



### *Collier County 2014 State Legislative Priorities*

The Board of County Commissioners on behalf of Collier County citizens advocates for the overall principles of preserving the **Home Rule** authority of local governments; opposing state **Preemption**; opposing **Unfunded Mandates**; and protecting against **Trust Fund Diversions**.

#### *Issues to Advocate:*

- 1. Public Safety Center on Alligator Alley** – Oppose changes to the existing statute that provides both construction and operational funding for the proposed Public Safety Center being constructed by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) at Mile Marker 63 on I-75. Support FDOT operational funding for a minimum of seven (7) years.
- 2. Inland Oil Drilling & Fracking** – Support development of a Task Force by the Florida Legislature composed of stakeholders including local government elected officials and staff experts, residents, oil industry representatives, environmental interests, and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to study the health, safety and welfare impacts of oil drilling and fracking, and the effects on infrastructure and water quality.
- 3. Economic Incubator** – Support Collier County requesting **\$2.5 million** in state-funded support that will be equally matched to initiate a technology business incubator/accelerator that will attract and nurture entrepreneurs – both international and domestic – who want to build their own businesses locally.
- 4. University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS)** – Support protecting research programs and preserving educational resource facilities at UF/IFAS in Collier County. UF is considering an alternate funding source through the Florida Legislature. The new, uncertain funding source for UF/IFAS is a Legislative Budget Request (LBR).

5. **Communications Services Tax (CST)** – Oppose any legislation that would change the CST; support present CST collections. The CST is assessed on all taxable communications services, such as a cell phone service, business land lines, cable and satellite television. Loss of CST would be **\$5 million impact** to Collier County.
6. **Lake Okeechobee Basin** – Support state funding for the construction of additional water storage and water quality treatment facilities within the Lake Okeechobee, Caloosahatchee, St. Lucie and Indian River Lagoon watersheds.
7. **Beach Funding & Maintenance** – Advocate for increased funding for beach renourishment and maintenance for coastal counties. In FY 2013-2014 a total of **\$37.5 million** was allocated to projects included in the Beach Management Funding Assistance Program (BMFAP). In 2013 Collier County was allocated **\$998,000** for engineering costs. Streamline permitting.

**Continuing Issues of Interest:**

- A. **Gulf Consortium** – Support Collier County’s continued participation in the federal RESTORE Act directives, including development of the State of Florida’s unique Gulf Consortium which is composed of representatives from 23 counties bordering the Gulf of Mexico. Clean Water Act penalties against BP could mean from **\$6 to \$24 million** to Collier County in funding disbursements based on a methodology/formula (**Pot 1**) to be finalized in U.S. Treasury Rules for local projects determined by boards of county commissioners. The focus of the Consortium with oversight of the FAC is to develop a list of projects possibly with more regional impact and statewide significance (**Pot 3**).
- B. **Offshore Drilling in Gulf of Mexico** – Support permanently prohibiting offshore oil and gas drilling in Florida territorial waters, which are within nine (9) geographic miles from the coast of the Gulf of Mexico. Support state demands that the federal government exert rigorous oversight of any current and future drilling outside state waters and insist no monetary limitations for any drilling mishap are set.
- C. **Gaming** – Support Collier County receiving three (3) % local government share of any future gaming proceeds.
- D. **Local Business Tax** – Support like the Florida Association of Counties (FAC), the authorization of local governments to modify local ordinances in a manner that results in a more simplified, efficient and equitable tax system that benefits business and local communities. Collier County business tax proceeds: **\$400,000** annually.

- E. Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP)** – Advocate for increased funding in this statewide grant program that finances outdoor recreational improvements. In the past Collier County Parks and Recreation typically applied for as many as three (3) grants through FRDAP, each of which can be a **\$200,000** award.
- F. Revenue & Expenditure Caps (TABOR)** – Oppose state legislation mandating local governments cap revenue and expenditures.
- G. Impact Fees** – Support home rule authority over administration of Collier County’s existing impact fee program.
- H. Libraries** – Support State Aid to Libraries and cooperatives like the Southwest Florida Library Network (SWFLN). For FY 2014, Collier County requests **\$33.4 million** for State Aid (the level of funding in 2001); **\$4 million** for library construction (no construction money since about 2007); and **\$1.5 million** for library cooperative funding.
- I. Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Program** – Support continued restoration of funding and assure that the additional **\$10 million** committed in 2012 for funding in FY 2014-2015 is also secure. In the 2012 Legislative Session, the Legislature provided an additional **\$5 million** for TD services statewide for FY 2012-2013. TD also received **\$111 million** in General Revenue and Transportation Trust Fund dollars, which represents a **\$7.6 million** increase over last year to fund transportation for the elderly, medically fragile, and underprivileged. The total Collier County 2013 budget: **\$3,346,340**
- J. Procurement** – Support, as FAC does, legislation amending the Consultants Competitive Negotiation Act (CCNA) to establish an optional (alternative) process for state and local entities to consider cost in the award of professional services agreements.
- K. Synthetic Drugs** – Support, like FAC, expanding the controlled substance schedule to include new iterations of synthetic formulas that mimic the effects of illegal drugs. Support prohibiting certain types of packaging and marketing of any products claiming to mimic the effects of illegal drugs.
- L. Pensions** – Oppose any Florida Retirement System (FRS) benefit changes that result in an increase in the FRS county and county employee contribution rates, which aligns with FAC.
- M. Medicaid** – Support encouraging the state to continue efforts to overhaul the system. Despite billing process improvements, ridding counties of this unfunded mandate is FAC’s ultimate goal.

- N. Online Travel Agencies (OTA's)** – Oppose any attempts to give OTA's an exemption on paying the correct amounts of sales tax and tourist development tax on hotel reservations made on the Internet.
- O. VISIT FLORIDA Funding** – Protect the current level of funding to VISIT FLORIDA and support increased funding to this organization to support the Governor's goal to attract 100 million visitors to Florida in the next year.
- P. Transportation** – Oppose diverting the Transportation Trust Fund to non-transportation projects. A total of **\$11.3 billion** was funded for transportation items for the current FY 2013-2014. Some of the major funding areas include **\$8.67 billion** for the Transportation Work Program; **\$3.6 billion** for Intrastate and Arterial Highway Construction; **\$725 million** for Right-of-Way Land Acquisition; **\$421 million** for Public Transit Development Grants; **\$152 million** for County Transportation Programs (SCRAP & SCOP); **\$52 million** for Intermodal Development Grants; and **\$15 million** for the Economic Development Road Fund. In addition, advocate against regionalization of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO's) in concert with FAC which further proposes opposing FDOT efforts to require urbanized areas (UZA's) with multiple MPO's to submit one combined project priority list.
- Q. Growth Management** – Support monitoring any new Growth Management legislation, including Permitting, Transportation Concurrency, and Proportionate Share.
- R. Regional Planning Councils (RPC's)** – Support monitoring the funding of RPC's statewide. Historically, the state's 11 RPC's received about \$2.5 million in state General Revenue funds. For the past three years, RPC's have not received any state funding.