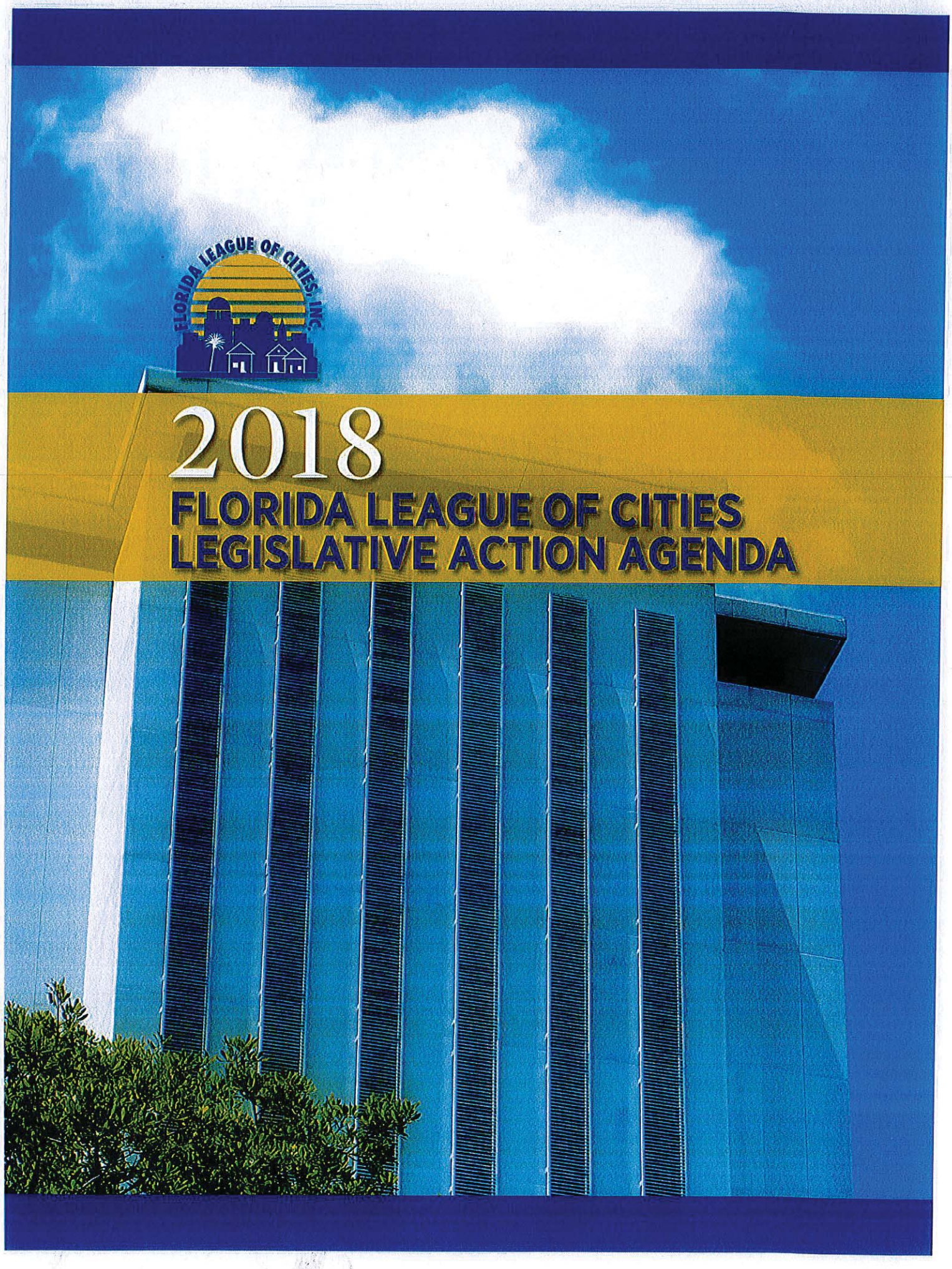
Alan Johnson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Rebecca C. Haynes, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL FORM AND CORRECTNESS:

Andrew Dickman, City Attorney



2018
FLORIDA LEAGUE OF CITIES LEGISLATIVE ACTION AGENDA

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FLORIDA LEA

The Florida League of Cities, Inc. was founded on the belief that local self-government is the keystone of American democracy.

COVER PHOTO © GETTY IMAGES

Introduction

Each year, municipal officials from across the state volunteer to serve on one of the League's five legislative policy committees. These committees develop the League's Legislative Action Agenda, which addresses priority issues most likely to have a statewide impact on daily municipal operations and governance.

This year, there are six priorities – one developed by each of the policy committees – and a super priority to strengthen and protect local self-government. The priorities were considered and approved by the full League membership on August 19, 2017.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

The formation of a city is the embodiment of local self-government, or Home Rule. A city is voluntarily created by its citizens for a variety of reasons. Citizens in an area may want additional services, increased control over land use decisions, an improved business or residential environment, or more say in how their government is run.

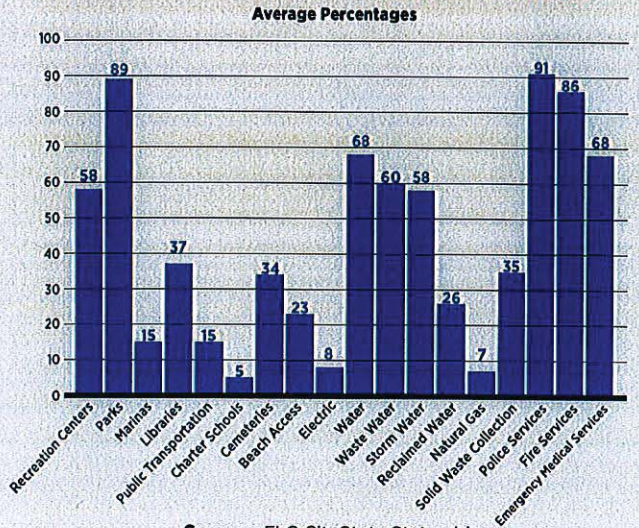
Home Rule is why no two cities are alike. City residents take pride in this diversity.

Strong Home Rule powers ensure that government stays responsive to the people it serves. The desires and expectations of residents cannot be met if municipal officials do not have the authority to respond to local needs and preferences, or to address them in a timely manner. We ask the Florida Legislature to LET CITIES WORK!

MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Just as no two cities are alike, each city's menu of services is also different. The most important aspect of municipal services is that the services are created to meet the demands of the residents. Each city offers those services desired by its own citizenry.

