



2017 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

MAJOR PRIORITIES

COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES TAX AND LOCAL BUSINESS TAX PROTECTION:

SUPPORT: Legislation that protects general revenues collected from the communications services tax and the local business tax.

FUNDING FOR HOMELESSNESS PROGRAMS/ MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVES/ SOBER HOMES:

SUPPORT: State funding for local homelessness programs, housing for the homeless, as well as the aid groups and statewide agencies that oversee them.

Support the expansion of Miami Dade's Homeless and Domestic Violence Tax for all counties and municipalities as it pertains to authorization and uses in Chapter 212.0306 Local option food and beverage tax; procedure for levying; authorized uses; administration of the Florida Statutes.

Support legislation that plans and adequately funds basic mental health facilities and programs in Florida including additional psychiatric beds.

Support legislation that defines and establishes minimum regulatory standards for sober home facilities and allows for more stringent local regulations of these facilities.

SUPPORT a public records exemption for "individual identifying information" contained in a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

RED LIGHT CAMERAS:

OPPOSE: Legislation that would repeal local governmental authority to enable the use of red light cameras.

TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

SUPPORT: Legislation that preserves local control of transportation planning, provides equitable transportation funding among municipalities and counties, and provides opportunities for additional revenue options for municipal transportation infrastructure projects.

SUPPORT: Funding for the extension of The Legacy Trail through public/private partnerships and/or Florida Department of Transportation and the Shared-Use Nonmotorized Trail Network.

OTHER IMPORTANT PRIORITIES

AFFORDABLE HOUSING:

- Support allocating the full amount of dedicated documentary tax revenues for state and local affordable housing programs (SUPPORT)
- Support investing in affordable housing to create jobs in home repair, hardening homes, retrofitting and constructing affordable rental units, and lowering energy costs to make housing more affordable (SUPPORT)

BEACHES AND TOURISM:

- Protect and maintain bays and beaches to sustain environmental quality and economic prosperity for the State's tourism and fishing industries
- Near-shore Oil Drilling (OPPOSE)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

- Support legislation that promotes industry and commerce to strengthen and diversify Florida's economy (SUPPORT)
- Support legislation that creates jobs through transportation and infrastructure projects, tourism and hospitality, alternative energy, industry and commerce and health care services (SUPPORT)
- Support continued funding for Community Development Block Grants (SUPPORT)
- Support clarification of the intent of s. 163.387 Redevelopment Trust Fund, Section (2)(a) clarifying that the number of payments to be appropriated into the redevelopment trust fund must be equal to the number of years of the Community Redevelopment Area. (SUPPORT)
- Support the creation of a Commission on Social Equity at the State level. (SUPPORT)
- Support the nationwide "Ban the Box" Initiative for public and private employers to consider a job candidate's qualifications first and delay the background check inquiry until later in the hiring process (SUPPORT).

CLIMATE AND ENERGY:

- Support a long and short term Florida Energy Policy with greenhouse reduction and renewable energy targets. (SUPPORT)
- Support protections and incentives for renewable energy and energy efficiency, including ensuring net metering policies are not reduced or eliminated. (SUPPORT)
- Support solar legislation that allows municipal governments to utilize solar energy systems to help defray municipal energy costs. (SUPPORT)
- Support legislation that assists local governments to mitigate and adapt to sea level rise, changing precipitation patterns, increasing storm severity and increasing extreme heat days. (SUPPORT)

FISCAL:

- Oppose legislation that modifies, restricts or eliminates the authority of municipalities to levy, collect and/or expend the local business tax (OPPOSE)
- Support legislation that authorizes municipalities to provide effective public notice by means other than newspaper (SUPPORT)
- Support any proposed legislation that would repeal SB 176 passed in the 2011 session relative to Affordable Housing (SUPPORT)

PUBLIC SAFETY AND TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT:

- Support legislation banning the manufacture, possession, distribution, purchase or sale of synthetic drugs, including without limitation, herbal incense, bath salts, synthetic marijuana and/or any cannabinoids (SUPPORT)
- Support legislation to correct any infirmities found by the Supreme Court of Florida in Florida Statute §316.3045 – Operation of radios or other mechanical sound making devices or instruments in vehicles. (SUPPORT)
- Support continued funding for COPS (Community Oriented Police Services) and Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne JAG) Programs (SUPPORT)

RIDE-FOR-HIRE SERVICES:

SUPPORT: Legislation that defines and establishes uniform safety and insurance standards for transportation network companies and their drivers and that preserves Home Rule authority over such services.

