



# 2026 Legislative Action Plan

FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

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# Letter from the President



On behalf of the Florida Association of Counties (FAC), it is my honor to present the 2026 Legislative Action Plan. Each year, this document reflects the collective voice of Florida's counties and the shared commitment we bring to strengthening local communities across our state. The priorities outlined here are the product of months of collaboration among county commissioners, professional staff, and partners who work every day to support effective, responsive local government.

As we enter the 2026 legislative session, our focus remains firmly on ensuring counties have the tools they need to serve their residents. Florida's counties face diverse challenges—from rapid growth to aging infrastructure to the everyday demands of public service—but we also share a common purpose: delivering solutions that reflect the needs and values of our communities. This Action Plan continues that mission by elevating the principles that guide us and the policy goals that matter most to local governments.

FAC's strength has always come from the unity of its membership. I encourage you to remain engaged, stay informed, and work alongside our legislative team throughout the session. Your insights, expertise, and advocacy are essential to ensuring that county perspectives are heard and respected in Tallahassee.

Thank you for your continued leadership and dedication to the people of Florida. I look forward to working with you in the months ahead as we advance policies that support strong, resilient, and locally driven county government.

Sincerely,



Michelle Lincoln  
Monroe County

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# Policy Development Process

The Florida Association of Counties has a deliberative, consensus-built policy development process. The goal is to solicit and develop policy statements on legislative issues affecting county government. Through participation in legislative policy committees, county officials identify, discuss, and ultimately vote on issues to be in FAC's Legislative Action Plan. Each policy committee has one presidentially-appointed Chair and Vice Chair as well as a number of volunteer Policy Leaders.

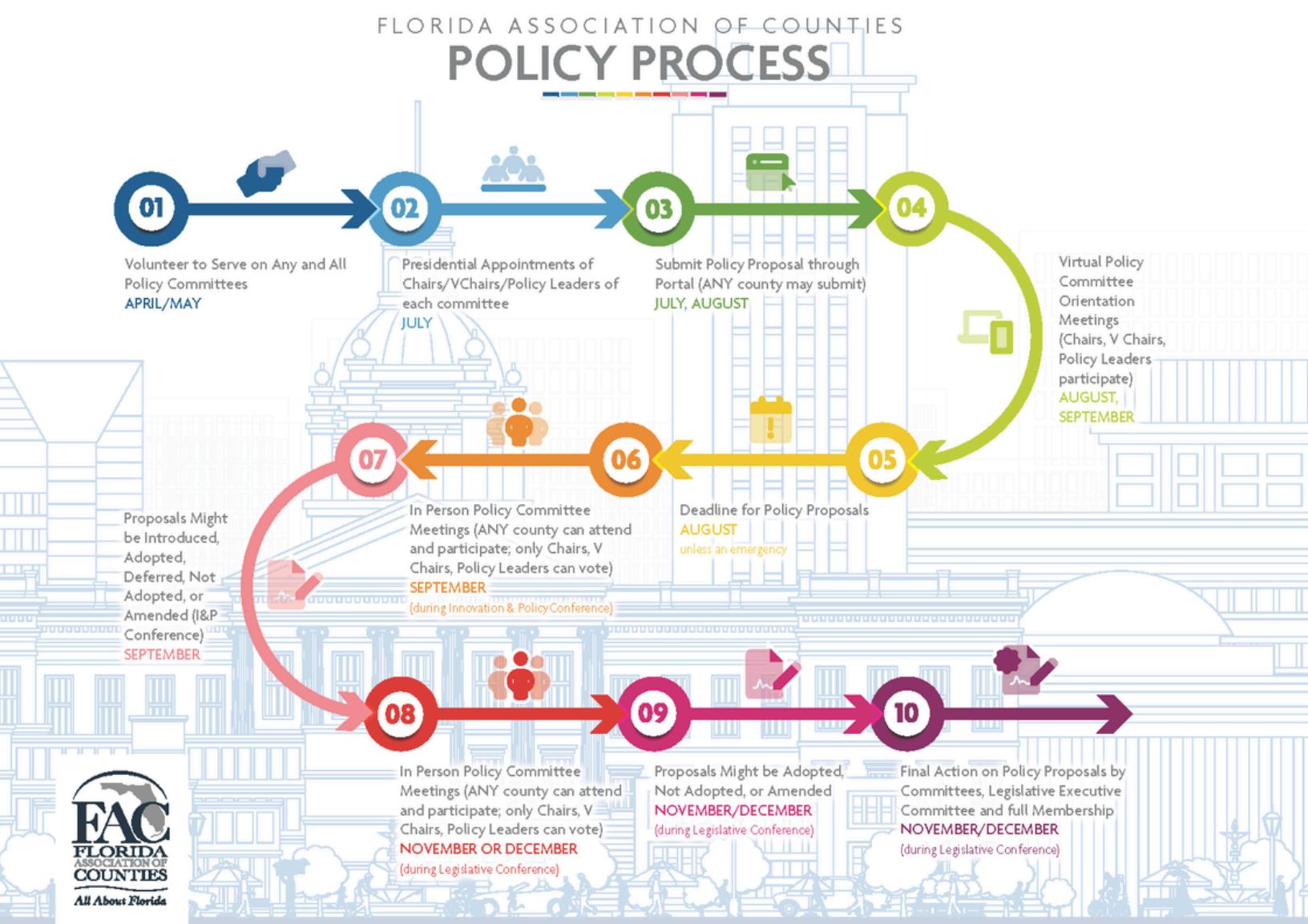
The FAC Legislative Action Plan is divided into two parts:

