



**FAC Federal Policy Committee
Existing Policy Update
August 2020**

1. NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Reform: SUPPORT reauthorization of the NFIP with legislative, policy and programmatic modifications to ensure no coverage lapses and to improve the affordability, transparency, and financial stability of the program through reforms in the following areas: 1) Affordability/Rate Structure; 2) Mapping/Data Collection/Modeling; and, 3) Mitigation. **OPPOSE** any reauthorization efforts that are detrimental to policy holders, local governments, and the integrity of the program.

Update:

- The NFIP is set to expire on September 30, 2020.
- During the 116th Congress, the House Financial Services Committee passed H.R. 3167 on a bipartisan 59-0 vote. Along with reauthorizing the program for five-years, the legislation would make key reforms to enhance and modernize NFIP. Provisions within the bill include:
 - Creating a five-year pilot program to provide means-tested assistance for low-income policy holders; however, the program does not account for geographic disparities in housing costs in certain coastal communities.
 - Providing \$500 million annually for updates to mapping technology to better predict future flood risk
 - Allocating \$200 million annually for the flood mitigation assistance grant program
 - Providing continuous coverage for policy holders who wish to explore flood insurance in the private market
- HR 3167 does not provide affordability protections for the more than 47,000 Florida policy holders who own businesses and/or second homes or rental properties. These properties are subject to premium increases as high as 25% per year.
- July 2019 - Bipartisan bills in both the U.S. House and the U.S. Senate were introduced to reauthorize and reform the NFIP. The bills, S. 2187 (sponsored by Sen. Robert Menendez (D-N.J.)) and H.R. 3872 (sponsored by Rep. Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-N.J.)). Key provisions of the bills:
 - Authorizes the program for five-years to 2024.
 - Caps annual premium increases at 9 percent.
 - Expands coverage losses from \$250,000 to \$500,000 for residential properties
 - Creates a means-tested affordability program
 - Creates a new mitigation set-aside program

- Creates two new mitigation loan programs
 - Provides \$400 million annual for mapping
- While HR 3167 includes provisions that are laudable, S. 2187 and HR 3872 Of all the NFIP reform bills align more with FAC priorities.
- 11/8/19 FAC sent a joint letter with the Florida League of Cities to Florida’s Congressional Delegation writing in support of legislation creating a long-term National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) reauthorization.

Staff Recommendation:

A. Retain current FAC policy

2. WATER

WRDA: SUPPORT bi-annual passage of the Water Resources Development Act that authorizes U.S. Army Corps of Engineers projects and policies that often have state-wide impacts to Florida, including Everglades restoration, port and inlet construction, and beach nourishment projects. **SUPPORT** restoration of congressionally directed spending.

Update:

- On July 29, the U.S. of House Representatives unanimously approved the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2020 (H.R. 7575). The lower chamber approved the measure by voice vote under a procedural set of rules that disallows most amendments. WRDA bills authorize water resources studies and projects and set policies for navigation, flood control, hydropower, recreation, water supply and emergency management for the U.S Army Corps of Engineers (Army Corps). This legislation is usually passed on a biennial basis and addresses county interests related to ports, inland waterways, levees, dams, wetlands, watersheds and coastal restoration. Counties often partner with the Army Corps to strengthen local infrastructure.

In the Senate, the WRDA bill is one of two water infrastructure measures that the Environment and Public Works Committee cleared unanimously on May 6. It has \$5.1 billion for 26 Corps projects. The bills had yet to come up for a Senate floor vote. It is assumed that compromise legislation will be taken-up during the “lame duck” session following the November election.

Staff Recommendation:

A. Retain current FAC policy

3. UPPER KISSIMMEE BASIN WATER STORAGE PROJECTS

Upper Kissimmee Basin Water Storage Projects: **SUPPORT** the inclusion of funding in the Water Resources Development ACT (WRDA) for studies and implementation of water storage projects within the Upper Kissimmee Basin to reduce harmful discharges, enhance central Florida water supply, and to mitigate negative economic impacts on communities surrounding Lake Okeechobee.

