



# Palm Beach County League of Cities

# 2021

## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES & ISSUES

*The Palm Beach County League of Cities supports legislation that preserves municipal self-governing powers and recommends a moratorium on unfunded mandates. We request that the state legislature allow municipalities to focus on current requirements without added regulations or pre-empting **Home Rule**.*

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*In an effort to protect the health and safety of residents and the preservation of businesses, support funding for statewide COVID -19 testing and vaccination distribution, and support direct funding to local governments to cover expenses related to the pandemic.*

**Sales Tax Fairness** The Palm Beach County League of Cities SUPPORTS legislation to reform Florida's sales and use tax laws that apply to online/e-commerce sales from out-of-state retailers. Changes are needed to ensure in-state retailers are treated equitably.

**Short-Term Rentals** The Palm Beach County League of Cities SUPPORTS legislation providing for a collaboration between the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation and cities to ensure that short-term rental properties abide by state and local regulations, are properly licensed and insured, and comply with state and local taxation requirements as well as industry-accepted safety practices. The Florida League of Cities SUPPORTS legislation clarifying that existing, grandfathered municipal short-term rental ordinances can be amended without penalty.

**Affordable Housing, Homelessness & Small City CDBG Policy** The Palm Beach County League of Cities SUPPORTS legislation that requires all monies from the Sadowski State and Local Housing Trust Fund be used only for Florida's affordable housing programs. The League also supports legislation maintaining dedicated housing trust funds for workforce housing, housing rehabilitation, economic development, and neighborhood and commercial revitalization, with adequate verification safeguards that ensure grants will benefit the homeless and low to moderate-income families.

**Workforce Training** The Palm Beach County League of Cities SUPPORTS the continued focus for state resources on obtaining flexibility for local workforce and career training at all education levels and subsequent job placement, with particular interest to meeting employment needs. The League also SUPPORTS Governor Ron DeSantis' vision to make Florida the best state in the nation in workforce development by 2040.

**State Funding for Educational Initiatives** The Palm Beach County League of Cities SUPPORTS revisions to zoning requirements so that local jurisdictions have greater authority over the location and construction of educational facilities for local universities, state colleges, and Palm Beach County schools (including charter schools). The League also supports adequate funding for all state education mandates, including those related to student safety, mental health, school security and COVID-19 related academic support.



The Palm Beach County League of Cities SUPPORTS legislation that stands for *equity, inclusiveness, and diversity* for all residents of Florida including, but not limited to equal treatment for all in areas of social justice, economic rights, health care rights, voting rights, employment rights and housing rights.

**Opioid/Substance Use** The Palm Beach County League of Cities SUPPORTS policies that provide state appropriations for life saving interventions and medically-assisted detoxification programs for those suffering from opioid addiction.

**Mental Health** Understanding the cause of homelessness in many cases is related to mental health illness, the Palm Beach County League of Cities SUPPORTS funding efforts for beds, treatment program, and youth council initiative to advance prevention.

**Sober Homes** The Palm Beach County League of Cities SUPPORTS the Sober Homes Task Force, created in 2016, and their recommended statutory changes for the 2021 session.

**Economic Development** The Palm Beach County League of Cities SUPPORTS legislation advancing economic incentives for distressed areas and providing increased flexibility for municipalities to enter into public-private partnership agreements.

**Pension Plans & Benefits** The League of Cities SUPPORTS legislation that affirms the home rule powers of municipalities to establish and fund municipal employee benefit levels, and specifically provides comprehensive pension reform, disability presumption reform, and a mechanism for municipalities to revoke their election to participate in the Florida Retirement System.

**Annexation** The Palm Beach County League of Cities SUPPORTS legislation that facilitates the municipal annexation of unincorporated areas while protecting private property rights and respecting municipal boundaries.

**Discharges to Surface Waters** The Palm Beach County League of Cities SUPPORTS legislation that establishes reasonable time frames for utilities to eliminate, to the extent possible in compliance with regulatory requirements and with specified exceptions, discharges to surface waters unless a utility demonstrates it is not environmentally, technically or economically feasible.

**Resilient and Sustainable Florida** The Palm Beach County League of Cities SUPPORTS legislation that promotes a resilient and sustainable Florida, including: funding for water quality improvements; establishing policies and funding for alternative water supply development; providing for intergovernmental coordination and planning on strategies to address climate challenges such as drought, coastal flooding and inland flooding; and enabling local authority to implement natural resource protection strategies.

**Septic Tanks** The Palm Beach County League of Cities SUPPORTS, regulatory initiatives and financial initiatives, including 50% matching grants, that prioritize and encourage properties with septic tanks to connect to centralized sewer systems, especially in areas that adversely impact rivers, estuaries, first magnitude springs, water bodies and water supply sources.

**Beach Management** The Palm Beach County League of Cities SUPPORTS legislation increasing the beach management allocations to \$50 million for the Ecosystem Management and Restoration Trust Fund for beach preservation and repair.

**Local Business Tax** The Palm Beach County League of Cities SUPPORTS legislation that protects local government rights to use local business tax revenue to provide services that our citizens want and need, including public infrastructure, public safety services and public transportation infrastructure.

**Mobility & Transportation Funding** The Palm Beach County League of Cities SUPPORTS legislation that defines mobility plans and fees in order to provide the clarity and consistency needed to assist Florida's cities in implementing alternative modes of transportation. The League also SUPPORTS legislation that will allow cities to have greater local decision making and flexibility on transportation funding to ensure we meet our ever-changing transportation demands.

**Cybersecurity** The Palm Beach County League of Cities SUPPORTS legislation dedicating state resources for the development and enhancement of municipal cybersecurity by providing funding for technical assistance, threat assessments, employee training, infrastructure improvements and data protection, including the protection of exempt and confidential information such as law enforcement personnel information and plans for government buildings and other critical infrastructure.

**Digital Divide** The Palm Beach County League of Cities SUPPORTS legislation that reduces the digital divide and expands broadband Internet access to all areas of the state. This includes identifying areas of Florida that are underserved by traditional broadband providers; removing statutory barriers for cities to provide telecommunication services and open competition for affordable Internet service; and increasing public funding for construction of broadband infrastructure.

**Communications Service Tax** The Palm Beach County League of Cities SUPPORTS legislation that protects the general revenues collected from the Communications Service Tax in a manner that is revenue neutral.

**Community Redevelopment Agencies** The Palm Beach County League of Cities SUPPORTS legislation to protect and improve municipalities' use of community redevelopment agencies to effectively carry out redevelopment and community revitalization in accordance with Home Rule.