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

General policy principles of statewide importance that are relevant over several years at a time and over several individual policy issues. These statements exist automatically from year to year unless they are modified at the Legislative Conference's Closing Session by the membership.

## POLICY PROPOSALS

Single-purpose statements addressing a specific issue or piece of legislation. Policies must address an issue of statewide, regional, or significant and widespread impact and cannot promote individual county or project appropriations.



# Agriculture & Rural Affairs



Chair  
**BETSY CONDON**  
Clay



Vice Chair  
**RUSSELL MELENDY**  
Hardee



Vice Chair  
**DANNY GLIDEWELL**  
Walton

## INCENTIVES FOR YOUNG AND BEGINNING FARMERS

SUPPORT legislation that provides meaningful financial incentives—such as targeted tax credits, loan guarantees, and down-payment assistance for land or equipment—to help young and beginning farmers establish and expand agricultural operations. These incentives will strengthen Florida's food security, preserve the state's agricultural heritage, and ensure the next generation can afford to farm.

## FISCALLY CONSTRAINED COUNTIES DISTRIBUTION FORMULA REVISION

SUPPORT legislation updating the fiscally constrained distribution formula currently in s. 218.67 F.S., to provide an enhanced allocation and modernized distribution factors.

## AGRICULTURE TPP OFFSET FOR FISCALLY CONSTRAINED COUNTIES

SUPPORT implementing legislation that provides an offset to fiscally constrained counties impacted by the exemption of agricultural tangible personal property taxation created by HJR 1215, if approved by voters in 2026.

## FISCALLY CONSTRAINED COUNTY DEFINITION

SUPPORT legislation amending s. 218.67, F.S., to increase the revenue-raising capacity threshold of one mill for fiscally constrained counties.

6 Scan to view the Guiding Principles



# Community & Urban Affairs



Chair  
**KEN CORNELL**  
Alachua



Vice Chair  
**STEVE GELLER**  
Broward



Vice Chair  
**BOBBY POWELL**  
Palm Beach

## **CODE ENFORCEMENT ANONYMOUS COMPLAINT**

SUPPORT legislation amending s. 125.60 (4)(b) F.S., 162.06(1)(b) F.S., and s.162.21(3)(b) F.S., to allow for a delay in disclosing the complainant's name and address until the hearing officer determines a violation existed on the property.

## **AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPT OUT PROVISION**

SUPPORT maintaining local authority, under s. 196.1978(3)(o), F.S., to opt out of the ad valorem tax exemption for certain affordable housing ("missing middle") programs.

## **USE OF EXCESS BUILDING PERMIT FEES**

SUPPORT legislation expanding the use of surplus revenue collected from the issuance of building permits to pay down disaster-related debt without restriction.

## **PRIVATE PROVIDERS**

SUPPORT legislation that aims to protect citizens when private providers are being used in the homebuilding process.

## **SB 180 GLITCH FIX**

SUPPORT legislation narrowing the scope of the preemption of land use regulations in SB 180 passed during the 2025 session.

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# Federal



Chair  
**KATHRYN STARKEY**  
Pasco



Vice Chair  
**MARLEINE BASTIEN**  
Miami-Dade



Vice Chair  
**MICHAEL KOHLER**  
Escambia

## **WRDA BEACH RENOURISHMENT PROJECTS**

SUPPORTS (1) amending the next (2026) Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) to extend Section 1145 (d) of WRDA 2024 deadline for Hurricane and Storm Damage Reduction Project Implementation period by an additional 3 years and (2) clarify, for the purpose of constructing and maintaining a project for hurricane and storm damage risk reduction, the provision of an adequate width of beach in public ownership for public use fronting private property shall be considered sufficient to meet the public use requirement for Federal participation in projects for shores presently in private ownership with acceptable access, parking areas, and other facilities necessary for public use.

