



SOUTHWEST FLORIDA
REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

2015



LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

November 20, 2014



Key Legislative Dates

(Subject to change)

2014

November

- 18-20 House/Senate Organizational Session
- 13-14 Florida League of Cities Legislative Conference

2015

January

- 5-9 Legislative Interim Committees
- 20-23 Legislative Interim Committees
- 23, 5 pm Deadline for submitting requests for drafts of general bills and joint resolutions, including requests for companion bills

February

- 2-5 Legislative Interim Committees
- 9-13 Legislative Interim Committees
- 10-11 Florida League of Cities FAST Fly-In – Washington, DC
- 16-20 Legislative Interim Committees
- 25, 5 pm Deadline for approving final drafts of general bills and joint resolutions, including companion bills

March

- 3 Legislative Session Convenes
- 3, 12 pm Deadline for filing bills for introduction (Rule 3.7(1))
- 17-18 Florida League of Cities Legislative Action Days

April

- 21 50th day - last day for regularly scheduled committee meetings (Rule 2.9(2))
- 27 All bills are immediately certified (Rule 6.8)
Conference Committee Reports require only one reading (Rule 4.5(1))
Motion to reconsider made and considered the same day (Rule 6.4 (4))

May

- 1 Last Day of Regular Session



2015 Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council Legislative Priorities

Executive Summary

This legislative agenda addresses issues that affect the region as a whole, and that can be more effectively addressed through the collaborative efforts of the local governments of the region speaking with one collective voice.

I. Funding Requests

- A. Request:** full statefunding of regional planning councils to, at a minimum, cover the costs of statutory responsibilities and support enhanced economic development activities.
- B. Request:** SouthFlorida Water Management District State Funding Priorities related to the Southwest Florida Region.
- C. Request:** the South Florida Ag Council request for \$1.8 million of the \$5.5 million UF/IFAS budget request for recurring funding to provide for additional faculty positions, support staff, and research operations and programming at the Southwest Florida Research and Education Center.
- D. Request:** \$4 million for the creation of a regional transportation plan for Southwest Florida.
- E. Request:** \$1 million for an economic development project in Glades County that brings together the public and private sector in a true partnership. This project includes the construction of a 40,000 square foot training center consisting of 30,000 sq. ft. of working warehouse training and business incubator space/10,000 sq. ft. of classroom and office space.

II. Legislative Priorities

A. Planning for Large Scale Land Development Projects (DRIs, Platted Lands, etc.)

1. **SUPPORT:** full funding of regional planning councils to, at a minimum, cover the costs of statutory responsibilities, and to support enhanced economic development activities. **OPPOSE** legislation prohibiting or restricting the ability of a regional planning council to provide planning and technical service to its local governments.
2. **SUPPORT:** legislation that strengthens intergovernmental coordination to ensure that land development projects resulting in adverse impacts on a neighboring jurisdiction are properly mitigated by the approving jurisdiction.
3. **Support:** Consolidation of Platted Lands/Antiquated Subdivisions.

B. Economic Development

1. **Support:** legislation that reauthorizes existing statewide enterprise incentive zone programs and ensures the existence of state incentive programs targeting job creation, job expansion, investment and economic stability.
2. **Support:** measures that could reduce the negative economic impact on rural counties of the State purchase of rural lands for conservation purposes.

C. Restoration of the Region's Rivers, Estuaries, and Waterbodies

1. **Support:** the water policy legislative priorities adopted by the Council in its 2014 Legislative Agenda.
2. **Support:** implementation of the 2015 recommendations of the 16 County Coalition for the Responsible Management of Lake Okeechobee, St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries and Lake Worth Lagoon.
3. **Support:** Conversion of Septic to Central Sewer Systems

D. Energy and Climate Resilience

1. **Support:** legislation, projects, and programs to: 1) create a comprehensive state energy policy; 2) establish a renewable energy portfolio standard; 3) fund energy conservation loan programs for homes and businesses; 4) revise public service commission regulations to improve the financial feasibility of energy conservation for power companies; 5) ensure against energy supply interruptions; 6) improve the power and fuel transmission line network; and 7) establish a sea level rise mitigation trust fund for critical state and local government infrastructure retrofit projects.

E. Home Rule/Unfunded Mandates

1. **Support:** legislation that reduces and eliminates unfunded mandates and increases local government revenues and their ability to collect sufficient to provide needed services and facilities.
2. **Oppose:** legislation that assaults Home Rule authority, and the preemption or incremental erosion of local planning or regulatory and taxing authority, which diminish the ability of local governments to carry out comprehensive planning activities.
3. **Oppose:** preemption of fertilizer ordinances adopted by local governments.