



*All About Florida*

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**VIRGINIA "GINGER"**  
DELEGAL  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

July 20, 2020

The Honorable Rick Scott  
United States Senate  
716 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

**VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL**

Dear Senator Scott:

As the President of the Florida Association of Counties, I am writing today to respectfully urge your support in cosponsoring the Restore the Partnership Act (H.R. 3883/S. 2967), a bipartisan bill that would reconstitute and reform the U.S. Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR) to increase transparency, to reduce regulatory burden, foster intergovernmental dialogue and unite all levels of government in supporting our unparalleled system of federalism.

America's system of federalism divides governing responsibilities between the federal government and state and local governments. While there is a clear distinction and separation of powers and duties among these levels of government, there is also a deep interconnectedness and interdependence. We are bonded together by a shared purpose to achieve public policy outcomes that best serve the American public, often requiring the collective efforts of federal, state, local and tribal governments working together.

However, in recent decades, we have witnessed a significant decline in structured, intentional dialogue and partnership among federal, state and local government officials. Counties are responsible for a wide range of issues, including public infrastructure, transportation, healthcare, economic development, criminal justice and law enforcement, and many others. While some of these responsibilities are unique to counties, in many cases we work with our state and federal partners to achieve optimal solutions. We often serve as co-regulators with our state and federal counterparts. While policies and programs established by the federal government are intended to guide and coordinate efforts, they are ultimately implemented and enforced at the state and local levels.

From 1959-1996, the ACIR served as the preeminent bipartisan, independent organization promoting strong intergovernmental relations. ACIR produced high-quality information, data and analyses, including over 130 policy reports with action recommendations, 194 information reports and about 80 issues of a magazine titled, "Intergovernmental Perspective." ACIR also helped develop congressional legislation related to improving the administration of federal grants and served as a valuable advisor to presidents, state leaders and local elected officials.

Reconstituting the ACIR would establish a national commission focused on how governments are interacting. Governments work best when they work together, and this new commission would help shine a spotlight both on areas of potential improvement as well as examples of successful collaboration.





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Thank you for your attention to this matter and for bringing the county voice to the table to discuss the importance of a robust federal, state, local and tribal partnership. County officials stand ready with innovative approaches and solutions to work side-by-side with our federal and state partners to ensure the health, well-being and safety of our citizens.

Sincerely,

Melissa McKinlay  
President, Florida Association of Counties

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