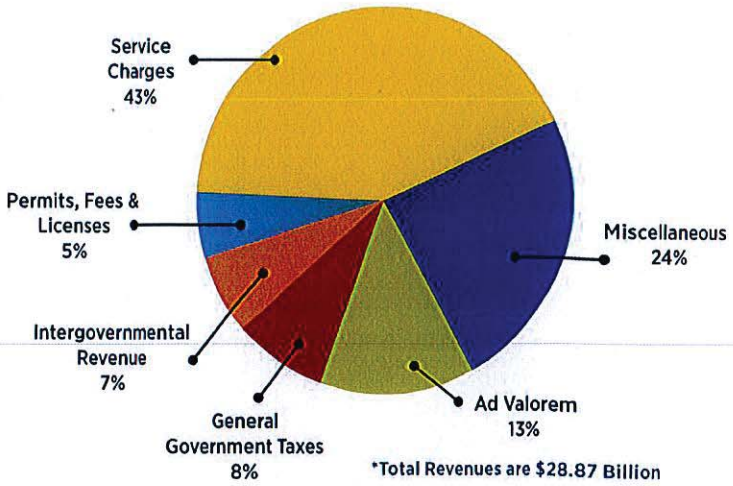
MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDED BY CITIES



Source: FLC CityStats Statewide Regional Trends, 2016

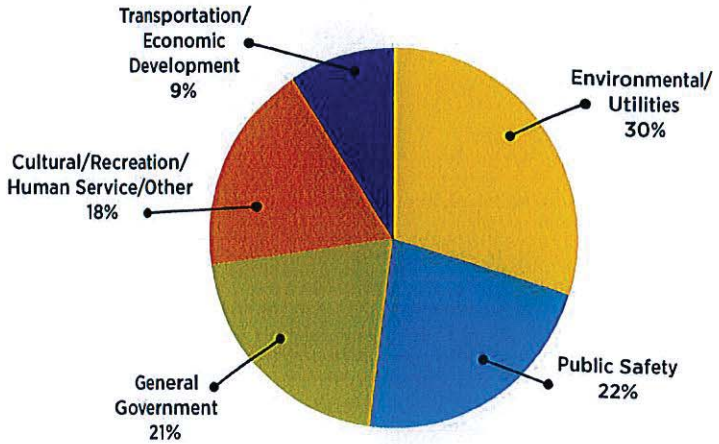
CITY BUDGETS: AT-A-GLANCE

MUNICIPAL REVENUES FY 2015*



*Total Revenues are $28.87 Billion

MUNICIPAL EXPENDITURES FY 2015*



*Total Expenditures are $25.7 Billion

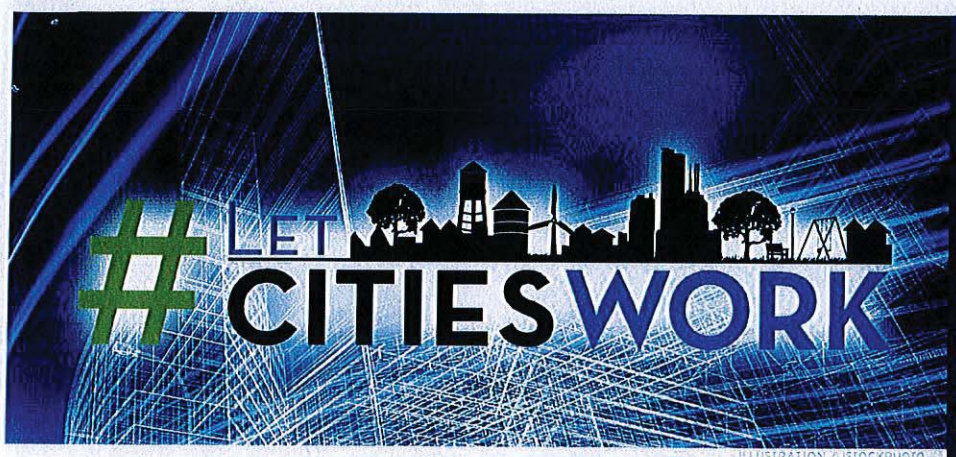


ILLUSTRATION ©ISTOCKPHOTO

Local Self-Government

PRIORITY STATEMENT:

The Florida League of Cities seeks to strengthen and protect the fundamental concept of local self-government, and will **OPPOSE** legislative efforts to impede the constitutional right Floridians have enjoyed for nearly 50 years to govern themselves under municipal Home Rule powers. Additionally, the Florida League of Cities **OPPOSES** the Legislature's persistent intrusion into local finances, which are necessary to provide financial stability and essential services uniquely required by municipal residents and local businesses.

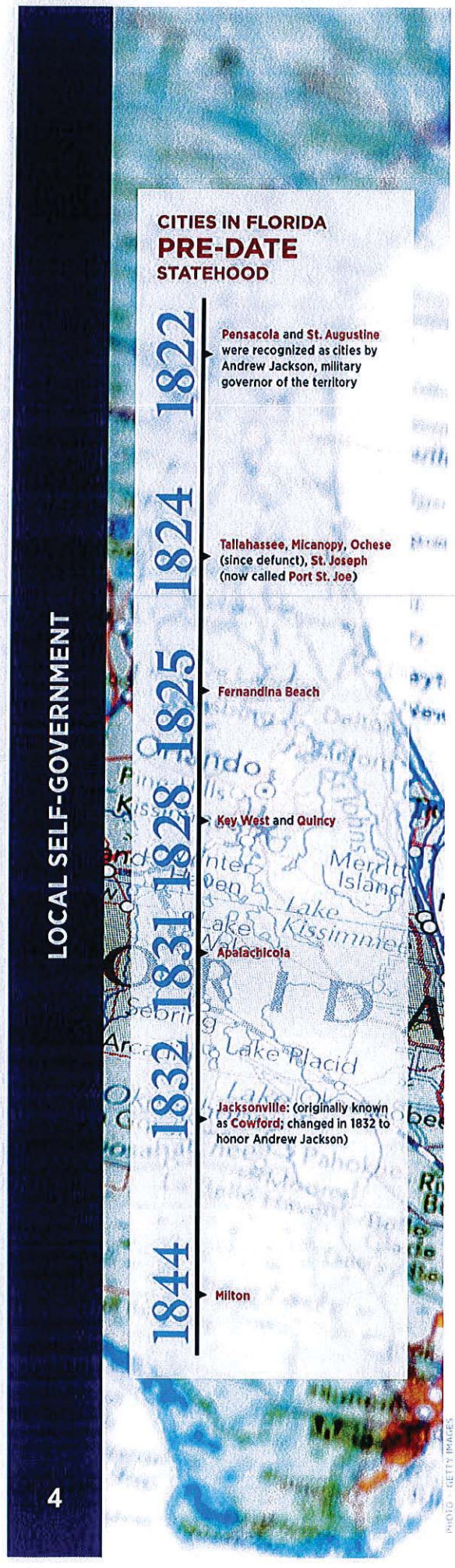
BACKGROUND:

In Florida, local self-government is not a gift of the state Legislature. . . it is the expressed will of the people. It was added to the Florida Constitution nearly 50 years ago by a statewide vote of the electorate. Floridians voted to empower themselves with the right of local self-government, or Home Rule. As the only form of voluntary government, Florida's municipalities are the embodiment of this right.

A city is created by its citizens for a variety of reasons, including increased services, a desirable business or residential environment, and more voice in how their government is run. Florida law specifies the standards for the formation of a municipality. The multi-step process is not an easy one, and it should not be. The process takes commitment, tenacity and hard work of residents who volunteer their time for the cause. Local citizens take the first step by having a feasibility study to determine if the community should incorporate, and they develop a charter that specifies the form, functions and power of their proposed city government. These steps can take a year or more to complete.

Next, the proposal is presented to the Legislature for a review of whether it meets statutory requirements for incorporation. Following a successful review, the proposed charter is adopted by a special act of the Legislature. The final step must be taken by local citizens: approval of the incorporation and charter by voters in a local referendum.

Home Rule authorizes the governmental, corporate and proprietary powers necessary to conduct municipal government, perform municipal functions, and render municipal services. At its core, Home Rule is demonstrated by the level of services provided within a municipality and, to a much lesser extent, by exercises of regulatory power.



Citizens in cities expect various municipal services: water, sewer, garbage collection, storm water systems, roads, sidewalks, fire protection, law enforcement, parks and recreation. Citizens also expect municipal officials to exercise regulatory powers when necessary to protect public health, safety and community standards specific to the municipality in which they choose to live. These expectations cannot be met if municipal officials do not have the authority to respond to local needs and preferences, or to address them in a timely manner.

