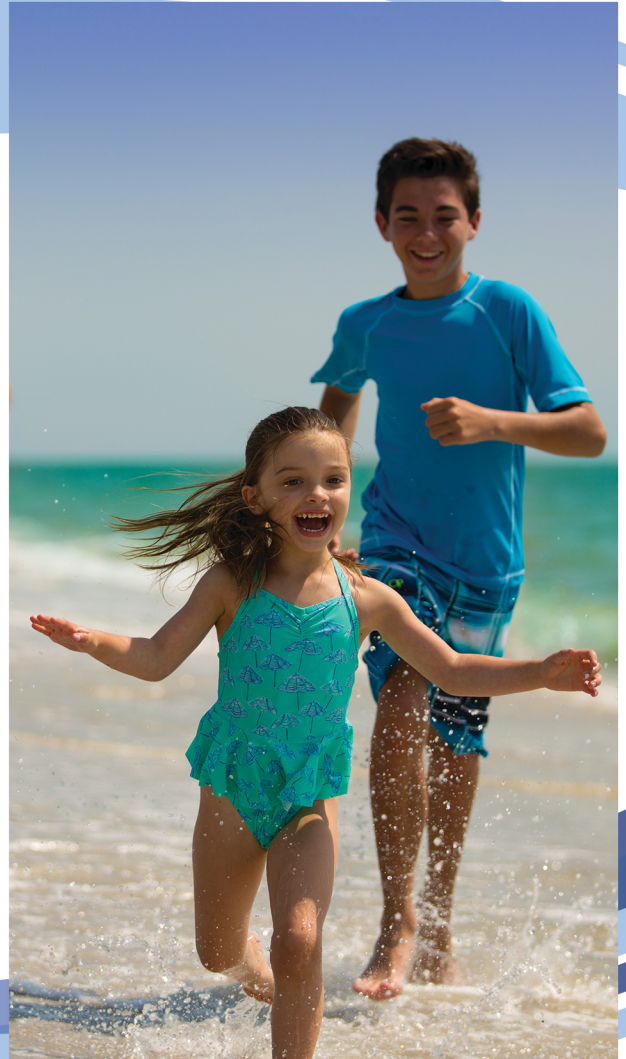




# Charlotte County

Board of County Commissioners



# 2017

State Legislative  
Program

## 2017 State Legislative Agenda

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### Guiding Statement

State and Local Governments are partners in the promotion and protection of the health and welfare of the community. To preserve this partnership Charlotte County will:

- Support state policies which benefit the economic development, environmental and social health of Charlotte County and its citizens.
- Oppose legislative changes or fiscal decisions which impact County revenues such as unfunded mandates, revenue limitations, trust fund diversions or cost shifts.
- Support local flexibility to address problems by honoring home rule and avoiding unnecessary preemptions of local authority.

### CHARLOTTE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



**Ken Doherty,**  
Vice Chairman  
District 1



**Christopher Constance**  
District 2



**Bill Truex,**  
Chairman  
District 3



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District 4



**Joe Tiseo**  
District 5



Charlotte County works in partnership with Florida's 67 counties via the Florida Association of Counties (FAC). Policy statements adopted by the FAC membership for the 2016 Florida Legislative Session have been incorporated throughout Charlotte County's State Legislative Agenda. The following legislative priorities have been identified by FAC:

- Tax Reform
- Beach Renourishment
- Medical Marijuana
- Comprehensive Water Policy
- Opioid Epidemic