## **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 policyholders, local governments, and the integrity of the program.

## **WATER (Water Resources Development Act)**

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 on Florida, including Everglades' restoration, port and inlet construction, and beach nourishment projects.

SUPPORT restoration of congressionally directed spending.

## **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 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 - 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.

## **DISASTER RECOVERY & PREPAREDNESS**

SUPPORT increased investment in mitigation programs such as the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Program, the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, and other partnerships between local and federal governments to complete mitigation projects and increase disaster resiliency.

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.

OPPOSE programmatic changes that would increase the local cost share for disaster recovery, such as the implementation of a disaster deductible.

## **OFFSHORE OIL DRILLING**

SUPPORT keeping Florida's east coast free from off-shore drilling and OPPOSE inclusion of Florida from offshore leasing in the proposed National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program.

## **FEDERAL APPROPRIATIONS**

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:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers funds – Everglades' restoration, port & inlet construction, maintenance, and beach nourishment (USACOE)
- Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG)
- Community Services Block Grant program (CSBG)
- Social Services Block Grant program (SSBG)
- Economic Development Administration (EDA)

## **VETERANS**

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.

## **HEALTH CARE FOR NON-CONVICTED PERSONS**

SUPPORT the reinstatement of federal health care benefits for non-convicted justice-involved individuals, including:

- Benefits awarded to veterans.
- Services for patients in an inpatient mental health or substance use disorder treatment facility with more than 16 beds and to increase Medicaid reimbursement rates for said services.
- Increase Medicaid reimbursement rates for all mental health and psychiatric care services.

## **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.

## **LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDIT**

SUPPORT legislation expanding the 4% and 9% tax credits of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program to encourage more private development of affordable housing units.

## **CORAL REEFS**

SUPPORT the State of Florida delegation working with the State of Hawaii delegation and other delegations represented on the U.S. All Islands Coral Reef Committee and NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program to hold a Congressional hearing on the status, trends, and urgent issues facing the U.S.'s coral reefs. SUPPORT reauthorization of the Coral Reef Conservation Reauthorization Act of 2000 and additional recurring funding dedicated to improving the health of the nation's coral reefs. Also, recommended that NOAA (National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration), in coordination with the states and territories, update the economic value of coral reefs for each region and establish a regular update schedule for these studies.

## **HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHERS (SECTION 8) PORTABILITY**

SUPPORT legislation to reform the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program's mobility feature by eliminating the negative fiscal impact to an initial Public Housing Agency (i.e., the PHA that initially issued the HCV to a family) that results when a voucher family moves to a high-cost area and the receiving PHA bills the initial PHA to administer the voucher instead of absorbing the moving family into its (i.e., the receiving PHA) program.

SUPPORT legislation requiring counties to assist residents first, before assisting non-residents from outside the county. \*This policy will be modified by the Committee in January 2026.

## **IMMIGRATION**

SUPPORT federal legislation that establishes a secure border but ensures a reasonable and workable process for individuals who desire to better their economic prosperity to apply to come and work in the US, especially those in the agricultural and hospitality industries.

## **TRUCK WEIGHT RESTRICTIONS**

OPPOSE legislation that seeks to increase truck size or weight limits beyond those in current federal law due to safety concerns and potential impacts on local roads.

## **ARPA FUNDING RECOUPMENT**

SUPPORT legislation to prohibit the U.S. Department of Treasury from recouping previously awarded funds for projects and services that have been certified as complete for at least three years, which will be 2029.

SUPPORT the implementation of a statute of limitations for the remediation and recoupment of funds directly allocated to Counties under the American Rescue Plan Act.

## **REAUTHORIZATION OF WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT**

SUPPORT reauthorization of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the continuation of adequate funding of critical programs that provide resources for the provision of local workforce programs.

OPPOSE redefining local workforce development board member participation to increase the percentage of union representation due to the shortfall of union representation in the state.

## **SOUTHERN RAIL COMMISSION**

SUPPORT the State of Florida becoming a member of the Southern Rail Commission and actively working to secure federal funding for the restoration of passenger rail throughout Florida.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICER BENEFIT**

SUPPORT legislation expanding the Bureau of Justice Assistance's Public Safety Officers Benefits (PSOB) program to include coverage for public safety officers whose death or disability resulted from cancer diagnosed and sustained "in the line of duty," and to expand the death, disability, and educational benefits available to public safety officers and eligible survivors, as applicable.