STAND YOUR GROUND:

SUPPORT: Legislation that provides additional clarification to Florida's Stand Your Ground law. The Florida Legislature passed CS/CS/HB 89 – Threatened Use of Force - legislation effective June 20, 2014 that modified the Stand Your Ground law to clarify certain provisions.

STRATEGIC LAWSUIT AGAINST PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (SLAPP):

SUPPORT: Legislation that will extend the anti-SLAPP provisions to include "neighborhood associations."

SUNSHINE/PUBLIC RECORDS LAWS REFORM:

- Support legislation to amend the Public Records Act and Government in the Sunshine Law to curb abuses by requiring a notice of intent to sue describing the specific violation(s) alleged so that government will have a reasonable opportunity to respond and to remedy a problem prior to suit; by reforming the one sided attorney fee provisions of the law so that the Court may order citizens who engage in abuses of the public records laws or file frivolous actions under the Sunshine Law to pay the government's attorney fees and costs; limiting or prohibiting anonymous public records requests; and modifying fee requirements such that the Court "may" grant fees, rather than "shall," in the instance the Court determines a case merits fees. (SUPPORT)
- Support legislation to amend the Government in the Sunshine Law to specify or define what constitutes a "meeting" that is subject to the Sunshine Law and to add legislative exemptions that facilitate better more effective governmental decision making while meeting constitutional requirements. (SUPPORT)
- Support legislation to exempt recordings made by law enforcement officers with body worn cameras employed by law enforcement agencies that elect to use body cameras from the application of Chapter 934 Florida Statutes (The Florida "Security of Communications Law"). (SUPPORT)
- Support legislation to create a Public Records Counsel at the State level to enforce Florida's Government-in-the-Sunshine Laws. (SUPPORT)

FEDERAL ISSUES:

- Oppose any proposal to limit the value of the tax-exemption for municipal bonds
- Support passage of the Marketplace Fairness Act H.R.684
- Support preservation of Beach Renourishment Funding and programs
- Support funding for improvements at intersection of Honore Avenue and 17th Street
- Support funding for Brownfield clean-up at the Marian Anderson site
- Support funding for a Downtown circulator
- Support funding for U.S. 41 North Trail Multi-modal improvements
- SUPPORT Long-term funding for the federal Highway Trust Fund



2017 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES DETAILED SUMMARIES

STATE ISSUES

Affordable Housing:

Affordable Housing: SUPPORT allocating the full amount of dedicated documentary tax revenues for state and local affordable housing programs. SUPPORT investing in affordable housing to create jobs in home repair, hardening homes, retrofitting and constructing affordable rental units, and lowering energy costs to make housing more affordable. The State of Florida established the Sadowski Housing Trust Fund to create a source of funding for affordable housing. Funding comes from a dedicated tax on housing transactions. Recently, the trust fund has been swept by the State Legislature for other uses. While housing prices have decreased, seniors and other low income families are finding it increasingly difficult to make needed home repairs. When home repairs are not made, they not only create an unsafe situation for the occupant, but also reduce values of surrounding homes. \$175.2 million is available for appropriation from the Sadowski Housing Trust Funds in Fiscal Year 2013-2014. If this money is used for housing, it will create 13,470 jobs in the State of Florida and have a total economic impact of \$1.341 billion. Of this total, more than \$2 million would be allocated to Sarasota County. This would create 153 jobs and have a total economic impact of \$15.2 million in Sarasota County.