SUPPORT including the following language in the next WRDA bill: The Secretary is authorized to conduct a feasibility study for the following:

SUPPORT including the following language in the next WRDA bill expanding the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Program, to the fullest extent of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Program (CERP), to include the Upper Kissimmee Basin and the headwaters of the Kissimmee River at the Shingle Creek tributary.

Staff Recommendation:

Adopt amended FAC policy

4. DISASTER RECOVERY

Recovery & Preparedness: **SUPPORT** increased investment in mitigation programs such as the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program, the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and other partnerships between local and federal governments to complete mitigation projects and increase resiliency to disasters. **SUPPORT** measures that ensure any supplemental disaster recovery assistance appropriated by Congress, including the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Relief (CDBG-DR), is expedited to states to be made available to disaster-impacted counties. ~~**SUPPORT** assistance for Hurricane Michael recovery, and efforts that will expedite the funding guidelines required for the CDBG-DR program.~~ **OPPOSE** programmatic changes that would increase the local cost share for disaster recovery, such as implementation of a disaster deductible.

Update:

- Preparedness:
July 2019 - Bipartisan bills in both the U.S. House and the U.S. Senate were introduced to reauthorize and reform the NFIP, which included key provisions for preparedness. The bills, S. 2187 (sponsored by Sen. Robert Menendez (D-N.J.) and H.R. 3872 (sponsored by Rep. Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-N.J.)). Key provisions of the bills:
 - Authorizes the program for five-years to 2024.

- Caps annual premium increases at 9 percent.
 - Expands coverage losses from \$250,000 to \$500,000 for residential properties
 - Creates a means-tested affordability program
 - Creates a new mitigation set-aside program
 - Creates two new mitigation loan programs
 - Provides \$400 million annual for mapping
- On August 4, the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for \$660 million in FY 2020 Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grants. States and localities will be eligible to apply for Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) and the new Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) pre-disaster mitigation grants, which replaced the existing Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) grant as part of the Disaster Recovery Reform Act (DRRA) of 2018. The application period opens on September 30, 2020.
 - \$500 million is made available through the BRIC program to provide funding to states and localities to implement pre-disaster mitigation activities that reduce risk and disaster costs, and increase the resilience of critical infrastructure lifelines such as transportation, energy, communications and health facilities.
 - FEMA is also making \$160 million available through FMA grants to help localities implement changes to reduce or eliminate risk of flood damage to structures insured by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). FEMA has allocated \$70 million of the total amount for Community Flood Mitigation Projects such as floodwater diversion and flood-control measures.

Staff Recommendation:

A. Adopt revised FAC Policy

5. OFFSHORE OIL DRILLING

Offshore Oil Drilling: SUPPORT the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006 (GOMESA), which bans oil and gas leasing within 125 miles off Florida's Gulf Coast until 2022. **SUPPORT** keeping Florida's east coast free from offshore drilling and maintaining the Department of Interior's commitment to remove Florida from consideration in the next draft of the proposed leasing plan.

OPPOSE any legislation that moves the ban to an earlier date.

Update:

- In 2019, the House passed two bills that would ban offshore drilling in most coastal regions, including the Atlantic and Gulf coasts of Florida.
 - H.R. 1941, the Coastal and Marine Economies Protection Act, would permanently ban oil and gas leasing off of the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. The bill passed by a 238-189 vote.

- H.R. 205, the Protecting and Securing Florida's Coastline Act of 2019, would ban oil and gas leasing in the eastern Gulf of Mexico, thus making permanent the existing moratorium on drilling in that region. The bill passed by a 248-180 vote.
- Florida Shores Protection and Fairness Act
 - Senator Rubio filed S. 13 in January of 2019. This bill expands the Gulf of Mexico outer Continental Shelf revenue sharing program to include Florida. (Currently, only Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas are included in the program that shares the revenues from oil and gas leasing on the Gulf of Mexico outer Continental Shelf.)
 - Additionally, the bill extends to June 30, 2027, the moratorium on oil and gas leasing in certain areas of the Gulf of Mexico.
 - S. 13 stalled and action on offshore oil drilling is unlikely until after the 2020 election.