Municipalities are authorized by the Florida Constitution to levy ad valorem taxes, and are further authorized by statute to levy other forms of local taxation. In addition, municipalities are authorized under their constitutional Home Rule powers to impose special assessments and fees for municipal services. Municipal citizens pay local taxes, assessments and fees for the specific purpose of obtaining and enhancing municipal services and amenities. Citizens expect their elected city leaders to use these local revenue proceeds for local municipal purposes, and not for state purposes (that should be paid for with state taxes).

Home Rule is why no two cities are alike. City residents take pride in this diversity. Strong Home Rule powers ensure that government stays close to the people it serves. Intrusion on Home Rule from the state or federal government undermines the constitutional right of citizens to govern themselves. Intrusion from the state or federal government into local finances prohibits elected city leaders from meeting the expectations of their citizens that local revenues will be used as intended by the citizens.

CS/HB 17 (Fine) and **SB 1158** (Passidomo), introduced in the 2017 legislative session, would have effectively preempted to the state the authority of municipal governments to impose local requirements on businesses, professions, commerce and trade. While the bills differed in approach, their ultimate effect was the same. In short, the right of local citizens to govern themselves through the exercise of municipal Home Rule powers would have been severely restricted. The bills eviscerated principles of local self-government by transferring local decision-making to the state Legislature. CS/HB 17 passed one subcommittee but ultimately died in the House Commerce Committee. SB 1158 never got a hearing in the Senate.

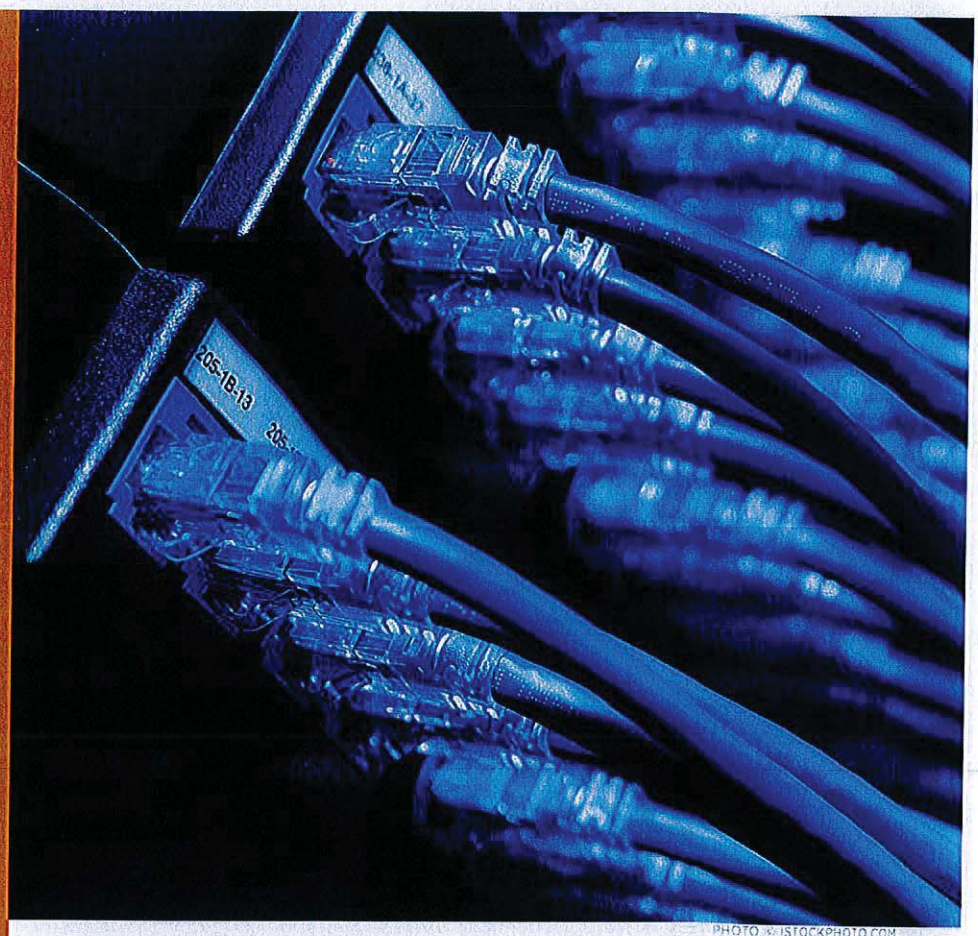
In addition to CS/HB 17 and SB 1158, numerous other bills restricting local self-government were introduced in the 2017 legislative session. Examples of 2017 proposals include, but are not limited to, the following issues: Building and Land Use; Small-Cell Wireless; Community Redevelopment Agencies; Vacation Rentals; Municipal Elections, Medical Marijuana; Concealed Weapons and Firearms; Firefighter Cancer Disability Presumption; Local Business Taxes; Fiscal Transparency; Ad Valorem Taxes; Stormwater and Wastewater Management; Traffic Infraction Detectors; and Drones. These proposals involved either preemptions of municipal powers or intrusion into municipal finances, and sometimes both.

The League anticipates that legislative efforts to divest citizens of their powers of local self-government and transfer control over local decisions to the state Legislature will continue in the 2018 legislative session.

LEGISLATIVE PREEMPTIONS USURP LOCAL CONTROL

These are some of the preemptions that the Florida Legislature has passed.

#LETCITIESWORK



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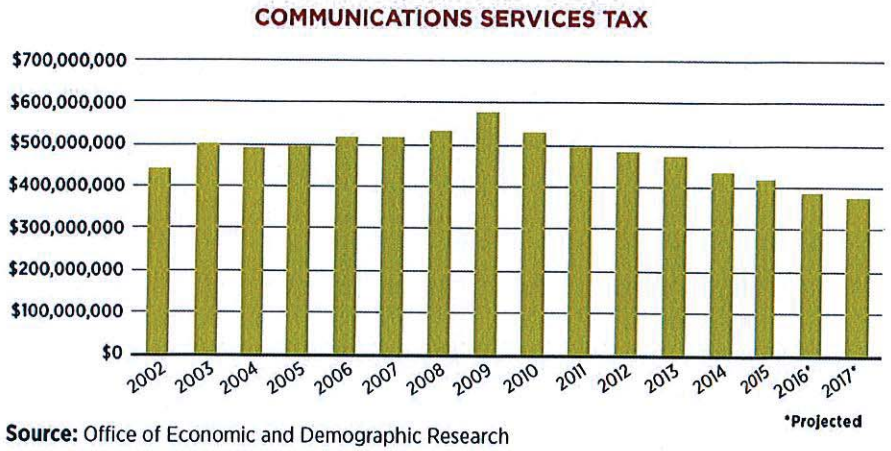
Communications Services Tax Protection

PRIORITY STATEMENT:

The Florida League of Cities **SUPPORTS** reforming the Communications Services Tax in a manner that is revenue neutral; provides for a broad and equitable tax base; provides for enhanced stability and reliability as an important revenue source for local government; and provides a uniform method for taxing communication services in Florida. Reform should promote a competitively neutral tax policy that will free consumers to choose a provider based on tax-neutral considerations.