Beaches and Tourism:

Offshore Drilling: SUPPORT a ban on offshore oil exploration and drilling within a thirty mile limit off Florida's coastline.

Economic Development:

Economic Development and Jobs: SUPPORT legislation that would attract businesses for relocation and/or expansion in Florida by enacting measures that will promote Florida as a nationally recognized leader in favorable business tax climates; fund urban public infrastructure projects through various means, such as leveraging of private investments through state tax credits; establish public/private partnerships to promote redevelopment and encourage infill development, preservation and reuse in Florida cities.

Community Development Block Grants: SUPPORT continued funding for the Community Development Block Grant program which funds local community development activities such as affordable housing, anti-poverty programs, and infrastructure development. CDBG, like other block grant programs, differ from categorical grants, made for specific purposes, in that they are subject to less federal oversight and are largely used at the discretion of the state and local governments and their sub grantees.

Community Redevelopment Areas: The City of Sarasota requests that the Florida Legislature clarifies the intent of s. 163.387 Redevelopment Trust Fund, Section (2)(a) clarifying that the number of payments to be appropriated into the redevelopment trust fund must be equal to the number of years of the Community Redevelopment Area. For example, if the Community Redevelopment Area is for 30 years then the number of payment to be appropriated into the redevelopment trust funds must be 30 payments. Further requesting clarification that if the Community Redevelopment Plan has been amended or modified pursuant to s. 163.361 (1) that an automatic 30 years begin upon adoption of the amendment or modification but no later than 60 years after the fiscal year in which the plan was initially approved or adopted.

Social Equity: The City of Sarasota requests the Florida Legislature to create a Commission at the State level to focus on issues of fairness, justice, equity in education, policing, workforce housing, transportation, and economic outcomes.

Ban-the-Box Initiative: Support the nationwide “Ban the Box” Initiative for public and private employers to consider a job candidate’s qualifications first and delay the background check inquiry until later in the hiring process. Nationwide, over 100 cities and counties have adopted the initiative rather than utilizing blanket exclusions for job hiring; instead, it encourages employers to consider the age of the offense and its relevance to the job when hiring.

Climate and Energy:

Florida Energy Policy: Advocate for legislative and regulatory reform to authorize and incent Florida municipal governments and third party providers to implement and manage solar energy systems on municipal properties to help defray municipal energy costs and lessen dependence on the statewide grid. Locally generated municipal solar energy systems should receive the same retail rate credit for kilowatt-hours of electricity delivered to the utility as opposed to the lesser, average cost of generate rate. Ensure support (including net metering policies) and incentives for community members to utilize renewable energy and energy efficiency are not reduced or eliminated. Advocate for state-wide greenhouse gas reduction and renewable energy targets.

Aggregate Net Metering: Support legislation that helps customers combine their electrical meters for the purpose of net metering. This would allow the allocation of solar energy to multiple meters of one customer. Municipal governments, businesses, and multi-family dwellings could benefit from being able to apply on-site solar power to other meters within their portfolios.

Climate Policy: Advocate and support legislation that encourages vulnerability assessments, coordinates resources and supports the efforts of local governments to mitigate and adapt to sea-level rise, changing precipitation patterns, and increasing storm severity and extreme heat days.

Fiscal:

Communications Services Tax and Local Business Tax Protection: SUPPORT legislation that protects general revenues collected from the Communications Services Tax and the Local Business Tax. In 2001, the Florida Legislature restructured taxes on telecommunications, cable, direct-to-home satellite and related services. The changes replaced and consolidated seven different state and local taxes and fees into a single tax with two centrally administered parts which are the state Communications Services Tax and the local Communications Services Tax. The local Communications Services Tax is one of the main sources of general revenue for municipalities, generating more than \$400 million every year for cities. These revenues are used to provide essential municipal services, such as public safety, constructing and maintaining roads, bridges, public parks and open spaces. Maintaining a diversified revenue base strengthens the fiscal stability of local governments and improves their ability to serve citizens and businesses.