Staff Recommendation:

A. Retain current FAC Policy

6. FEDERAL APPROPRIATIONS

Appropriations for Programs of Significant Importance: SUPPORT the continuation of adequate funding of critical programs that provide resources for the provision of local services and local public infrastructure. These funding programs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Corps of Engineers funds – Everglades restoration, port & inlet construction & maintenance & beach nourishment
- Community Development Block Grant program
- Community Services Block Grant program
- Social Services Block Grant program
- Economic Development Administration
- State Criminal Alien Assistance Program

Update:

- The U.S. House has approved a \$1.3 trillion, six-bill appropriations minibus for fiscal year 2021 that includes emergency funding for the Army Corps of Engineers that helped trigger a veto threat from the White House. The House has also marked-up its remaining six appropriations bills. Passed by nearly a party-line vote of 217 to 197, H.R. 7617 arrived in the Senate, where the appropriations process has been stalled, with little chance of restarting soon enough to avoid some kind of stopgap funding measure. The minibus also includes funding for Transportation, Defense, Education, Housing and other agencies.

- In the Senate, there has been very little action. According to reports, the holdup is the lack of an agreement between Senate Appropriations Chairman Richard C. Shelby, R-Ala., and ranking member Patrick J. Leahy, D-Vt., on what amendments will be offered in committee. In all likelihood, a compromise budget for FY 20/21 will not be reached before the end of the fiscal year.

Staff Recommendation:

A. Retain current FAC Policy

7. VETERANS

Veterans Homelessness: SUPPORT legislation requiring the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide case management support to local housing authorities under the VA-supported housing program.

Update:

- On February 25, 2020, the House passed H.R. 3749 – Legal Services for Homeless Veterans Act (Rep. Jimmy Panetta, CA-20). This legislation requires the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to make grants to eligible entities that provide legal services to homeless veterans and veterans at risk for homelessness. To be eligible, an entity must:
 - Be a public or nonprofit private entity with the capacity to effectively administer a grant,
 - Demonstrate that adequate financial support will be available to provide legal services to homeless veterans and veterans at risk for homelessness, and
 - Agree to meet the VA's established requirements and demonstrate a capacity to meet such requirements.
- The bill requires the VA to use a specified portion of the grants to provide legal services to women veterans, and report on areas where VA programs are failing to meet the needs of women veterans who are homeless. There was no companion bill or action in the Senate.

Staff Recommendation:

A. Retain current FAC Policy

8. INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure: SUPPORT federal legislation that ensures funding for locally owned infrastructure, including water and wastewater facilities, preserves the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds, streamlines the federal permitting process, promotes innovative financing, and ensures the long-term certainty and solvency of the Federal Highway Trust Fund.

Update:

On June 4, Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives, led by House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.), introduced H.R. 7095, the Investing in a New Vision for the Environment and Surface Transportation (INVEST) in America Act. The five-year, \$494 billion surface transportation reauthorization contains an extension of current law (P.L. 114-94) for highway and transit programs – plus some additional Highway Trust Fund contract authority – for FY 2021, followed by new and existing authorizations for these programs from FY 2022 to FY 2025. It also includes new, five-year reauthorizations for the Federal Railroad Administration and the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration. Current law, P.L. 114-94, the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act of 2015, is set to expire on September 30, 2020

It contains several county priorities, including:

- \$49 billion dedicated to local infrastructure
- Increasing, to over \$1 billion, the off-system bridge set-aside, and
- Establishing new competitive grant programs for transportation and infrastructure through the U.S. Department of Transportation, including a \$600 million Community Transportation Investment discretionary grant program designed to support local infrastructure projects
- Creating a program to address and eliminate at-grade rail-highway crossings

Though the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee unanimously approved its bill, S. 2302 (116), nearly a year ago, the other three committees with partial jurisdiction — Banking, Finance and Commerce — have yet to even produce a draft.

