



## 2009 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

### Oppose cost shifts to local governments.

**BACKUP INFO** — Oppose addressing state budget shortfalls through cost shifts to local governments; oppose unfunded mandates.

### Oppose a cap on local government property tax revenues and/or expenditures.

**BACKUP INFO** — Neither revenue nor expenditure caps would address the tax inequities that currently exist in the property assessment and tax system.

### Support giving authority to local building officials to inspect severely damaged mobile or manufactured homes.

**BACKUP INFO** — Request authority to inspect severely damaged mobile or manufactured homes by local building officials. Charlotte County believes the use of the Standard Unsafe Building Abatement Code or the International Property Maintenance Code for abatement of unsafe manufactured housing is the most expedient manner in which to address the issue with these structures but we need clarification of our authority.

### Support true competitive bidding.

**BACKUP INFO** — Request sponsorship by the Charlotte County Delegation of a Statewide Bill that would seek protection from disclosure, under Section 119.07, Florida Statutes, and the Public Records Law, the official cost estimate of local government projects. The Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners passed a Resolution to this effect on Feb. 27, 2007. This would save the local governments thousands of dollars and reintroduce true competitive bidding on projects. By publishing these cost estimates we find that all bids are within a few dollars of that estimate. This is not a competitive bid process.

### The Legislative Agenda For Charlotte County

### Support responsiveness from regulatory agencies.

**BACKUP INFO** — Request sponsorship by the Charlotte County Delegation of the following: "the regulatory agency shall have \_\_ (60, 90 or 120 days) from receipt of County's submittal of plans, specifications or drawings to review and notify the County in writing of any suggested or required changes needed to comply with any existing rules, regulations or guidelines. If the regulatory agency fails to reply within the specified timeframe, the Agency will be deemed to have approved the submittal, plan, specification or drawing as submitted."

### Support establishing a streamlined TRIM notice.

**BACKUP INFO** — Support establishing a Truth-in-Millage (TRIM) notice that is streamlined and easier for the taxpayer to understand.

### Support prohibiting offshore drilling near Florida coastlines.

**BACKUP INFO** — Support passage of Constitutional Amendment to prohibit offshore oil drilling within 250 miles of the Florida coastline.

Resolution #2007-123 approved September 11, 2007.

### Oppose the State increasing the county's share of reimbursement to the AHAC for Medicaid hospital beds and nursing home beds.

**BACKUP INFO** — Oppose the State increasing the county's share of reimbursement to the State (Agency for Health Care Administration) for the Medicaid hospital beds and nursing home beds. The Agency for Health Care Administration (AHAC) has once again proposed to raise the local government requirement to reimburse the State from \$55 per month per Medicaid nursing home bed to \$202 per month per nursing home bed. It is estimated that this would increase Charlotte County's additional cost liability to \$877,340.

## Oppose governments losing their TV channels.

BACKUP INFO — As the existing cable franchise agreements expire, governments may lose their TV channels or face new programming rules that may be cost prohibitive. In addition, as cable companies expand the number of channels and number of "tiers," the existing government channels are being bumped to triple-digit channel numbers and into tiers that the basic cable subscriber can't access without additional cost.

## Oppose reductions of Medicaid reimbursement rates for transportation or case management.

BACKUP INFO — Medicaid non-emergency trip funding was \$475,380 per year until the end of contract year on September 1, 2008, when rates were reduced to \$452,558 per year. The Agency for Health Care Administration (AHAC) is currently negotiating with the Commission on the Transportation Disadvantaged who passes the funds through to the localities. While AHAC has been asking for a 7% cut across the board, the contract appears to be settled at 4.1% starting December 1, 2008. This would reduce Charlotte County revenues to \$434,003 for the year. This represents an annual loss of \$41,377.

## Support State funding increases for local road projects.

BACKUP INFO — Support State funding increases for local road projects. Restore transportation projects delayed or postponed due to increased transportation costs, labor shortages and other unexpected events. Prevent diversion of the State Transportation Trust Fund and transportation user fees to non-transportation purposes, recognizing that the diverted money would be unavailable to fund area transportation improvement needs.

