



VOLUSIA COUNTY LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

VOLUME III, NUMBER 1

March 27, 2003

STATE ISSUES

FLORIDA STATUTORY CHANGES

▪ JUVENILE PREDISPOSITION COSTS

The Senate Criminal Justice Appropriations Committee presented its first draft budget proposal. Their draft does not include any cost shifts to the counties in the area of juvenile justice. The House Public Safety Appropriations Committee presented its first draft budget proposal this week. The draft does shift the costs of pre-trial detention of juveniles to the counties. This is an approximate hit of \$85.7 million for the counties statewide. **The proposed hit to Volusia County is more than \$2.9 million.** Please see attached paper on this issue.

▪ WATER AND UTILITY LEGISLATION

SB 140 by Senator Argenziano and SB 998 by Senator Cowin are the legislative response to the Florida Water Services controversy and would establish new criteria and procedures for separate legal entities that are organized to acquire and operate public water and sewer facilities. SB 140, SB 998 and SB 1060 were combined into one bill and amended in committee on 3-17-03. The bill is still favorable to local governments opposed to the method of sale to Milton and Gulf Breeze. **HB 129 by Representative Frank Attkinson** also addresses the same issues in a slightly different fashion. A strike everything amendment was adopted on HB 129 for the benefit of local governments which oppose the method of sale to Milton and Gulf Breeze. **SB 156 by Senator Campbell and HB 735 by Representative Greenstein** impose restrictions on the transfer of consumptive use permits and water resources. There has been no action on these bills. **SB 1044 by Senator Argenziano and HB 279 by Representative Cretul** also deal with consumptive use permits, and they would entitle a county to notice and the opportunity to object when the Water Management District is considering a CUP within the county boundaries. SB 1044 continues to move through committees, but HB 279 has not been heard. **HB 1069 by Representative Russell** would tie water availability and consumptive use permits to specific developments or projects, directs the Public Service Commission to establish mandatory conservation or drought rates, adds water conservation policies to water supply plans, and deals extensively with water reuse policy. This bill has not yet been heard in committee.

SB 1376 by Senator Saunders creates a study commission with a broad scope to look at the state's long-term water needs, and it may be a vehicle to pursue a comprehensive look at basic water law. **HB 1275 by Representative Greenstein** is the House companion to SB 1376 and has been referred to

five committees. **SB 662 by Senator Bennett** deals with reuse facilities. It is designed to allow the PSC to accommodate the implementation of reuse in private waste water systems. SB 662 is now available for the Senate Calendar, but neither SB 1376 nor HB 1275 have been heard by committee.

- **MEDICAID NURSING HOME COSTS/MEDICAID TRANSPORTATION**

A proposed committee bill, **PCB HC 03-02**, was heard by Committee while the Council was in Tallahassee for Volusia Day. Mr. Bruno gave testimony as Chair of the Volusia County Council and Chair of the Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board. This bill is bad for Volusia County on two fronts. First, it increases our contribution for Medicaid Nursing Home costs over \$1,000,000. (The Senate has proposed, through a budget proposal, an increase that would cost the County approximately \$346,000). Secondly, it forces counties to provide medical transport for Medicaid patients. This comes at a cost of \$ 1.7 million. It also eliminates the Transportation Disadvantaged Program – this would cost the County \$600,000.

Additional bills which would impact our public transportation system are **HB 855, SB 2070, HB 1473, SB 937 and HB 1664**. **HB 855 by Ross** regarding the High Speed Rail Authority, would take \$75 million from the funds within the State Transportation Trust Fund designated for the Transportation Outreach Program for the construction of the high-speed rail system. If that amount is not sufficient, funds will then be appropriated from within the State Transportation Trust Fund for public transportation projects.

SB 2070 and HB 1473, would appropriate 1% of the State Block Grant Program for inter-city travel (i.e. Greyhound.) This would impact VOTRAN's budget by approximately \$60,000.

SB 937 and HB 1664 would eliminate the enforcement of the Medicaid co-pay requirement. VOTRAN supports this legislation.

- **INDIGENT CARE REIMBURSEMENT**

SB 696 by Senator Saunders would increase counties indigent patient reimbursement cap from \$4 to \$6 per capita. **The impact would be \$800,000 to the County.** This bill also impacts the county's financial responsibility for indigent patients at regional trauma centers. The cost of this is unknown at this time.

- **ARTICLE V/REVISION 7**

SB 1184, SB 1190, SB 1192, SB 1196, and SB 1198 by Senator Villalobos are shell bills dealing with the judiciary, the state court system and the court clerks and are likely vehicles for implementing Article V issues as they are decided by the Senate. **SB 1194 by Senator Villalobos** is now the prime vehicle for Revision 7 reforms to Article V related matters. SB 1194 was amended in Senator Villalobos' committee this week. The Florida Association of Counties was not able to get its amendments added to the bill. However, since this meeting FAC has shared more strategic information and allowed us to participate more in their efforts.

SB 1194 will be heard by the Senate Article V Appropriations committee in the next two weeks. Our lobbyists have been working with Chairman Smith to consider the FAC amendments because adoption of the FAC amendments in his committee will be a very difficult task. At Chairman Smith's direction, FAC is working with the various stakeholders on implementation and funding options for the integrated statewide judicial information system.

Because of the increased coordination between FAC and contract lobbyists for various counties, it appears that some progress has been made with the House Select Committee members. The House will likely take up a bill next week.

- **EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**

No legislation has been filed at this time regarding COPCNs.

- **LIBRARY LEGISLATION**

HB 251 (Patterson) and **SB 192** (Lynn) as well as companions **HB 49**, **HB 325**, **SB 1408**, **SB 1434**, and **SB 1654** all deal with the issues of parental access to library records of their children under 16 years of age for the purpose of collecting fines or recovering overdue books or materials.

FUNDING REQUESTS

- **EMERGENCY SERVICES INSTITUTE/ EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER**

Requests have been made through the Federal government for \$4.5 million and the State government for \$2 million in funding for this project. Congressman Mica has made this a top funding priority for his office this year. State officials welcomed the project, however many noted that funding would be much more likely to happen when Federal funding is secured.

- **FLORIDA FOREVER FUNDING**

This will be followed throughout the session.

- **TRANSPORTATION OUTREACH PROJECTS**

It is unknown what the process will be for transportation project funding in the coming session. These are the projects that we are requesting funding for:

VOLUSIA COUNTY

- Daytona Beach Area Transportation Solution – \$9.67 million
- I-4 Frontage Road (472 Activity Center) – \$6.185 million
- Rhode Island Extension - \$6 million
- Saxon Blvd. Extension - \$3.4 million

- **WATER AND SEWER PROJECTS**

Requests will be made for each of the water projects indicated on the priority list:

- North Peninsula - \$20 million total
- Stone Island - \$1 million
- Southeast Volusia - \$3 million.

ADDITIONAL ISSUES

- **FIREFIGHTER AND PARAMEDIC CANCER PRESUMPTION**

HB 1393 by Representative Pickens would create a presumption that the death or disability of a firefighter or paramedic due to cancer was accidental and in the line of duty. **SB 2320 by Senator Atwater** is the Senate companion to HB 1393. There has been no action on either of these bills.

- **VOLUSIA HOSPITAL DISTRICTS**

HB 273 by Representative Kosmas would codify the special acts relating to the Southeast Volusia Hospital District. **HB 1457 by Representative Pickens** would codify and amend the special acts relating to the Halifax Hospital Medical Center special taxing district. HB 273 has been placed on the House Calendar. There has been no action on HB 1457.