In addition to EPW’s highway portion, the Banking Committee has jurisdiction over transit, the Commerce Committee has jurisdiction over rail and safety and the Finance Committee needs to figure out how to pay for it all — a job that’s become more complex since coronavirus started limiting travel and tanking gas tax receipts. In a contentious election year, a bi-partisan infrastructure bill is unlikely until next year.

Staff Recommendation:

A. Retain current FAC Policy

9. FEMA FLOOD MAPPING – RISK RATING 2.0

FEMA Flood Mapping Risk Rating 2.0: SUPPORT measures that ensures FEMA consults with counties and recommend that FEMA delay its implementation of as it develops its new Risk Rating 2.0 flood mapping initiative.

Update:

- Risk Rating 2.0 will fundamentally change how FEMA rates a property's risk to flood. Rather than using Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMS), which are viewed as a binary tool, Risk Rating 2.0 will use FIRMS and other commercially-available programs to get a more accurate rating of a property's flood risk. Risk Rating 2.0 was originally set to roll out on April 1, 2020 for single family residential properties, while new rates will go into effect on October 1, 2020. FEMA has since delayed implementation to October 1, 2021. However, since the delay was announced in early 2020, Florida counties have not been consulted.

Staff Recommendation:

A. Amend revised FAC Policy Statement

10. HEALTH CARE FOR NON-CONVICTED PERSONS

Health Care for Non-Convicted Persons: SUPPORT the reinstatement of federal health care benefits, including those benefits awarded to veterans, for non-convicted justice involved individuals.

Update:

- S. 2626 the Restoring Health Benefits for Justice-Involved Individuals Act (Sen. Merkley Jeff (OR) D)
- Latest Action: 10/17/2019 - Read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance.
- 12/16/2019 FAC to Senator Rubio and Senator Scott in support for S. 2628 the ***Equity in Pre-Trial Medicaid Coverage Act*** and S. 2626 the ***Restoring Health Benefits for Justice-Involved Individuals Act***; two pieces of legislation that would ease the impact of the Medicaid inmate exclusion on our local justice systems.

Staff Recommendation:

A. Retain current FAC Policy

11. DIGITAL DIVIDE

Digital Divide: SUPPORT increasing public funding for construction and mapping of broadband infrastructure

Update:

- With Congress' passage of more robust mapping requirements for the FCC, much of the policy is in place to obligate the federal agency to provide better data about the availability of broadband internet in the states. During the 2020 session, the Florida Legislature established an Office of Broadband within the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity. The Office, charged with mapping broadband in Florida, is likely to seek funding from several Federal agencies.
- H.R. 4229 the Broadband DATA Act (Rep. David Loebsack - IA)
- 12/11/19 - FAC sent a letter to Florida's Congressional Delegation in support of H.R. 4229 the Broadband DATA Act.
- 12/16/2019 - The House passed by voice vote a bill, H.R. 4229 (116), that would aim to improve how the FCC maps broadband data.
- 3/23/20 - A related bill S. 1822 Broadband DATA Act (Sen. Roger Wicker - MS) became law.

Staff Recommendation: Retain current FAC Policy

12. NON-DOMESTIC SAND SOURCES

Non-Domestic Sand Sources: SUPPORT enabling the Secretary of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to allow counties to acquire sand by purchase, exchange or otherwise from non-domestic sources for the purpose of beach renourishment.

Update:

- Sen. Rubio filed the Sand Acquisition, Nourishment, and Development Act in September 2019, which would allow acquisition of non-domestic sand for beach projects even if domestic sources were available. The bill has not yet been heard.

Staff Recommendation:

A. Retain current FAC Policy



FED-PP-1: RESTORING RESILIENT REEFS ACT (RRRA)

FAC STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Adopt

PROPOSED POLICY STATEMENT:

SUPPORT the Restoring Resilient Reefs Act (RRRA). This is a federal policy proposal that would provide funding to Florida to support the coral reef tract that has been plagued by the Coral Tissue Loss Disease since 2014.