## Support Water Resource Issues:

- Establishment of water reservations to keep our estuaries, Charlotte Harbor, healthy.
- A sustained State of Florida grant program that includes sufficient funding for all water utilities to research and develop cost-effective alternative water supplies.
- Current State of Florida water law that recognizes that local governments and public water utilities have the responsibility and right to establish rates and rate structures for all of their services.
- Both water supply development and environmental restoration should take place concurrently and expeditiously to support public health, safety, and the environment.
- All affected water users and uses, including environmental, must equally share in the responsibility and management of declared water shortages.
- Establishment of a dedicated and long-term recurring funding source from the State of Florida and Water Management Districts for alternative water supply development projects mandated by the regional water supply plans.
- Requirement that Water Management Districts provide an equitable distribution of funds among all types of cost effective alternative water supply projects that effectively address regional and local needs regardless of the size of the water utility.
- Programs that define water conservation or demand side management which demonstrate water savings as an alternative water supply shall be eligible for State of Florida and Water Management District funding assistance.
- Water Management District and State of Florida provisions of financial and regulatory incentives for water utilities that effectively and efficiently manage the use of reclaimed water as part of alternative water supply development.
- The State of Florida and Water Management District purchase or controlled use of lands contained within catchment areas of surface and ground water sources to ensure the safety and reliability of those sources.

## Support Veteran's Tuition Waivers.

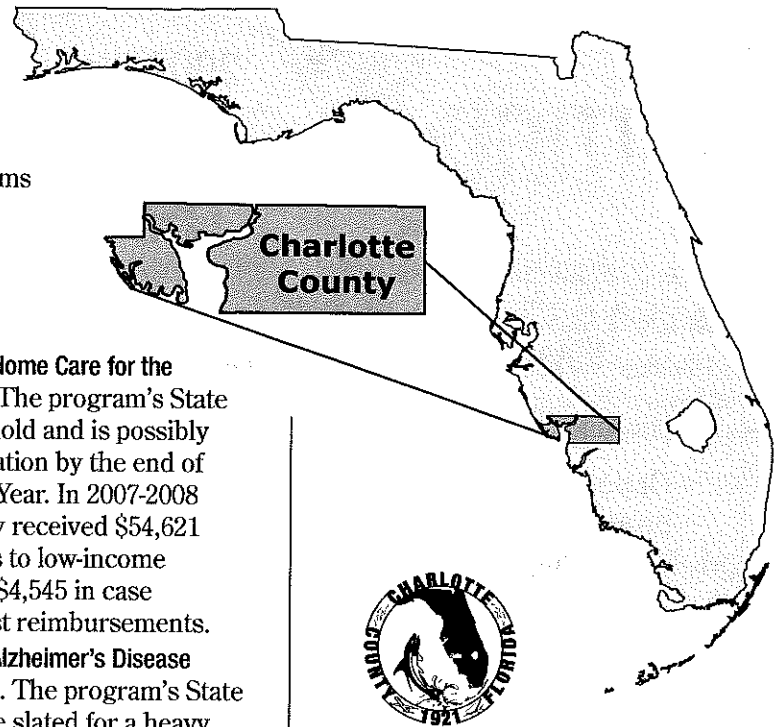
BACKUP INFO — Support the Veteran's Tuition Waivers proposal to designate Veterans' Tuition Assistance Act which requires state universities and community colleges to waive percentage of in-state tuition rate for veterans who meet specified criteria and provides percentage cap on number of required credit hours for which tuition waiver may be received. This proposal died in State Postsecondary Education Committee last year but is expected to be reintroduced this year. It is supported by the State Veteran Services Officers' Affiliates.

## Support Affordable Housing for Veterans.

BACKUP INFO — Support Affordable Housing for Veterans proposal that increases amount of documentary tax distributed to the State Housing Trust Fund and provides that increased amount is to be used to fund loans to veterans for affordable housing through Florida Homeownership Assistance Program. This proposal died in State Economic Development Committee last year but is expected to be reintroduced this year. It is supported by the State Veteran Services Officers' Affiliates.

## Support continued funding of community programs:

- Mosquito Control Program
- County Extension Programs
- Housing Trust Fund for SHIP Program
- Impact Fee Reduction/Down Payment Assistance
- General Revenue Funds for Senior Service Programs
- Home Care for the Elderly Program
- Alzheimer's Disease Initiative Program
- Community Care for the Elderly Program



**BACKUP INFO** — Support continuation of state funding of **Mosquito Control program**, currently Charlotte County receives approximately \$35,000. Funding of these expenditures would have to be covered from another source.

