



STATE LEGISLATIVE SESSION REPORT

Week 2: March 8 – 12

2010

Local Government Mandates

The Joint Legislative Committee on Intergovernmental Relations staff made a presentation on their draft report on legislative measures from the 2009 Legislative Session that impact local governments. The committee found that of the 244 general bills that became law, 49 contained mandates on local governments with 142 separate provisions. Extensive background and supporting materials were also provided on pages 13-95 of the [committee meeting packet](#). County legislative staff will incorporate appropriate information into the County's unfunded mandate chart.

Pretrial Detention

[HB 445](#) seeks to implement a statewide standard for pretrial release programs. Currently, Hillsborough County and numerous other counties administer pretrial release programs tailored to their community. The bill sponsor believes that some pretrial programs have extended beyond their original scope of assisting arrested indigents, and that they are competing with bail bondsmen in the private sector. The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office and the County's Criminal Justice Liaison report that the bill as currently written could increase the jail population, as individuals may have difficulty raising funds for bail or a bail bondsmen, resulting in a \$2.8 million fiscal impact, and a reduction in the number of individuals on GPS monitoring from 177 to 50. The bill passed its first of three committees of reference, but with numerous members expressing concern about the bill's impact operational and fiscal cost. Its Senate companion, [SB 782](#), has not yet been heard. County legislative staff shared these concerns with the House Public Safety and Domestic Security Committee, and will continue to seek a positive outcome for Hillsborough County.

Confirmation of Executive Appointments by the Senate Ethics and Elections Committee

The Senate Committee on Ethics and Elections approved a number of executive appointments from Hillsborough County to various offices:

Florida State Boxing Commission – Melody "Mel" Jurado of Temple Terrace for a term ending September 30, 2011.



Regulatory Council of Community Association Managers – Kelly A. Moran of Tampa for a term ending October 31, 2012.

Tampa-Hillsborough County Expressway Authority – Donald E. Phillips of Tampa for a term ending July 1, 2012.

Tampa Port Authority – Stephen W. Swindal of Tampa for a term ending February 6, 2012.

Uniform Traffic Control / Red Light Cameras

[HB 325](#) by Hillsborough County state Representative and House Speaker Pro Tempore Ron Reagan creates a statewide authorization and structure for the use of red light cameras by local governments. The bill shares the infraction fine revenues between local government, the state's general revenue fund, and Florida's trauma hospitals. Three amendments filed at the behest of House appropriators to strike the trauma funding were strongly opposed by the Health Care Regulation Policy Committee. The first was defeated on a voice vote, and the remaining amendments were withdrawn. The bill then passed unanimously. It has one committee hearing before being available for consideration by the full House. Its Senate companion bill, [SB 294](#), has yet to be heard in its first committee of reference. County legislative staff will continue to track and support these bills.

House Floor Action

The House of Representatives heard numerous repealer bills on its the Special Order Calendar on Tuesday, March 9 and on Third Reading on Thursday, March 10. Repealer bills eliminate obsolete statutory language from Florida's law books that have been superseded by newer laws, or have been inactive for an extended period of time.

Solid Waste / Recycling and Landfills

[SB 570](#) was filed a shell bill, a placeholder targeted toward a particular subject, which is later amended with specific statutory language. A 25 page amendment was offered that would radically change the way solid waste is disposed of and recycled. The language generated widespread opposition, prompting the Senate Environmental Preservation and Conservation Committee chairman to hold a workshop on the bill rather than move to a formal vote. The Chairman requested feedback on the idea of focusing on setting recycling goals for C&D debris. The bill is likely to be addressed again on week 3. County legislative staff will continue collaborating with our Solid Waste Department and other counties to protect Hillsborough County's interests.



The committee was also scheduled to take up [SB 1052](#), which would allow certain Class I landfills to accept yard waste. However, due to concerns about the issue, the bill was temporarily postponed. It, too, is likely to be reconsidered in week 3. Its House companion, [HB 569](#) passed the Military and Local Affairs Committee. County legislative staff will continue to track the legislation to ensure it is not changed to negatively impact the County.

Hillsborough County Local Bills

[HB 1247](#) granting a special use alcohol beverage license to the new Children’s Museum of Tampa passed the House Military and Local Affairs Committee by a vote of 11-1. It has two remaining committee stops.

Gaming

The Legislature has returned to negotiations with the Seminole Indian Tribe of Florida over a gaming compact following the rejection of the most recent compact. Debate continues over whether to expand gaming facilities beyond where it exists, whether to provide the Seminole Indians exclusive rights to offer high-stakes games in return for a fixed amount of revenue to the state, or whether to allow pari-mutuels to compete against the Seminole Indian facilities. This has been a contentious issue, and will likely continue to be so throughout the session.

A 126 page strike everything amendment to [SB 622](#) was workshopped in the Senate Regulated Industries Committee setting forth parameters by which the Governor would be authorized to negotiate a new compact.

The House Select Committee on Seminole Indian Compact Review received a presentation from the coordinator of the Florida Office of Economic & Demographic Research regarding the potential use of an auction process for granting gaming licenses. They also heard from representatives of the Las Vegas Sands Resort and Casino regarding their operation.

County legislative staff has and will continue to pursue revenue sharing to pay for impacts to local infrastructure and services.



Growth Management

On Wednesday, the House Local Government and Military Affairs Committee approved a proposed committee bill (PCB) that would allow development permits to proceed despite the legal challenge by local governments to SB 360 passed in the 2009 Legislative Session. This PCB essentially places a freeze on local governments from taking any action on proposed developments until the litigation on SB 360 is resolved. The PCB has been assigned an official bill number for consideration, HB 7099, but has not yet been referred to committees.

The Budget

The House and Senate proceeded with plans to construct the FY 2010-11 state budget early this session. Revenue shortfalls are estimated between \$1 and \$3 billion dollars. Federal stimulus funding will also end soon. Both Senate President Atwater and House Speaker Cretul have announced that there will be no tax or fee increases. There will be extensive cuts to programs and services in order to accomplish a balanced budget.

This week, the House and Senate leadership released their initial budget allocations to the various appropriations committees. The committees are working to craft committee proposals for consideration early in week 3, and potential action by the full appropriations committees soon thereafter. Some budget issues under consideration include expanding the Medicaid pilot program to other Counties, including Hillsborough, eliminating state aid to local libraries, and reducing FRS benefits to government employees.

It is likely that the Legislature will await final action on the budget until another Revenue Estimating Conference report is issued to ascertain if additional funds will be available to ease cuts. County legislative staff will work to keep interested parties informed and protect the County's interests.