BACKGROUND:

This is a bi-partisan, bi-cameral piece of legislation that modernizes the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000, providing funding to states and territories to help implement projects and programs to help the reefs, creates an emergency program to get additional aid to areas that most need it, allows states and locals to have a greater say in the management of the restoration of the reefs, and maintains a federal NOAA reef presence to allow states and territories to still benefit from their technical expertise. The RRRA is critical to for the future of our reefs and helps ensure the nation's ecologically and economically important coral reefs persist for future generations. The Florida Reef Tract has been experiencing an outbreak of a coral disease termed Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease (SCTLD). First reported off the coast of Miami-Dade County in 2014, this outbreak has spread along Florida and to reefs in the Caribbean, including Jamaica, Mexico, St. Maarten, the US Virgin Islands, and the Dominican Republic.

ANALYSIS:

The Southeast Florida Coral Reef Tract extends from Martin County down into Monroe County. These reefs directly impact fisheries as 25 percent of ocean life comes from two percent of habitat provided by coral reefs. The reefs contribute to coastal resiliency from storms and coastal erosion. The reefs are also directly related to tourism. Most of the oxygen in our atmosphere is a direct result of ocean born algae which depends on coral for survival.

FISCAL IMPACT:

From tourism to marine recreation and sport fishing, coral reefs play an important role in the economies of countries all around the world. By one estimate, coral reefs provide economic goods and services worth about \$375 billion each year. NOAA suggests that coral reefs in southeast Florida have an asset value of \$8.5 billion, generating \$4.4 billion in local sales, \$2 billion in local income, and 70,400 full and part-time jobs. The fish that grow and live on coral reefs are a significant food source for people worldwide. In the United States, about half of all federally managed fisheries depend on coral reefs. NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service



estimates the annual commercial value of U.S. fisheries from coral reefs to be over \$100 million. Reef-based recreational fisheries generate over \$100 million annually in the United States.

SUBMITTING COUNTY: Martin County

ASSIGNED COMMITTEE: Federal

BOARD SUPPORT: Yes

National Association of Counties (NACo) Resolutions Sponsored by Florida Members

COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Resolution on Protecting the Health and Safety of Sober Home Residents

Issue: Local governments continue to see a proliferation of sober homes within their boundaries and need additional clarity from the federal government on how they can protect the health and safety of sober home residents through reasonable regulations.

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) supports further U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) clarification on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Fair Housing Act (FHA) to allow local governments to enact reasonable regulations to protect the health and safety of sober home residents, and the residents of the surrounding communities.

NACo also supports federal legislation to establish patient protection and best practices for sober homes.

Sponsor(s): Melissa McKinlay, Mayor, Palm Beach County, Fla.

Adopted | July 15, 2020

Resolution to Support Legal Migration to Strengthen Local Economies and Workforce

Issue: The role legal immigration plays in our nation's workforce and local economies.

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) urges Congress and the administration to enact legislative and regulatory proposals that provide improved and efficient legal avenues for immigrants to enter the United States and contribute to the workforce and local economies and maintain the area standard industry wages for the local marketplace.

Sponsor(s): Bill Truex, Commissioner, Charlotte County, Fla.; Jim Zwetzig, Commissioner, Morgan County, Colo.; Marion Greene, Commissioner, Hennepin County, Minn.; Bob Thomas, Commissioner, Franklin County, Pa.

Adopted | July 15, 2020

Resolution on Streamlining State Licensing Procedures for Military Spouses

Issue: The men and women who serve in uniform and their families experience hardships following a move when seeking employment due to licensing procedures.

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) urges the U.S. Department of Defense to implement the provisions of Public Law 115-91 to fully reimburse military spouses for costs they incur in transferring professional licenses and certifications from state to state.

Further, counties should do all that they can to support the U.S. Departments of Defense, Homeland Security, Labor and the Military Spouse Employment Partnership in encouraging states to streamline the process for granting reciprocity for military spouses who must relocate from state to state in support of our men and women in uniform as they provide for the security of our nation.