## 2017 State Legislative Agenda

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### Policy Statements

#### Support Economic Development and Job Creation

- **Support** the development of economic development and job training programs and innovation clusters.
- **Support** efforts to monitor the National Flood Insurance Protection Program and the State of Florida's response to the NFIP.
- **Support** legislation and appropriation that enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of the state and local government partnership in economic development through the greater use of targeted strategies and strategic investments to induce and retain sustainable economic activity resulting in a consistent positive return on investment for both state and local governments.
- **Support** legislation that would enhance the current incentives program to support and incentivize local governments to create and maintain a more sustainable and competitive physical and financial environment for attracting film, television, digital and new media related entertainment production in the State of Florida that promotes and is tied to infrastructure and workforce education in science, technology, engineering, arts and math.
- **Support** efforts to maintain or increase funding for local government affordable housing programs.
- **Support** changes to s.286.0113 and s.288.075, F.S. that would allow the Board of County Commissioners to deliberate in private regarding an economic development proposal and preserve the confidentiality of confidential information in the possession of an economic development agency.
- **Support** language within the FY17 Renewable Energy Implementation bill that will ensure that utility scale projects that have already received local economic development incentives are exempt from tax abatement under the solar energy amendment.
- **Support** legislation to provide space and seating requirements for the issuance of alcoholic beverage licenses to event centers in Charlotte County.

#### Support Fiscal Responsibility

- **Oppose** shifting costs for state programs to local governments without a permanent identified funding source.
- **Support** legislation that maintains existing voter approval thresholds for local option tax referenda held during "General Elections".
- **Support** measures that enhance the effectiveness of existing local revenue sources to meet current and future public service demands.
- **Support** methods to enable local efforts to collect due and payable local taxes, fees, fines and other revenues.
- **Support** continued state efforts for tax reform provided that such efforts remain revenue neutral for local government.
- **Support** continued revision to current law regarding the Communication Services Tax in a manner that is: 1) revenue neutral; 2) simplifies administration and collection of the current tax; 3) provides for a broad and equitable tax base; 4) provides for enhanced stability and reliability as an important revenue source for local government; and 5) provides the opportunity for market-based growth.

- **Support** legislation that would phase-in a reduction and eventual exemption of state sales tax on commercial leases, but preserving and “grandfathering-in” existing local (county) option sales taxes.
- **Support** legislation that allows senior staff to participate in executive sessions as subject matter experts to provide board members with technical knowledge necessary to make informed decisions.
- **Oppose** legislation that would eliminate currently existing recapture provisions for homestead and non-homestead property.

### **Support the Environment and Responsible Growth Management**

- **Support** funding request for the Charlotte County Central Sewer Expansion project which includes constructing central wastewater service to 358 properties with aging and failing On-Site Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems (septic tanks) that are contributing to the pollution of the impaired water bodies of Charlotte Harbor, the Peace River and the Myakka River.
- **Support** funding request for the feasibility and design of the Manasota Key 10-year Renourishment plan which provides initial restoration and periodic beach nourishment for two and a half miles of eroding gulf shoreline within Charlotte County.
- **Support** funding for the study and monitoring of the impaired waters of Charlotte Harbor to address the health and safety of citizens and to assist in the implementation of programs to reduce the levels of non-point source pollutants introduced into these waters.
- **Support** the funding of the Water Protection and Sustainability Program within the Department of Environmental Protection and Water Management Districts for the development of alternative water supplies, water quality improvement projects, and comprehensive water infrastructure needs.
- **Support** legislation that enhances regional and local financial capability to address water supply development with allocation flexibility in all available funding sources.
- **Support** legislation that requires or incentivizes property owners to connect to reclaimed water lines when such lines are available and efforts to limit the issuance of permits for use of ponds and wells on sites where reclaimed water lines are available.
- **Support** continued engagement of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection in a comprehensive monitoring of the cumulative impacts of the implementation of the revised Clean Water Act, or WOTUS rule, on the State of Florida.
- **Support** a balanced distribution of funds for land acquisition and for water quality and quantity projects throughout the state, with equitable allocation irrespective of a project’s urban or rural nature, or its coastal or inland location.
- **Support** legislation to amend Section 159.17, Florida Statutes, to authorize counties – as well as municipalities – that issue revenue bonds, to place liens that are prior to and on parity with state, county and municipal tax liens, on properties served by any water, sewer or gas systems for service charges until paid in full.
- **Support** the creation of a new dedicated and recurring statutory funding source for beach renourishment projects which accurately reflects the increase in participating programs and future beach and inlet project funding needs.
- **Support** the revision of statutory criteria for the annual ranking of beach projects for state cost sharing; specifically, the inclusion of criteria that recognizes economic benefits and cost effectiveness, reduction in storm damage and the ability to leverage matching funds as an investment in beach protection and preservation.