The City Commission also SUPPORTS the authority of municipalities to levy, collect and/or expend a local business tax. Currently, a municipality may impose a local business tax on certain businesses, professions or occupations. The amount of the tax and who the tax is imposed on are determined by the city. Revenues from the local business tax are used to assist in funding services critical to business such as zoning, permitting, code enforcement, and police and fire. Municipalities may also use the business tax revenues to help fund economic development programs. Many municipalities use the business tax as general revenue funds and have pledged these revenues to secure debt. The local business tax is also the most comprehensive way of knowing what businesses are operating within the municipal jurisdiction. This information enables cities to allocate resources appropriately (e.g. knowing what businesses in the city handle hazardous materials). Cities collect more than \$120 million every year from the local business tax.

Effective Public Notice: SUPPORT legislation that authorizes municipalities to provide effective public notice and advertising for various appropriate matters, not to include ad valorem taxation millage setting, by means other than newspapers, such as direct mailings, physical posting of property, Internet posting, free publications, government-access television channels and other suitable alternatives. Numerous statutory provisions require cities to provide public notice or advertising in local newspapers. Newspaper ads are required for the following city activities: ordinance adoption, annexations, budget adoption, comprehensive plan changes, bidding and purchasing, notice of meetings, redevelopment activity and land-use changes. It is estimated that local governments spend more than \$16 million a year to print legal notices in local newspapers. Laws should be changed to authorize cities to provide effective public notice and advertising for various appropriate matters by means other than newspapers. Ad valorem millage setting notices should continue to be provided in newspaper ads. The goal is to provide public notice in the most effective manner at the lowest possible cost to the citizens.

SB 176: SUPPORT the repeal of SB 176 from the 2011 session that extended the affordable housing property ad valorem tax exemption to property that is held for the purpose of providing affordable housing to lower income persons that is owned by a Florida based limited partnership, the sole general partner of which is a non-for-profit corporation, or be owned by a nonprofit entity that is a not-for-profit corporation. The bill analysis estimated a negative impact to local governments of \$200,000 each year for the next five years. The staff analysis appears to have been based on then-existing nonprofit projects, and did not contemplate large numbers of conversions from for profit to nonprofit General Partners. As of September 7, the state has received 100 requests for transfers of general partnership interests to non-profits for purposes of the ad valorem tax exemption, with an estimated negative impact to local governments of \$14,022,330 each year. If each of the for profit developments in Sarasota County were to transfer general partnership interests to non-profits, it would result in an annual loss of \$272,902.81 in ad valorem taxes to local governments in Sarasota County. The conversion of already developed housing units will not increase the supply of affordable housing and, because the nonprofit ownership in many of these developments is less than 0.1% of the total project, the vast majority of the tax savings will go to for profit developers.

Homelessness Programs/ Mental Health Initiatives/ Sober Homes:

Funding for Homelessness Programs: SUPPORT State funding for establishing and maintaining local homelessness programs, housing for the homeless, and operating capital for the aid groups and statewide agencies that oversee them.

Foreclosures, unemployment rates, and lack of job opportunities have left communities nationwide devastated with an increase of homelessness. Statistics show that Florida ranked third highest nationally in the number of homeless individuals in 2012, with approximately 54,300 homeless individuals. Homelessness brings many complications to communities besides leaving thousands of people without a sustainable living environment. Having more affordable housing in the community can help individuals at risk of being homeless.

The present system of funding nonprofits and homeless shelters is not working and lawmakers are encouraged to create an “organized approach” and not leave it entirely up to individual counties and cities to be faced with the decision of whether to spend taxpayer money to help the homeless.

Homeless and Domestic Violence Tax: The City of Sarasota requests the state’s expansion of Miami Dade’s Homeless and Domestic Violence Tax for all counties and municipalities as it pertains to authorization and uses in Chapter 212.0306 Local option food and beverage tax; procedure for levying; authorized uses; administration of the Florida Statutes.