Sponsor(s): Kathryn Starkey, Commissioner, Pasco County, Fla.

Adopted | July 15, 2020

ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY AND LAND USE

Resolution Urging Congress to Provide Funding for Local Efforts to Address Coastal Water Level Changes

Issue: Addressing the threat posed by rising sea levels to the built environments of coastal communities across the country.

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) urges Congress to provide appropriate financial assistance and support to local governments for coastal water level changes and increased storm surge related initiatives and projects that aim to develop adaptive solutions to these potentially devastating events.

Sponsor(s): Sally Heyman, Commissioner, Miami-Dade County, Fla.; Harvey Ruvin, Clerk of the Court, Miami-Dade County, Fla.

Adopted | July 15, 2020

Resolution in Support of Affordable Beach Renourishment Projects

Issue: Allowing local governments to purchase sand from countries outside of the U.S. to replenish shorelines due to beach erosion.

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) supports enabling the Secretary of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to allow counties to acquire sand by purchase, exchange or otherwise from non-domestic sources for the purpose of beach renourishment.

Sponsor(s): Sally Heyman, Commissioner, Miami-Dade County, Fla.; Harvey Ruvin, Clerk of the Court, Miami-Dade County, Fla.

Adopted | July 15, 2020

Resolution in Support of Research into Harmful Algal Bloom Prevention and Mitigation

Issue: Harmful algal blooms (HABs) and hypoxic events (severe oxygen depletion) are some of the most scientifically complex and economically damaging issues challenging our ability to

safeguard the health of our nation’s aquatic ecosystems. Almost every state in the U.S. now experiences some kind of HAB event and the number of hypoxic water bodies in the U.S. has increased 30-fold since the 1960s with over 300 aquatic life systems now impacted.

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) supports the renewal of the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act and encourages the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to collaborate with other federal agencies to identify nutrient reduction strategies and scalable Harmful Algal Bloom mitigation processes.

Sponsor(s): Doug Smith, Commissioner, Martin County, Fla.

Adopted | July 15, 2020

Resolution Supporting the Reauthorization of the Coral Reef Conservation Act

Issue: Coral reefs in Florida and throughout the United States and its territories are critically threatened due to increasing global and local stressors. In particular, the Florida Reef Tract, North America's only coral barrier reef, is currently facing an unprecedented coral disease outbreak.

Adopted Policy: NACo supports reauthorization of the Coral Reef Conservation Reauthorization Act of 2000. Additionally, NACo urges Congress to authorize and appropriate additional annual funding dedicated to improving the health of the nation’s coral reefs.

Sponsor(s): Doug Smith, Commissioner, Martin County, Fla.; Marty Cassini, Intergovernmental Affairs Manager, Broward County, Fla.

Adopted | July 15, 2020

Resolution on National Estuary Program Designation

Issue: Designating the Pensacola Bay System and Perdido Bay System as estuaries of national significance and the Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program as a National Estuary Program.

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) urges Congress and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to designate the Pensacola Bay System and Perdido Bay System as estuaries of national significance, and by extension recognize the Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program as a National Estuary Program (NEP), per Section 320 of the Clean Water Act. Furthermore, NACo urges the federal government to achieve a funding level to continue the NEP to all counties that meet a locally-significant start up program.

Sponsor(s): Robert “Bob” Cole, Commissioner, Santa Rosa County, Fla.

Adopted | July 15, 2020

HEALTH

Resolution Urging the Federal Government to Suspend, Instead of Terminate, Medicaid Coverage for Incarcerated Individuals

Issue: Medicaid benefits may be withdrawn when an individual is incarcerated as opposed to convicted.

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) urges Congress to pass legislation that: a) amends federal law to prohibit states from terminating eligibility for individuals who are inmates of public institutions or residents of Institutes for Mental Disease (IMF) based solely on their status as inmates or residents; and b) requires states to establish a process under which an inmate or resident of an Institute for Mental Disease (IMD), who continues to meet all applicable eligibility requirements, is placed in a suspended status so that the state does not claim federal financial participation (FFP) for services the individual receives, but the person remains on the state's rolls as being eligible for Medicaid; and c) once release or discharge from the facility is anticipated, require states to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that an eligible individual is placed in payment status so that he or she can begin receiving Medicaid-covered services immediately upon leaving the facility.