## 2025 – 2026 NACo Submissions by Florida Commissioners

### ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY, AND LAND USE

#### ***Proposed Resolution Supporting the Expedited Release of Guidance and Funding for Flood Control and Coastal Emergency Projects***

Sponsor(s): Kathleen Peters, Commissioner, Pinellas County, Fla.

#### ***Proposed Resolution on Comprehensive Permitting Reform***

Sponsor(s): Rosemarie Smallcombe, Supervisor, Mariposa County, Calif.; Shelley Brennan, Recorder, Duchesne County, Utah; Randall Ryt, Councilor, Los Alamos County, N.M.; Stuart Rimland, Legislative Council, Broward County, Fla.

### HUMAN SERVICES AND EDUCATION

#### ***Proposed Resolution on Expanding Title IV Eligibility to Short-Term Vocational Programs***

Sponsor(s): Rick Minor, Commissioner, Leon County, Fla.

### TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY

#### ***Proposed Resolution in Support of Federal Action to Establish Responsible Artificial Intelligence (AI) Guardrails that Protect Communities and Support U.S. Innovation***

Sponsor(s): Gregg Weiss, Commissioner, Palm Beach County, Fla.

#### ***Proposed Resolution Preserving County Authority: Opposition to Federal AI Moratorium and BEAD Funding Condition***

Sponsor(s): Gregg Weiss, Commissioner, Palm Beach County, Fla.; Terry Burroughs, Commissioner, Okeechobee County, Fla.

#### ***Proposed Resolution Supporting the Reauthorization of the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program***

Sponsor(s): Gregg Weiss, Commissioner, Palm Beach County Fla.; Jennifer Henderson, Treasurer, Schleicher County, Texas; Jennifer Clark, Board Member, Lake County, Ill.

### TRANSPORTATION

#### ***Proposed Resolution to Promote Safe and Consistent Federal Regulation of Autonomous Semi-Trucks on Intrastate Highways***

Sponsor(s): Gregg Weiss, Commissioner, Palm Beach County, Fla.

#### ***Proposed Resolution Urging Congress and the U.S. Department of Transportation to Reform Competitive Grant Programs***

Sponsor(s): Eileen Higgins, Commissioner, Miami-Dade County, Fla.

#### ***Proposed Resolution Urging Congress to Enact Legislation Creating a National Infrastructure Bank (NIB)***

Sponsor(s): Mary Alford, Commissioner, Alachua County, Fla.

# Finance, Tax, & Administration



Chair  
**JERRY DEMINGS**  
Orange



Vice Chair  
**REBECCA BAYS**  
Citrus



Vice Chair  
**CARL ZALAK**  
Marion

## FUEL TAX INDEXING

SUPPORT indexing local option fuel taxes (LOFT) to annual adjustments of the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

## ELECTRIC VEHICLE REGISTRATION FEES

SUPPORT legislation establishing a fair and equitable funding model that requires electric and alternative energy vehicles to contribute to the maintenance and operation costs of the state's transportation infrastructure.

## PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTION—SENIOR COUNTY LEADERSHIP

SUPPORT legislation granting public records exemptions to counties which allow the protection of senior county leadership (county administrators, deputy county administrators, and assistant county administrators).

## SHADE MEETING EXPANDED STAFF PARTICIPATION

SUPPORT legislation amending s. 286.011(8), F.S. to allow designated senior county staff to participate in closed sessions ("shade meetings") as subject matter experts to provide board members with the technical knowledge necessary to make informed decisions regarding litigation settlement negotiations or strategy sessions relating to litigation expenditures.

## CONTINUING CONTRACT THRESHOLDS

SUPPORT legislation raising the Consultants' Competitive Negotiation Act (CCNA) by reducing the restrictions and expanding continuing contract study cap thresholds and include CPI increase.

## **MUNICIPAL SERVICE TAXING UNIT VOTE THRESHOLD**

SUPPORT the modification of s. 200.065(5)(a)(1), F.S. and s. 200.065(5)(a)(2), F.S. to provide a supermajority vote for the initial adoption of a Municipal Service Taxing Unit (MSTU).

## **SHADE MEETINGS FOR BERT J. HARRIS LITIGATION EXPENDITURES**

SUPPORT expanding the scope of shade meeting exemptions to include all phases of a Bert Harris Claim.

## **SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS ON AGRICULTURAL LANDS**

SUPPORT for legislation amending s. 125.01(1)(r) F.S. relating to special assessments on agricultural land to provide an exception to the prohibition if the property is vacant.



