



2019 POLICY & LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

FEDERAL PRIORITIES

FUNDING FOR REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS – Advocate for real federal funding to build our critically needed multi-modal transportation and transit infrastructure.

- ✓ Economic development and opportunity have historically depended on federal investments in transit and transportation that connect communities and allow businesses to bring goods to market.
- ✓ Competition, local control, and objective evaluation can ensure that federal funds flow to the projects that deliver the greatest benefit for taxpayers.
- ✓ The application of federal performance measures to both the state and regional programs would help prioritize needs and ensure that the greatest of them are addressed first. Newly available data and tools allow agencies to measure how well transportation networks function so that FDOT and regional MPOs can ensure federally funded investments are effectively connecting people to economic opportunity.

OFFSHORE DRILLING - Oppose any change to the existing federal or state laws that relate to offshore drilling off the Florida coast in the Gulf of Mexico.

COASTAL MANAGEMENT – Advocate for state and federal funding towards beach renourishment and pollution abatement.

- ✓ Address long-term solutions to the problem of critically eroded beaches.
- ✓ Identify causes of shoreline erosion and change, calculate erosion rates, and project long-term erosion for all major beach and dune systems.
- ✓ Establish a prioritized list of beach restoration and beach renourishment projects and the funding levels needed for such projects.



STATE PRIORITIES

TOURISM - Support and facilitate increased tourism throughout the state and the Tampa Bay region. Maintain the Florida Sports Foundation facilities capital budget of \$12M.

- ✓ Expand current level of funding for Visit Florida. Tourism is the economic engine that drives our state. It creates jobs, bolsters our economy, and keeps our taxes low. In 2016, visitors contributed over \$11 billion in state and local taxes. More than 1.4 million Floridians have jobs directly tied to tourism.
- ✓ Provide State and local incentives to encourage the growth and development of sports tourism at all levels and the retention of baseball spring training in our community.
- ✓ Monitor and advocate for the appropriate allocation of bed tax funds that allows for the continued marketing of our destination as well as pertinent capital projects.

RED TIDE MITIGATION AND PREVENTION – Support critical, scientific research initiatives focused on developing and testing red tide mitigation technologies.

- ✓ Continue state funding to advance mitigation science at multiple institutions, including the Red Tide Institute at the Mote Marine Laboratory, and their partnerships with the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, the University of South Florida, and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT - Increase funding of programs administered by Pinellas County Schools and local technical institutions that are focused on workforce development specifically Pinellas Technical College (PTC) programs and trade development programs.

AFFORDABLE WORKFORCE HOUSING – Oppose the use of money from the Sadowski Affordable Housing Trust Fund for any other purpose other than housing.

HEALTHCARE

- ✓ Preserve current Medicaid funding – avoid further rate cuts.
- ✓ Promote coverage and reimbursement of health care services delivered via telehealth.
- ✓ Enhance funding for behavioral health programs.
- ✓ Preserve the current Certificate of Need (CON) for Florida.

ASSIGNMENT OF BENEFITS – Stop unscrupulous contractors and attorneys from victimizing Florida homeowners at their most desperate hour.

- ✓ We urge our Legislative Delegation to bring back and press the pertinent parts of Senate Bill 1168 and urge the Governor to enact this legislation to protect Florida's insured.

EDUCATION

- ✓ Increase funding and continue to establish new and expand existing Career Technical Education and apprenticeship programs for K-12 education.



- ✓ Increase funding for community mental health and substance abuse agencies and require that the new revenue identify specific service slots for students in need of services as identified by public school personnel.
- ✓ Support maximizing early learning investments through pay-for-performance, increased accountability and workforce development in early education.
- ✓ Support the alignment of VPK assignments to developmental standards.

ARTS & CULTURE – Restore Florida’s full investment in the Florida Department of State Division of Cultural Affairs matching grants to fuel economic growth and quality of life.

- ✓ Florida arts and culture non-profit organizations support over 132,000 full time jobs – more than 7,200 in Pinellas County alone.
- ✓ Spending by both nonprofit arts and cultural organizations and their audiences in Pinellas County totaled \$241 million in fiscal year 2015.



REGIONAL PRIORITIES

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION – Advocate for the development of multi-modal transportation options, such as bus rapid transit, waterborne transportation, road infrastructure, and development of emerging technologies to build a regional system that can solve today’s congestion problems and is ready for the challenges of the coming decades.

- ✓ We urge the Legislature provide the necessary funding requested by the Florida Department of Transportation, the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority, the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority, and the Forward Pinellas Metropolitan Planning Organization to address transportation and transit projects in Pinellas County. ***Pinellas County Transportation Funding Summit January 18, 2019 – Location TBD****
- ✓ Support Brightline’s efforts to connect South Florida and Orlando to Tampa Bay.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT - Increase funding of programs administered by Pinellas County Schools and local technical institutions that are focused on workforce development specifically Pinellas Technical College (PTC) programs and trade development programs.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT – We urge the Pinellas County Economic Development department to include Clearwater and the rest of North Pinellas County in its efforts to attract new business, and we urge the City of Clearwater to continue streamlining the process involved in starting and opening businesses in Clearwater

- ✓ There is a sense in the business community that economic development initiatives proposed in Pinellas County tend to ignore the area north of Ulmerton Road.

HEALTHCARE

- ✓ Establish a specialized receiving facility for individuals apprehended under the Marchman Act. Provide funding for the training of law enforcement and first responders. De-criminalize the process of committing individuals who present a danger to themselves or others due to substance abuse.
- ✓ Continue to support the 340B outpatient drug pricing program.
- ✓ Promote coverage and reimbursement of health care services delivered via telehealth (as included in the opioid legislation recently passed by the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, recognizing the value that telehealth can provide in helping patients access critical medication assistance treatment services)
- ✓ Promote funding for behavioral health programs.



CLEARWATER PRIORITIES

IMAGINE CLEARWATER – Support the City’s efforts to get this project done.

- ✓ We urge the City to provide the economic impact details that will entice local business to support Imagine Clearwater and increase business activity in the downtown.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT – We urge the City of Clearwater to continue streamlining the process involved in starting and opening businesses in Clearwater.

- ✓ A growing number of businesses have expressed frustration with the process of opening a business in Clearwater, often due to conflicting information or the perception that the City is not friendly to business.
- ✓ Some current regulations have unintended consequences that discourage property and business owners from updating or investing in their business or property.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT – Take a more active role in workforce and business development.

- ✓ Work with The Florida High Tech Corridor to include high-tech education and development locally.
- ✓ Work with SPC and PTC to provide ‘job ready’ training and internship opportunities to local students.
- ✓ Connect the business community with local high schools to generate awareness and interest in students through the promotion of skilled trade certifications and training as an alternative to traditional academia.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING – We urge the City of Clearwater to give priority to creating an environment that enables the development of affordable housing.