



*All About Florida*

**NICK MADDOX**  
PRESIDENT  
LEON

**MELISSA MCKINLAY**  
PRESIDENT-ELECT  
PALM BEACH

**RALPH C. THOMAS, JR.**  
FIRST VICE PRESIDENT  
WAKULLA

**LEE CONSTANTINE**  
SECOND VICE PRESIDENT  
SEMINOLE

**KARSON TURNER**  
IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT  
HENDRY

**VIRGINIA "GINGER"**  
DELEGAL  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

April 8, 2020

The Honorable Marco Rubio  
United States Senate  
284 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

**VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL**

Senator Rubio:

On behalf of Florida's 67 counties, thank you for your efforts to pass the bipartisan Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. The CARES Act provides local governments funding to meet the immediate needs of residents, households, and small businesses on the economic margins.

As Congress begins work on a fourth relief package, we urge you to consider the following priorities for Florida counties:

**Direct Funding for All Counties:** Provide direct funding to smaller counties that have populations less than 500,000. Under the CARES Act, twelve (12) Florida counties are eligible to receive direct funding from the federal government, while the remaining fifty-five (55) will have to work through a yet-to-be determined state process. Given the unprecedented scale of COVID-19 event and its impact on county resources, funding relief is needed for all Florida counties, irrespective of their size. Accordingly, we implore you to eliminate as many obstacles as possible, including requiring counties to access funds directly through the state.

**Eliminate the Non-Federal Cost-Share for FEMA Reimbursements:** To lessen the financial impact on counties, we encourage Congress to eliminate the non-federal cost share for FEMA Public Assistance (PA) reimbursement. Such a measure is not unprecedented, as Congress has historically adjusted the cost share requirements for PA funding based on the severity of the event.

**Allow Teleworking as an Eligible Expense Under the FEMA Disaster Declaration:** The Center for Disease Control (CDC) continues to report that social distancing is the primary measure to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus. To that end, 53 counties in Florida have closed offices that see "in-person" customers. Of those, five (5) require their employees to telecommute from home, while another thirty-one (31) make it optional. These measures are impactful in several ways. First, by lessening the spread of the virus, it reduces the drain on federal resources. Second, by telecommuting, counties can continue to provide essential services that, if not available, can seriously cripple a community. Accordingly, to the extent that counties incur expenses for telecommuting as a result of COVID-19, they should be considered an eligible expense under FEMA's Category B expenses (Emergency Protective Measures). The Florida Division of Emergency Management has determined that such expenses are ineligible under the Stafford Act. We encourage Congress to make this an eligible expense, under certain conditions.





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### **Payroll Tax Credits**

We also ask that you consider adding a provision that was overlooked in H.R. 6201 (*The Families First Coronavirus Response Act*) and H.R. 6201 (*The Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act*). Specifically, H.R. 6201 creates paid sick leave and family medical leave requirements for all state and local public agency employers. However, the bill treats private companies and public employers very differently in that only private sector employers will receive a tax credit to offset the costs.

Since counties pay the same federal payroll taxes (i.e., Social Security and Medicare) as private businesses and, importantly, are on the frontline fighting to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 community wide, it is only fair that they qualify for the payroll credits under the new paid sick leave and paid family leave provisions. Accordingly, as Congress works to pass a fourth funding package for COVID-19, we hope that you will support inclusion of this provision to help Florida counties.

Again, thank you for your leadership and all that you do for Florida's counties.

Sincerely,

Virginia "Ginger" Delegal  
FAC Executive Director





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716 Hart Senate Office Building  
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