BACKGROUND:

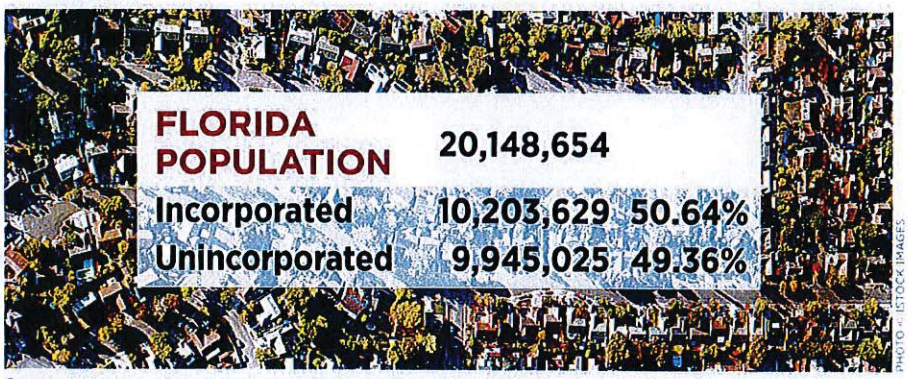
In 2000, the Florida Legislature restructured taxes and fees on telecommunications, cable, direct-to-home satellite and related services under the Communication Services Simplifications Act. This act replaced and consolidated seven different state and local taxes and fees into a single tax that has two centrally administered parts, the state and the local communications services tax (CST). The local CST is one of the main sources of locally levied general revenue for municipalities, providing them with more than $421 million annually. Counties collect nearly $234 million a year. The State of Florida collects approximately $600 million, including direct-to-home satellite, and shares a portion of those revenues with cities through the Municipal Revenue Sharing Program and Local Half-Cent Sales Tax Program. These revenues may be used for any public purpose, including pledging the revenues to secure bonds.



Source: Office of Economic and Demographic Research

The CST applies to telecommunications, video, direct-to-home satellite and related services. The definition of communications services encompasses voice, data, audio, video, or any other information or signals transmitted by any medium. Examples of services subject to the tax include local, long distance and toll telephones; voice over Internet protocol telephones; video services; video streaming; direct-to-home satellite; mobile communications; private line services; pagers and beepers; telephone charges made at a hotel or motel; facsimiles; and telex, telegram and teletype. The tax is imposed on retail sales of communications services that originate and terminate in Florida or are billed to an address within the state.

The Florida CST includes both a state tax and a gross receipts tax. Communications services, except direct-to-home satellite service, are subject to the state tax of 4.92 percent and the gross receipts tax of 2.52 percent. Direct-to-home satellite service is subject to the state tax of 9.07 percent and the gross receipts tax of 2.37 percent.



Source: Bureau of Economic and Business Research, 2016 population estimate

ILLUSTRATION © GETTY IMAGES

A county or municipality may authorize the levy of a local CST. The local tax rates vary depending on the type of local government. For municipalities that have not chosen to levy permit fees, the tax may be levied at a rate of up to 5.1 percent. For municipalities that have chosen to levy permit fees, the tax may be levied at a rate of up to 4.98 percent. In addition to the local CST, any local option sales tax that a county or school board has levied is imposed as a local CST.

Over the past few years, the economy, legislation and changes in technology have eroded the tax base for the CST. Additionally, there has been a movement by the Florida Legislature to reduce the total tax rate, both on the state and local CST. In June 2015, the First District Court of Appeal overturned a lower court's favorable ruling regarding the constitutionality of the direct-to-home satellite rate. The original lawsuit, from May 2005, alleged that the direct-to-home satellite rate was unconstitutional because by imposing the CST at a rate of approximately 60 percent higher on out-of-state satellite TV companies versus in-state cable companies, the tax unfairly discriminated against out-of-state companies and, therefore, violated both the Commerce Clause and the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution. The Department of Revenue appealed this decision and the Florida Supreme Court heard oral arguments in April 2016. On April, 13, 2017, the Florida Supreme Court found that the statute involved did not violate the dormant Commerce Clause, and reversed the decision of the First District Court of Appeal.

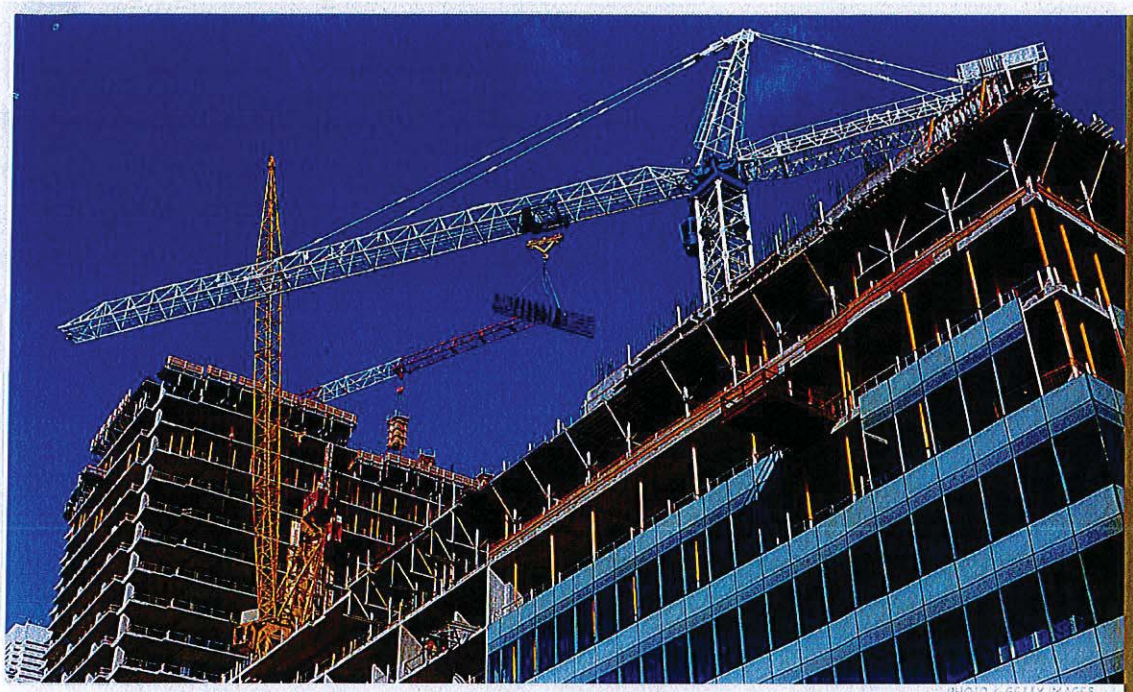


PHOTO © GETTY IMAGES

Community Redevelopment Agencies

PRIORITY STATEMENT:

The Florida League of Cities **SUPPORTS** legislation to improve municipalities' use of community redevelopment agencies to effectively carry out redevelopment and community revitalization in accordance with Home Rule.

BACKGROUND:

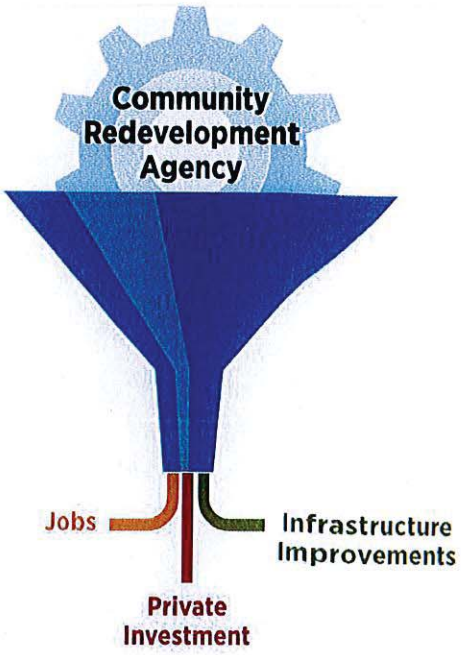
There are 222 active community redevelopment agencies (CRAs) in Florida. They were established to encourage new investment and job creation in urban areas that were blighted as a result of substantial growth moving away from the urban core.