Sponsor(s): Commissioner Sally Heyman, Miami-Dade County, Fla

Adopted | July 15, 2020

Resolution to Enhance Federal Resources for Veterans' Mental and Behavioral Health Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Issue: The COVID-19 pandemic is straining counties' ability to provide critical health resources – including key mental and behavioral health services – to veterans.

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) supports legislation that would provide additional federal resources to develop mental and behavioral health services for veterans as communities respond to increased local needs stemming from COVID-19. NACo specifically urges Congress and the administration to supplement existing mental and behavioral health services for veterans through the development of pilot programs and innovative solutions around the following key areas for veterans: depression, anxiety, suicide prevention, substance use disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).

Sponsor(s): Hon. Heather Post, Councilwoman, Volusia County, Fla.

Adopted | July 15, 2020

JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Resolution to Maintain Local Control and Public Safety Priorities Under Federal Immigration Laws

Issue: Maintain local control and flexibility under federal immigration laws.

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) supports the autonomy of counties in decisions related to the allocation of local law enforcement resources and setting of public safety priorities under federal immigration laws.

Sponsor(s): Bill Truex, Commissioner, Charlotte County, Fla.; Marion Greene, Commissioner, Hennepin County, Minn.; Tina Wenger, Councilwoman, Elkhart County, Ind.

Adopted | July 15, 2020



MELISSA MCKINLAY
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PALM BEACH

RALPH C. THOMAS, JR.
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WAKULLA

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FIRST VICE PRESIDENT
SEMINOLE

BILL TRUEX
SECOND VICE PRESIDENT
CHARLOTTE

NICK MADDOX
IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT
LEON

VIRGINIA "GINGER"
DELEGAL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

August 21, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
U.S. Capitol Building, Room S-230
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
U.S. Capitol Building, Room S-224
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, Leader Schumer and Leader McCarthy:

As President of the Florida Association of Counties, I am writing to you today to express my concern and opposition to recent actions that would negatively impact the ability of the U.S. Census Bureau to achieve a full and accurate 2020 Decennial Census (Census). Therefore, I respectfully request immediate Congressional intervention to ensure a complete, fair and accurate Census count.

The U.S. Census Bureau recently announced that field data collection and the self-response period would be shortened by one month and end on September 30, 2020.

The Florida Association of Counties OPPOSES the revision of timeframes related to field data collection and the self-response period. Furthermore, the Florida Association of Counties SUPPORTS a process that ensures the complete and accurate count of all individuals, including non-citizens.

The decennial census, which aims to count every United States resident each decade, is critical to county governments. With nearly a trillion dollars in federal funding being apportioned each year based on Census results, an accurate, complete count is crucial to county governments and their residents. Funding for health care, economic development, infrastructure, education and other critical county responsibilities are all informed by Census results. Census counts are also increasingly critical to data-driven businesses and research efforts. Therefore, without an accurate and complete count, counties across the country, and our residents, will not have access to the services we critically need.

In addition, Census response rates are currently down throughout the Country, and the sudden and unexpected curtailment of data collection by an entire month only serves to adversely impact ongoing efforts for state and local jurisdictions. Allowing enough time for the Bureau's Nonresponse Follow-Up Operation (NRFU) is crucial to reaching households that have been historically





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DELEGAL**
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

undercounted and are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. Additionally, halting counting operations early will disproportionately affect the quality of life and resources for county constituents for the next decade as well as the effectiveness of county officials to execute their responsibilities.

I reiterate my request for Congressional intervention to secure a complete, fair and accurate 2020 Census count and affirmation of The Bureau's prior commitment to the October 31, 2020 deadline. Thank you for your attention to these critical issues. Please let me know if I can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,

Melissa McKinlay
President, Florida Association of Counties
Palm Beach County Commissioner