- **Support** a statutory change to Section 163.3178 that clarifies for state and local officials how risk reduction is evaluated in special flood hazard areas (SFHA), as shown on FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs).
- **Support** the enhanced public awareness of pollution incidents that may threaten public health, safety and welfare and regulations with well-defined standards, and clear scope and applicability. **Support** a manner of public notice that is consistent and commensurate with the potential impact.
- **Oppose** any state-wide water commission or “water czar” which would create another layer of decision making and review of water projects or redefine existing water supply relationships among the state, regional water management districts, and local governments.

### Support Public Health

- **Support** funding to create and maintain a Community Action Team (CAT) in Charlotte County to provide comprehensive, community-based services to children aged 11 to 21 with a mental health diagnosis or co-occurring substance abuse diagnosis as a lower cost alternative to state funded foster care, residential behavioral health treatment and juvenile justice incarceration.
- **Support** funding for community-based free and charitable clinics that provide emergency room diversion and basic safety net health services for the uninsured and indigent.
- **Support** increased funding for core mental health and substance abuse services.
- **Support** legislation that repeals the state statutory preemption of smoking regulation by allowing local governments to enact local regulations that exceed state standards. In lieu of a total repeal of the preemption, **Support** legislation granting local governments the authority to restrict smoking in areas where children are present.
- **Support** efforts to increase supportive housing, employment and education initiatives for people with behavioral health issues and/or disabilities.
- **Support** diverting, medically assisting, or treating mentally ill persons outside of the criminal justice system through alternative community programs, such as Crisis Intervention Teams.
- **Support** establishing a cap on growth in the individual county Medicaid costs under s. 409.915, F.S. to address the cost shifts that result from the transition to a Medicaid enrollee based cost-sharing system.

### Support Transportation Funding

- **Support** funding for improvements to River Road in Sarasota County. River Road is a regional interstate connector and a critical evacuation route for Charlotte County residents.
- **Support** a preservation of or increase in funding for the Small County Outreach Program (SCOP). This valuable grant program provides essential funding for critical roadways among eligible counties.
- **Support** a restructure of the formula and methodology used in the distribution of gas tax funds and a review of the methodology of state prioritization (criteria) and funding for transportation projects.
- **Support** a review of state criteria for roads to be designated SIS (state roads). Charlotte County believes there are roads within our jurisdiction that meet the criteria and should be designated state roads as a part of the SIS.
- **Oppose** extending statutory authority to third-party / pass-through providers, who do not provide communication services or remit communications services tax or who do not provide franchise fees, to place communication services infrastructure within county rights-of-way.



## Support Public Safety

- **Support** legislation that provides a comprehensive health-based regulatory system where the Department of Health is responsible for licensing cultivation sites, dispensing facilities and manufacturers of marijuana for medicinal purposes subject to local ordinances, including but not limited to occupational licensing, regulation and zoning laws.
- **Support** long-term and stable funding for the Clerk of Courts.
- **Oppose** legislation that limits the ability of county EMS providers to be reimbursed for out-of-network transports.
- **Support** maintaining a countywide regulatory system for EMS through the current Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (COPCN) process.
- **Support** providing life-saving interventions, medically-assisted detoxification programs, and diversions from the criminal justice system for those suffering from opioid addiction.
- **Support** efforts to stop opioid trafficking and increased penalties for dealers and traffickers whose actions result in loss of life.
- **Support** legislation that reduces jail expenses by setting a reimbursement amount paid by counties to medical providers for health care services for inmates and arrestees at no higher than the established Medicare rate plus 10%, the same rate as currently charged to the Department of Corrections, unless there is an existing contract in place or a business practice providing a lower rate.
- **Support** continued efforts to obtain Medicaid eligibility for persons incarcerated in county jails while waiting disposition of their cases and to ensure that existing Medicaid benefits are not terminated during incarceration.
- **Oppose** legislation that would shift funds or impede counties from building and maintaining an interoperable radio communication system as authorized by statute.