For many years, residential development and commercial and governmental facilities were being built outside central urban areas. As these urban areas became vacant or underutilized, high crime rates followed, creating a decline in the economic and social vitality of many municipalities. Faced with these challenges, municipalities, working with their respective counties, have exercised their discretion to establish a CRA as a means for economic recovery in these areas.

Under Florida law (Chapter 163, Part III), local governments are able to designate areas as CRAs when certain conditions exist, such as the presence of substandard or inadequate structures, a shortage of affordable housing, inadequate infrastructure, insufficient roadways and inadequate parking. To document that the required conditions exist, the local government must survey the proposed redevelopment area and prepare a "Finding of Necessity."

If the Finding of Necessity determines that the required conditions exist, the local government may create a CRA to provide the tax increment financing tools needed to foster and support redevelopment of the targeted area, and to spur job growth. This redevelopment tool is used by both Florida counties and cities of all sizes, from Miami-Dade County, Tampa, Orlando and Jacksonville, to Hernando County, Madison and Apalachicola, to improve their targeted areas.

The tax increment used for financing projects is the difference between the amount of property tax revenue generated before the CRA designation and the amount of property tax revenue generated after the CRA designation. Monies used in financing CRA activities are, therefore, locally generated. CRA redevelopment plans must be consistent with local government comprehensive plans. This makes CRAs a specifically focused financing tool for redevelopment.



This financing system is successful because it provides specific public services without increasing or levying any new taxes. Both residents and business owners favor this system because the taxes they pay on their investment are rewarded with direct benefits from the CRA. Also, unlike a city or county government, a CRA may utilize tax increment financing as a way to leverage these local public funds with private dollars to make redevelopment happen in public/private partnerships. This has been extremely successful throughout the state.

ADDITIONAL POINTS:

1. The state should be wary of attempts to restrict the use of tax increment financing, particularly if the debate is over money and control and not about the merits of revitalizing blighted areas. CRAs have demonstrated that the use of the funding dramatically improved the economic and social outcomes within the targeted areas. These outcomes benefit cities, counties and, more importantly, the taxpayers.

2. CRAs and tax incrementing financing have been integral tools for municipalities to provide improvements to run-down urban cores for more than 30 years. It is not in the state's best interest to restrict municipalities' ability to revitalize and redevelop areas that are struggling the most. This is especially true, given the sunset of the state-funded Enterprise Zones program and the lack of alternative programs that address slum and blighted areas in Florida.

3. Redevelopment of an area can take different twists and turns to accommodate shifting circumstances, requiring the need for flexibility. Any attempt to increase bureaucratic or political interference would hinder the ability of the CRA to respond nimbly and comprehensively in implementing redevelopment initiatives.

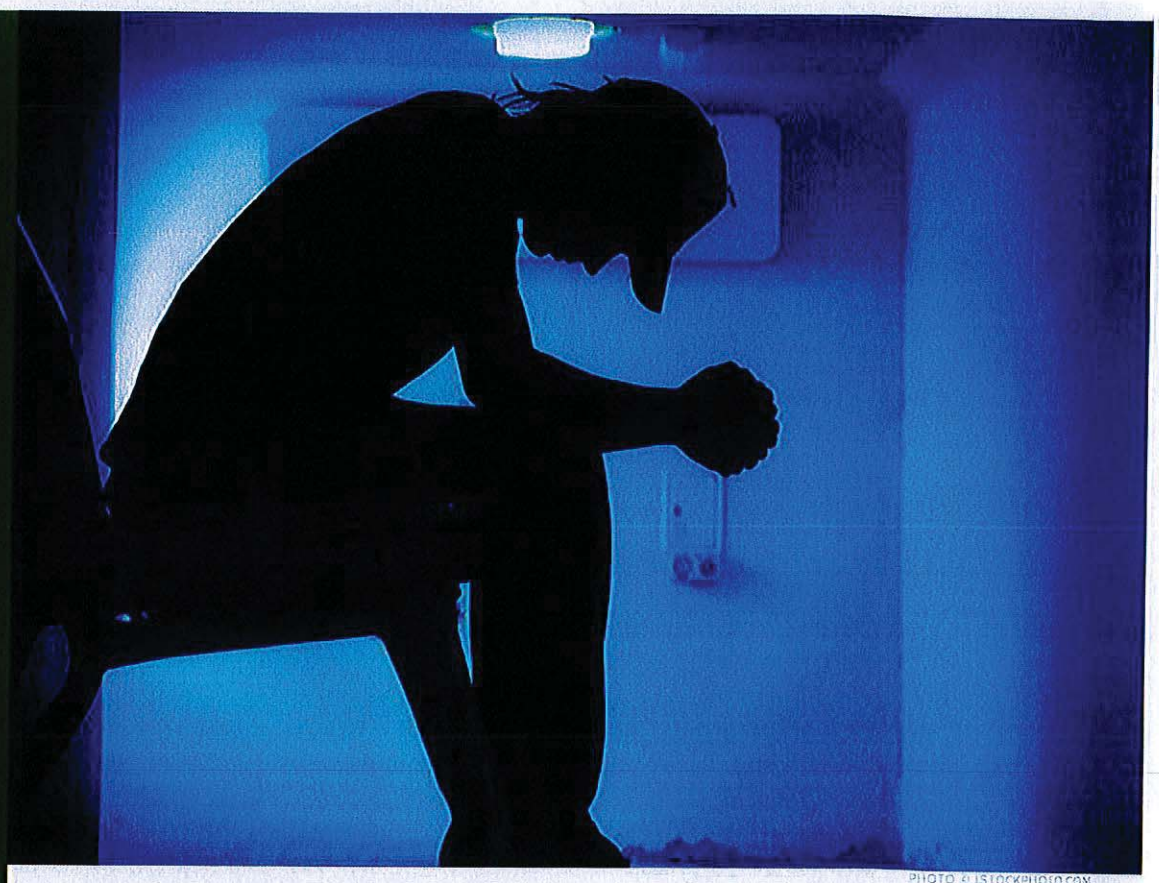
4. On February 3, 2016, the Miami-Dade County Grand Jury filed a report titled "CRAs: The Good, the Bad and the Questionable" that asserts the highest priority of Florida's CRAs should be affordable housing. This view of CRAs incorrectly reduces and mislabels their value and core mission as versatile revitalization engines. The Grand Jury report asserts CRAs are not held accountable for their spending and, therefore, public tax dollars are being abused by city officials. This is incorrect. The use of TIF funds must be consistent with the redevelopment plans agreed to by the citizens in a community.

5. Overall, the comprehensive community redevelopment plans that are created and implemented by CRAs are uniquely designed to address that area's specific needs for revitalization. Creating affordable housing is just one of the many roles that CRAs may play, and it should be part of a balanced economic development strategy. There are a variety of community, state and federal programs with the primary mission of providing affordable housing and CRAs consistently partner with and invest in these programs. The Florida Redevelopment Act, which governs CRAs, is designed to be adaptable to Florida's widely diverse communities.

6. Local governments create CRAs to respond to local needs and concerns to address slum and blight. CRA boards act officially as a body distinct and separate from the governing body of a city or county, even when it is the same group of people. By allowing elected officials to serve as CRA board members, CRAs provide knowledgeable representation to taxpayers from individuals who are familiar with community needs. Ultimately, elected city officials are held accountable by their decisions

7. At times, some county governments have been critical or uncooperative in the creation and expansion of CRAs by municipalities. These intergovernmental disputes have led to unnecessary conflicts between local governments. In some instances, questions regarding the interpretation of certain provisions of the Community Redevelopment Act are being disputed.