Support continuation of state funding for **County Extension programs**.

Support the proposal for the removal of cap on **Housing Trust Fund for SHIP** (State Housing Initiative Partnership) Program. Removal of cap will provide additional revenue to local governments. This proposal has been brought forward every year for several years.

Support the **SHIP program**. 4% of SHIP 2008-2009 allocation has been held back by State and localities are limited to 96% expenditures. Last year the 4% was released to the local governments at the end of the State Fiscal Year program. No guarantee of release for this year.

Support the **Impact Fee Reduction/Down Payment Assistance** proviso for award of up to \$20,000,000 in State non-recurring funds to eligible localities who have maintained impact fee reductions for 18 months. Rules, eligibility and process not yet determined.

Support the release of **General Revenue Funds for Senior Service Programs**. 4% of State General Revenue funds allocation has been held back from localities that are limited to 96% reimbursement of expenditures. Last year the 4% was released to the local entities at the end of the State Fiscal Year program. No guarantee of release for this year.

Support the **Home Care for the Elderly** program. The program's State allocation is on hold and is possibly slated for elimination by the end of this State Fiscal Year. In 2007-2008 Charlotte County received \$54,621 in cash subsidies to low-income households and \$4,545 in case management cost reimbursements.

Support the **Alzheimer's Disease Initiative** program. The program's State allocation may be slated for a heavy reduction by the end of this State Fiscal Year depending on State revenues. In 2007-2008 Charlotte County received \$79,101 for the purchase of respite care for frail elders with Dementia.

Support the **Community Care for the Elderly** program. The program's State allocation is being considered for transfer to meet Federal match requirements for the Medicaid Waiver Program, Consumer Directed Care Program and the controversial HMO Medicaid pilot program expansions. The Community Care for the Elderly Coalition and other stakeholders have been asked by the Secretary of the Department of Elder Affairs to provide creative solutions to care for the frail elderly with the potential loss of additional State revenue. In 2007-2008 Charlotte County received \$499,925 for case management services and in-home and community services through the Community Care for the Elderly Program.

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## Support Local Gas Tax Indexing.

**BACKUP INFO** — Support efforts to allow for the local gas tax to be indexed based on inflation (Local Gas Tax Indexing). Over 10 years ago, the State authorized that the State Motor Fuel Tax be annually indexed to the Consumer Price Index to allow the purchasing power of the tax to be maintained as costs increased over time. However, they did not provide for the same indexing of the Local Option Gas Taxes imposed by the Counties. As such, the buying power of the Local tax has decreased as costs have increased. As Counties struggle to find new revenue sources and fend off unfunded State mandates it has become imperative that Counties have every revenue resource available.



## Charlotte County Commission 2009 State Legislative Priorities

### The Quick List

#### Finance and Administration

- Oppose cost shifts to local governments.
- Oppose a cap on local government property tax revenues and/or expenditures.
- Support responsiveness from regulatory agencies.
- Support true competitive bidding.
- Support prohibiting offshore drilling near Florida coastlines.
- Oppose governments losing their TV channels.
- Support establishing a streamlined TRIM notice.

#### Building and Construction

- Support giving authority to local building officials to inspect severely damaged mobile or manufactured homes.

#### Public Works

- Support Local Gas Tax Indexing.
- Support State funding increases for local road projects.

#### Community and Housing

Support continued funding of community programs:

- Mosquito Control
- County Extension
- Housing Trust Fund for SHIP
- Impact Fee Reduction/Down Payment Assistance
- General Revenue Funds for Senior Service Programs
- Home Care for the Elderly
- Alzheimer's Disease Initiative
- Community Care for the Elderly
- Support Water Resource Issues.

#### State Mandated Programs

- Oppose the State increasing the county's share of reimbursement to the AHAC for Medicaid hospital beds and nursing home beds.
- Oppose reductions of Medicaid reimbursement rates for transportation or case management.

#### Veterans

- Support Veteran's Tuition Waivers.
- Support Affordable Housing for Veterans.