# Future Technology



Chair  
**GREGG WEISS**  
Palm Beach



Vice Chair  
**SEAN PARKS**  
Lake



Vice Chair  
**JACK MARIANO**  
Pasco

## **LOCAL AUTHORITY OVER DATA CENTERS AND CRYPTOCURRENCY MINING FACILITIES**

SUPPORT legislation that ensures counties and their residents are not disproportionately burdened by rising electric rates associated with large-scale data centers, including AI-driven facilities, by requiring fair cost allocation and exploring mitigation strategies such as infrastructure surcharges, renewable energy integration, or local benefit agreements.

## **SOLAR FACILITIES ON AGRICULTURAL LANDS**

SUPPORT legislation authorizing counties to adopt ordinances requiring the proper decommissioning of solar facilities and ensuring agricultural land used for solar remains viable for future agricultural use.

## **STATEWIDE SOFTWARE EFFICIENCY**

SUPPORT legislation or state initiatives that promote standardized, interoperable software platforms across Florida's jurisdictions to improve efficiency, reduce costs, and enhance data sharing and service delivery, while preserving local control over implementation.

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# Health, Safety, & Justice



Chair  
**GEORGE KRUSE**  
Manatee



Vice Chair  
**JESSICA WARD**  
Franklin



Vice Chair  
**RICK MINOR**  
Leon

## RECLASSIFICATION OF MOVE OVER LAW PENALTIES

SUPPORT legislation to increase awareness for the move over law s. 316.126, F.S., add tow truck operators to the list of authorized emergency vehicles, and reclassify the penalties for drivers who violate this law, specifically to include higher penalties for basic violations and violations resulting in death.

## USE OF HANDHELD DEVICES WHILE DRIVING

SUPPORT legislation amending s. 316.305, F.S., "Florida's Hands-Free Driving Law" to include the prohibition of using wireless communication devices in a handheld manner while driving.

## 911 FEE INCREASE

SUPPORT raising the 911 fee to accommodate increased expenses and expansion of technology to continue providing high quality of service to citizens.

## PUBLIC SAFETY EQUIPMENT

SUPPORT legislation that would expand the definition of s. 212.055(2)(d), F.S., to expressly permit public safety equipment that requires a lease agreement to be classified as infrastructure.

## INMATE MEDICAL CARE

SUPPORT a change to the State of Florida Medicaid eligibility that would cover hospitalization costs for inmates admitted to an inpatient facility.



# Water & Environmental Sustainability



Chair  
**HOLLY RASCHEIN**  
Monroe



Vice Chair  
**BRIAN HAMMAN**  
Lee



Vice Chair  
**CHRISTIAN WHITEHURST**  
St. Johns

## **PAYMENT FOR ECOLOGICAL SERVICES TO AGRICULTURAL LANDOWNERS**

SUPPORT legislation establishing a statewide framework that enables state and local governments to compensate agricultural landowners for the measurable ecological benefits their working lands provide—such as aquifer recharge, nutrient retention, wildlife habitat, and stormwater storage. A formal Payment for Ecological Services (PES) program would recognize the economic value of land stewardship, help keep farms and ranches viable, and reduce long-term public infrastructure and water management costs.

## **SEPTIC TANKS AND BMAP AREAS**

SUPPORT legislation that provides increased, sustained financial support to counties for the implementation of Basin Management Action Plans (BMAPs) as required under s. 403.067, F.S., and provides state relief for homeowners in BMAP areas facing the rising cost of septic conversions with modifications to include non-BMAP areas, particularly those counties who have adopted watershed plans that include water quality improvement and nutrients reduction action plans.

## **ALUM TREATMENTS ON SOVEREIGNTY SUBMERGED LANDS**

SUPPORT action by the Legislature and Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) to allow sediment inactivation, such as Alum treatments, as a safe and effective method of reducing phosphorus loading in Florida water bodies, including in Sovereignty Submerged Lands.

## **BEACH RENOURISHMENT AND SHORELINE PROTECTION**

Support legislation to ensure that the easement exemption outlined in SB 1622 (2025) for beach renourishment projects applies equally to all qualifying coastal counties—both Gulf and Atlantic—in order to streamline permitting, reduce project delays, and strengthen shoreline protection statewide.

# Water & Environmental Sustainability



## **BIOSOLIDS**

SUPPORT legislation to limit the use and geographic placement of land spreading operations in Florida, specifically by:

- Restricting land spreading within a designated radius (e.g., 3–5 miles) of schools, daycares, and residential areas.
- Increasing regulation and oversight to reduce air pollution and contamination of aquifers and waterways.
- Requiring buffer zones and stricter environmental testing before approval of land spreading activities.
- Restricting land spreading within a Springs Priority Focus Area.



# FAC Staff



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