CS/SB 1770 (Lee) and **CS/CS/CS/HB 13** (Raburn), introduced during the 2017 session, would have increased audit, ethics, reporting and accountability measures for community redevelopment agencies (CRAs). The bills would have required CRAs to annually submit additional reporting information to the state, including the number of CRA projects (the term "projects" is not defined), and the amount of money spent on affordable housing within the CRA. The bills would have required CRA procurement to comport with city and county procurement procedures. Of specific concern to cities, the bills outlined a process by which CRAs would be phased out and restricted the use of tax increment financing (TIF) funds to only those purposes specified in statute. This restriction would have eliminated the ability of the CRA to fund what could be considered traditional CRA projects such as infrastructure, streetscapes, sidewalks, building improvements, parks, security and the like. CS/SB 1770 also required a supermajority vote of the governing body that created the CRA to maintain any existing CRAs past 2037. CS/SB 1770 allowed for the creation of a new CRA, but only with a supermajority vote of the city or county that created it. CS/CS/CS/HB 13 prohibited the creation of a new CRA unless authorized by a special act of the Legislature. CS/SB 1770 died in a Senate subcommittee while CS/CS/HB 13 passed the House on a 78-37 vote. The League anticipates that legislative efforts to phase out or eliminate CRAs will continue in the 2018 legislative session.



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Sober Homes

PRIORITY STATEMENT:

The Florida League of Cities **SUPPORTS** legislation requiring certification for all recovery residences and recovery residence administrators to ensure that this vulnerable population is protected and that recovery residence administrators have the competencies necessary to appropriately respond to the needs of residents.

BACKGROUND:

In 2008, Congress passed the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act, which made available additional insurance benefits to people with substance abuse disorders. The passage of the Affordable Care Act in 2010 authorized adults under the age of 26 to use their parents' insurance, required insurance providers to cover pre-existing conditions, and guaranteed coverage despite multiple drug relapses. These changes in insurance benefits opened the floodgates of money going to substance abuse treatment.

> **"Police have coined the term 'new homeless,' referring to patients who are removed from sober homes once insurance money runs out."**

As a result, recovery residences became big business. Florida has long been a destination for those trying to overcome an addiction. In 2016, a study by Minnesota-based health care company Optum found that more than 75 percent of young adults treated for substance abuse in Florida came from out of state. The increased regulation of pill-mills during this decade limited access to prescription narcotics and has led to an increase in the use of heroin and other more accessible synthetic opioids.

There is little oversight of the recovery residence industry, whereas other areas of the healthcare system are highly regulated by the state. Recovery residences, which house vulnerable patients engaged in intensive outpatient treatment, are essentially self-policed. Legitimate recovery residences avail themselves of a voluntary certification program and agree to operate under higher standards. However, because this certification is voluntary, other sober homes can operate without minimum standards, resulting in the warehousing of patients in substandard housing that encourages anything but sobriety.

Cities have also been negatively impacted. Residential neighborhoods are lined with poorly run sober homes, but the number is unknown because there is no mandatory registration at any level of government. A recent *New York Times* article highlights the problems cities are facing, "With six to 12 people living in a home, noise is unavoidable. Property crime rose 19 percent from 2015 in a Delray Beach neighborhood." Police have coined the term "new homeless," referring to patients who are removed from sober homes once insurance money runs out. These homes not only create nuisances for residents, but are also a burden on local governments. Palm Beach County first responders dealt with 5,000 overdose calls in 2016.

On May 3, 2017, Governor Rick Scott declared a public health emergency in response to the opioid epidemic, allowing the state to tap into federal funding for prevention, treatment and recovery services.

The Legislature passed HB 807 by Representative Hager during the 2017 legislative session. The bill expands prohibitions on referrals between licensed treatment providers and certain recovery residences, while also prohibiting service providers from engaging in deceptive marketing practices. While HB 807 was a good start, the League will be advocating for minimum operating standards needed to protect this vulnerable population.

> **Palm Beach County first responders dealt with**
>
> **5,000**
>
> **overdose calls in 2016.**

PHOTO © ISTOCKPHOTO.COM

The cost of an average Palm Beach County Fire Rescue run is between

$1,000

and

$1,500

Source: Palm Beach County Sober Homes Task Force Report, January 1, 2017

Transportation Funding

PRIORITY STATEMENT:

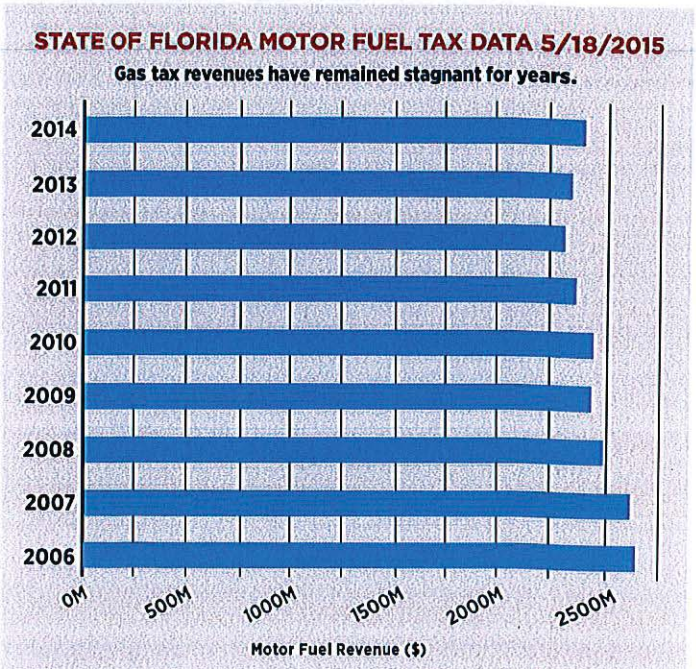
The Florida League of Cities **SUPPORTS** legislation that preserves local control of transportation planning, provides for a more equitable transportation funding formula between municipalities and counties, and provides for additional dedicated revenue options for municipal transportation infrastructure and transit projects.

BACKGROUND:

The 2017-2018 budget for the State of Florida allocates $5.6 billion for the Florida Department of Transportation 5-Year Work Plan. This amount includes $22.3 billion for construction, $2.6 billion for right-of-way purchase and maintenance, and $5.4 billion for freight logistics and passenger operations.

With 112.8 million visitors each year and more than 1,000 people moving to Florida each day, the state's transportation infrastructure is taking a beating. Congestion is a growing problem and the added wear and tear on our roads makes for recurring repair or replacement. At the same time, highway construction costs continue to escalate. Some of this increase is directly attributable to technological advancements that are necessary to implement a "smart transportation grid."

A major portion of transportation funding flows to municipalities through county, state and federal taxes on gasoline. Recent data show that gas tax revenues at both the state and federal levels have continued to decline, primarily due to an increase in the number of fuel-efficient vehicles. More fuel-efficient vehicles mean less gas is being purchased, resulting in lower gas tax revenues. As vehicles become even more fuel efficient, gas tax revenue will continue to decrease. To compound the problem, the federal gas tax was last increased in 1993 and doesn't keep up with inflation. Florida's gas tax rates are adjusted once a year to account for inflation.



Florida's gas tax rates are adjusted once a year to account for inflation. Figures were adjusted for inflation and shown in 2014 dollars.

Source: *Governing* calculations of U.S. Census Bureau Annual Survey of State Government Tax Collections data. Information on last gas tax raise compiled by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy.

While the federal, state and county governments have a variety of tools available to them to address transportation funding, municipalities have limited revenue options for funding transportation projects.

For example, the state can charge tolls on certain roadways or can increase vehicle registration or tag and title fees to generate additional revenue. Charter counties may hold a referendum on whether to impose up to a 1 percent sales tax to fund transportation infrastructure projects. Florida statutes also allow each county to levy up to 12 additional cents per gallon of fuel.

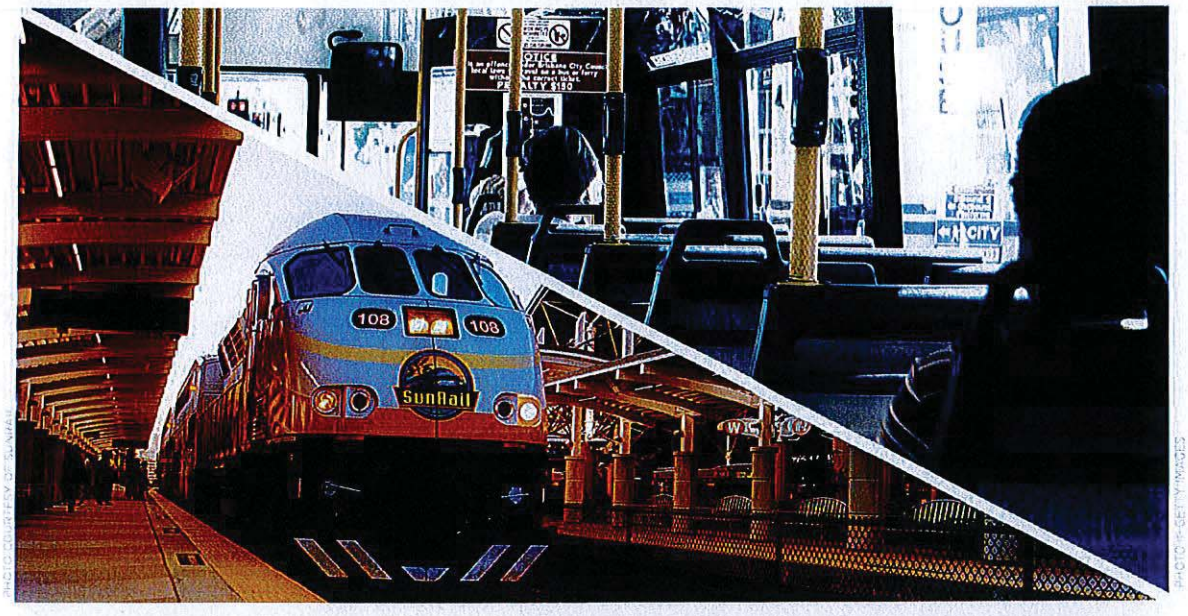


PHOTO COURTESY OF SUNRAIL

PHOTO © GETTY IMAGES

Only 3% of Floridians use some form of public transit — virtually unchanged since 2013.

Municipalities lack the authority to impose these fuel taxes. This can be problematic when there are disparities between the transportation needs of municipalities versus those of the more rural areas of the county. For example, a referendum was held in Hillsborough County to enact such a tax. The tax was defeated countywide. However, if the election results are broken down, a majority of the residents of the City of Tampa voted to approve the tax to pay for much-needed transportation projects. Extending such options to municipalities would allow greater flexibility to fund their specific transportation needs.

PHOTO © GETTY IMAGES

This is what happens when the economy grows faster than the transportation system's ability to accommodate it.

For those local option taxes adopted by counties, the proceeds are distributed by interlocal agreement or by a statutory formula that is not favorable to municipalities. The current transportation funding formulas do not take into account lane miles, traffic counts or other measures related to use and/or maintenance need. By including these elements into the calculations that determine the distribution of transportation funding, local governments – municipalities, in particular – will be able to more effectively address their transportation needs.

Another way to assist local governments would be for the state to provide a mechanism for low-interest loans or grants for transportation projects.

PHOTO - GETTY IMAGES

Water Funding

PRIORITY STATEMENT:

The Florida League of Cities will **SUPPORT** legislation to provide long-term, recurring and adequate state funding, that is equitably distributed throughout the state, for local government water resource and water quality improvement projects and infrastructure, including, but not limited to, projects that: reduce nutrient and pollutant loading from wastewater sources; mitigate storm water and flooding impacts; and increase available water resources and supplies.

BACKGROUND:

Florida's water quality and water supply challenges are myriad. Current conditions result from decades of pollution and overuse from multiple sources – urban, rural, agricultural, residential and industrial. All of these sources, their stakeholders, and their state and local governments, have a shared responsibility for addressing water supply, water quality and associated infrastructure problems. Resolution of these issues will require both long- and short-term strategies that are coordinated, are based on sound science, and make effective use of limited public funds and resources.

Florida's ability to meet the water needs of its growing population, industries and natural environment exceeds available supply and infrastructure. $48.71 billion is estimated to be needed over the next 20 years to meet needs for drinking water and wastewater, flood control, nutrient pollution, Everglades restoration, and beach and inlet erosion. Some states have taken proactive steps to ad-

In Florida:

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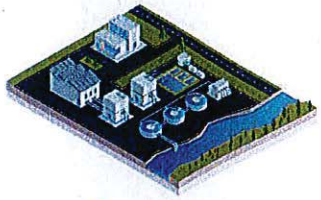
Source: EPA Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey and Assessment - Fifth Report to Congress, September 2015



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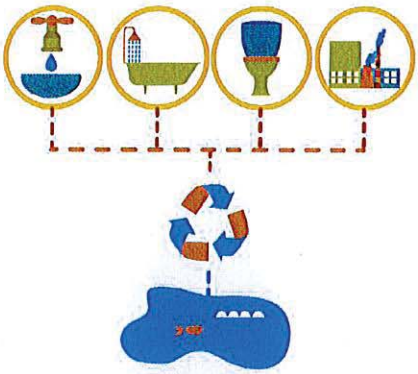
$18.5 billion

Is needed for wastewater infrastructure improvements **by 2020**

Source: EPA Clean Watersheds Need Survey 2012, Florida



There are over

1900

water body segments throughout Florida impaired for water quality

Source: 2016 Report Card for Florida's Infrastructure, American Society for Civil Engineers

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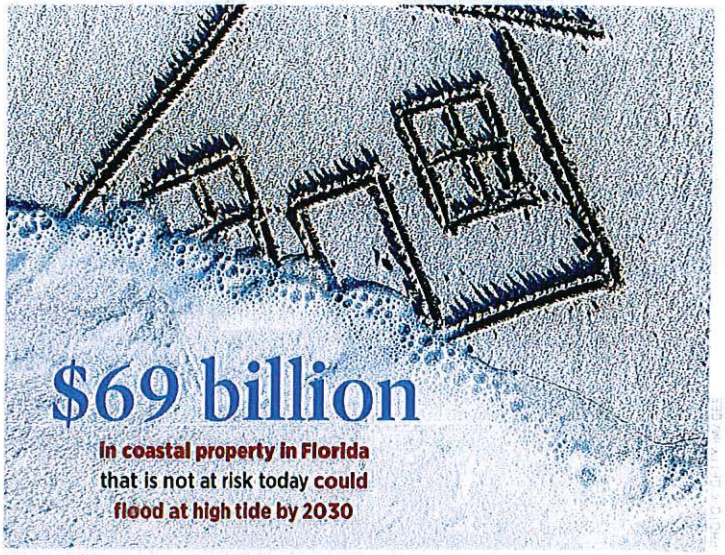

Source: "Come Heat and High Water: Climate Risk in the Southeastern U.S. and Texas," July 2015, Risky Business Project

dress similar challenges by creating financing and funding mechanisms, including Texas, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Illinois and California. Florida does not have a dedicated, long-term, recurring source of funding for water supply, water quality and associated infrastructure.

In 2005, the Florida Legislature took initial steps to establish a dedicated source of funding for water quality and water supply projects by creating and funding the Water Protection and Sustainability Program. Local funding matches and transparent grant criteria were hallmarks of the program. The program was funded with $100 million in recurring revenues – an amount that represented less than 1 percent of the state's total budget. During the program's first three years, the state and water management districts contributed $423 million for alternative water supply development, which funded 344 local projects. These projects were anticipated to generate 842 million gallons of new water per day. Unfortunately, the program was drastically cut in 2008, and funding to the trust fund was eliminated in 2009.

Other than the brief success of 2005's SB 444, Florida's history of water project and infrastructure funding has been one of band-aids and crisis management. Dying springs and algae-choked estuaries prompted the passage of SB 552 and HB 989 in 2016. Among other things, these bills required septic tank remediation plans for certain spring sheds and provided dedicated percentages of Amendment 1 money for the benefit of the Everglades and surrounding estuaries, Lake Apopka and springs. Continued algae blooms in South Florida estuaries prompted passage of SB 10 in 2017, which provided a $1.5 billion plan for water storage needed to combat nutrient pollution in these areas. These bills were critically needed, but problems persist throughout the state and continue to grow.

The extent and nature of the state's water and infrastructure problems vary among regions and communities. For some local governments, their most acute need is finding resources to mitigate nutrient pollution from septic tanks. Others are desperately seeking ways to increase available water supply through the creation of alternative water supplies, including reuse of reclaimed water. Still others grapple with the enormity of retrofitting their community against increasing tidal and storm flooding.

These challenges are growing exponentially, and cannot be shouldered by one or even a few governments or stakeholders. It is pointless to assign "blame" for these growing challenges because it is shared by everyone who uses Florida's water and infrastructure resources – businesses, residents, visitors and industries. It is time for Florida's state and local governments, residents, industry and water stakeholders to collaborate on shared solutions that meet Florida's water and infrastructure challenges comprehensively, equitably and for the long term.

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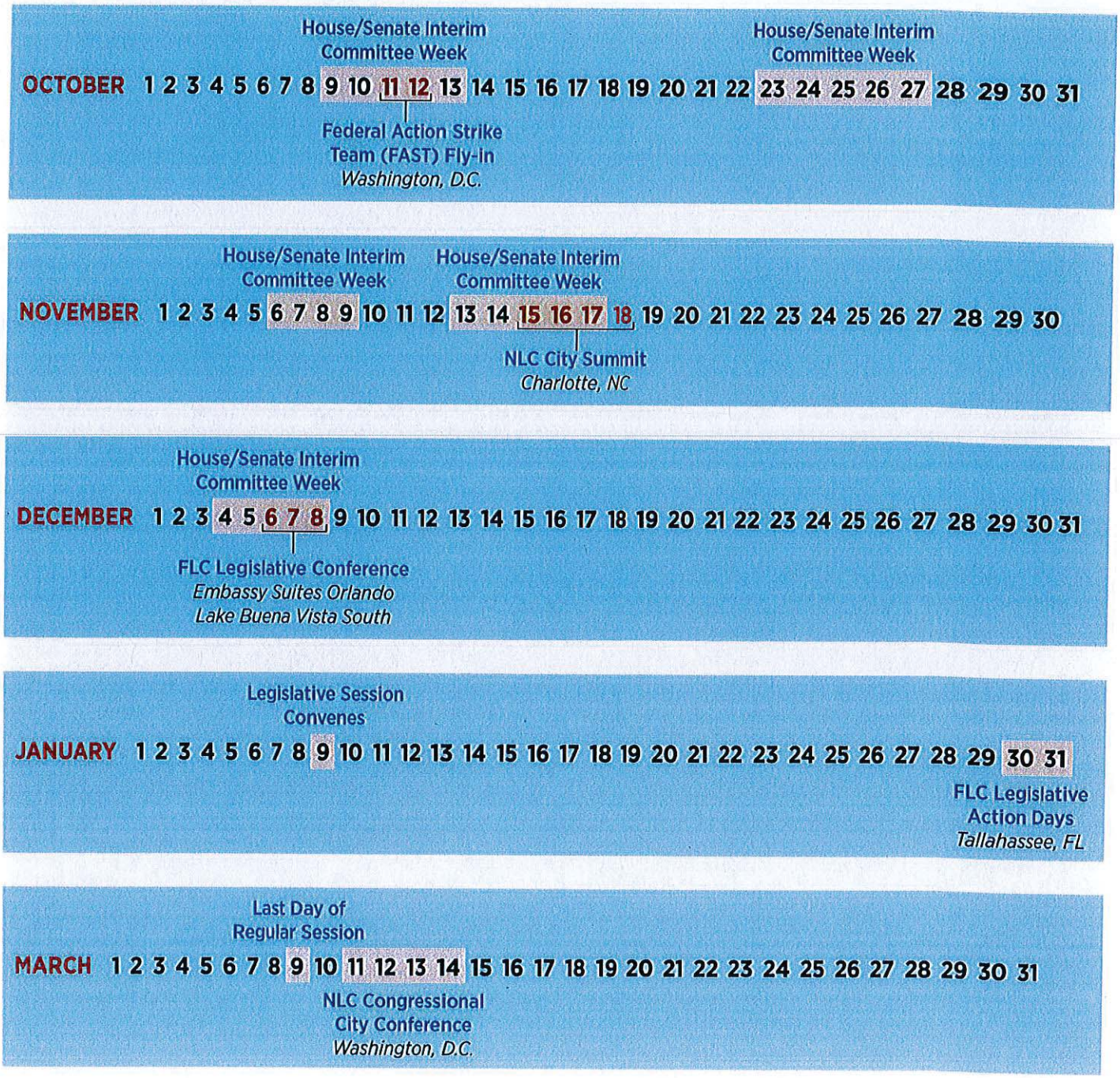
2017-2018 KEY DATES

(Dates subject to change)



LEGISLATIVE POLICY COMMITTEES

The following city officials served as chairs and vice chairs of the Florida League of Cities legislative policy committees. We thank them and the hundreds of municipals officials who participated in the development of these legislative priorities.

FINANCE, TAXATION AND PERSONNEL

Chair: *Council Member Natalie Kahler,* City of Brooksville
Vice Chair: *Mayor Bill Partington,* City of Ormond Beach

LAND USE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Chair: *Commissioner Hayward J. Benson, Jr.,* City of Lauderhill
Vice Chair: *Mayor Kathy Meehan,* City of Melbourne

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Chair: *Vice-Mayor Deborah Kynes,* City of Dunedin
Vice Chair: *Councilwoman Helen Miller,* Town of White Springs

AGUE OF CITIES, INC.

The Action Agenda reflects the priorities of 412 municipalities, as prepared by the Florida League of Cities' five legislative policy committees and adopted by the full membership at the League's 91st Annual Conference, August 19, 2017, in Orlando.

2017-2018 Officers

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The Florida League of Cities is the united voice for Florida's municipal governments. Its goals are to serve the needs of Florida's cities and promote local self-government.

Florida's city officials formed as a group of municipal governments for the first time in 1922. They wanted to shape legislation, share the advantages of cooperative action, and exchange ideas and experiences. Growing from a small number of cities and towns, our membership now represents 412 cities, towns and villages in the Sunshine State.

The League is the premier provider of many products and services developed especially for Florida's cities. Our strength and success are dependent upon the support and participation of our members.

For more information on the League's legislative initiatives, please contact:
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