Funding for Mental Health Initiatives/ Programs: SUPPORT legislation that plans and adequately funds basic mental health facilities and programs in Florida including additional psychiatric beds. In July 2014, the City Commission adopted Resolution No. 14R-2429 calling for additional psychiatric beds and community mental health funding in the State of Florida. In the Resolution, the City Commission identified that while most psychiatric hospitals were closed from the mid 1960's thru the 1990's, adequate funding of replacement community mental health did not occur, with federal and state mental health program funding being dramatically reduced in the 1980's and more recently in the Great Recession. As psychiatric hospitals were being reduced, jail and prison cells were dramatically expanded by over 200%. It is estimated that over 20% of our jails and prisons are serving as de facto psychiatric hospitals (without treatment capabilities) and over 30% of our chronic homeless population is suffering from severe mental health problems including schizophrenia, manic-depressive disorder, severe depression aggravated by substance abuses. The lack of mental health beds and community mental

health program funding has become a critical problem placing costly pressures on our jails, hospitals, police and EMS departments and our urban centers. As such, the lack of mental health treatments options for individuals, families, hospitals, courts and communities is fiscally and socially irresponsible resulting in an increasing number of well documented human and community tragedies across our Country.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS): SUPPORT legislation that provides for a public records exemption for “individual identifying information” contained in a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) or Point-In-Time Count. The exemption would protect information which could be used to directly or indirectly identify a specific person in the population.

Sober Homes: “Sober Homes” or “Halfway Houses” provide needed transitional housing opportunities for people who are progressing through treatment for substance abuse problems. Presently there is little or no regulation from government agencies in setting up a sober house. Law enforcement officials have seen increases in crime and homelessness in neighborhoods where these sober homes have located. Residents of the neighborhoods have reported an increase in burglaries, panhandling and other criminal activity. There is clearly a lack of uniform state standards or regulations for “sober homes.” The City of Sarasota SUPPORTS efforts to clearly define sober homes in statute and allow for the regulation of these facilities, and the Legislature must act and place minimum operating standards for these places into statute.

Public Safety and Traffic Enforcement:

Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS): SUPPORT continued funding for the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services in the office of the U.S. Department of Justice that advances the practice of community policing in America’s state, local and tribal law enforcement agencies. COPS does its work principally by sharing information and making grants to police departments around the United States. COPS is a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies, which support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques, to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime.

Red Light Cameras: The City Commission would OPPOSE Legislation that would repeal local governmental authority to enable the use of red light cameras for traffic enforcement. In 2010 the Legislature enacted a law authorizing the use of traffic infraction detectors at intersections. The use of red light cameras has been a valuable tool in the City’s traffic enforcement program and in improving public safety by deterring drivers from running red lights and causing accidents. The City would oppose any legislation that would repeal the ability of local governments to utilize traffic infraction detectors for traffic enforcement purposes.

Regulation of Radios and Other Soundmaking Devices: SUPPORT legislation that would correct any flaws found by the Supreme Court of Florida in Florida Statute §316.3045. Florida Statute §316.3045, which regulates the operation of radios or other mechanical soundmaking devices or instruments in vehicles, was recently declared unconstitutional by the Second District Court of Appeal. That ruling has been appealed to the Supreme Court of Florida and is currently pending. Should the Supreme Court find that the Statute is unconstitutionally vague, overbroad, arbitrarily enforceable or impinging on free speech rights, the City would support correcting the language so that it could withstand future constitutional challenges.

Stand Your Ground: The City Commission requests that the State Legislature further clarify the Stand Your Ground statute and establish a more civil approach to governance than afforded under the current statute.

Synthetic Drugs: SUPPORT legislation banning the manufacture, possession, distribution, purchase or sale of synthetic drugs, including without limitation, herbal incense, bath salts, synthetic marijuana and/or any cannabinoids in the state of Florida.

Ride-for-Hire Services:

SUPPORT legislation that defines and establishes uniform safety and insurance standards for transportation network companies and their drivers and that preserves Home Rule authority over such services.

Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation (SLAPP):

SUPPORT legislation that will extend the anti-SLAPP provisions to include "neighborhood associations." The term "strategic lawsuit against public participation," or SLAPP, describes a civil claim or counterclaim in which the asserted injury to the filer arises from the other party's act of petitioning government or speaking out on a matter of public concern. One scenario could involve a person speaking out against a development project at a governmental regulatory meeting. A proponent of the project might sue for defamation or interference with a business advantage in an effort to silence the person or entangle him or her in lengthy litigation. Because a lawsuit is expensive to defend, the person opposing the project may capitulate. Concern that these lawsuits may have an effect on free speech has led many states to enact anti-SLAPP legislation.

Extending the anti-SLAPP provisions to include "neighborhood associations" will guarantee the same protection to neighborhood association members as is guaranteed by law to homeowners' associations and condominium association members. The protection of public participation in government must be protected and no citizen should feel reluctant to exercise his or her right to speak at a public hearing for fear of being sued.

Sunshine and Public Records Laws Reform:

SUPPORT legislation to amend the Public Records Act and Government in the Sunshine Law to curb abuses by requiring a notice of intent to sue describing the specific violation(s) alleged so that government will have a reasonable opportunity to respond and to remedy a problem prior to suit; by reforming the one sided attorney fee provisions of the law so that the Court may order citizens who engage in abuses of the public records laws or file frivolous actions under the Sunshine Law to pay the government's attorney fees and costs; limiting or prohibiting anonymous public records requests; and modifying fee requirements such that the Court "may" grant fees, rather than "shall," in the instance the Court determines a case merits fees.

SUPPORT legislation to amend the Government in the Sunshine Law to specify or define what constitutes a "meeting" that is subject to the Sunshine Law and to add legislative exemptions that facilitate better more effective governmental decision making while meeting constitutional requirements.

SUPPORT legislation to exempt recordings made by law enforcement officers with body worn cameras employed by law enforcement agencies that elect to use body cameras from the application of Chapter 934 Florida Statutes (The Florida "Security of Communications Law").

SUPPORT legislation to create a Public Records Counsel at the State level to enforce Florida's Government-in-the-Sunshine Laws.

Transportation Funding:

SUPPORT legislation that preserves local control of transportation planning, provides equitable transportation funding among municipalities and counties, and provides opportunities for additional revenue options for municipal transportation infrastructure projects.

SUPPORT funding for the extension of The Legacy Trail through public/private partnerships and/or Florida Department of Transportation and the Shared-Use Nonmotorized Trail Network. The Legacy Trail is a trail system connecting communities across Sarasota County and stretching into neighboring Charlotte County. It is 10.6 miles long with a currently proposed 7.5 mile trail extension to be funded in partnership with the Trust for Public Land and CSX. More than 120,000 users annually use the trails for direct access to the City of Venice and its beaches and when completed, the extension will provide access to the City of Sarasota, among other areas. In the future, the Trail has the potential to become a regional connection among Manatee, Sarasota, DeSoto and Charlotte counties.

FEDERAL ISSUES

17th Street Earmark: SUPPORT funding for improvements at intersection of Honore Avenue and 17th Street. Funds were provided for the 17th Street corridor within the City of Sarasota, as the intersections within the City have been reconstructed, the City and County are working together to expand the description to include the full 17th Street corridor. SUPPORT the request to use the \$1,300,000 17th Street earmark at Honore Avenue and 17th Street.

Beach Renourishment Funding: SUPPORT preservation of Beach Renourishment Funding and programs which would facilitate the placement of sand on approximately 2 miles of public beach on Lido Key. The total cost for next renourishment is \$20,000,000. City's current request is for \$500,000 for permitting and design.

Downtown Circulator: SUPPORT funding for a streetcar type of downtown circulator to complement transit, new parking garage and the City of Sarasota's multi-modal efforts. The circulator will provide much needed economic revitalization and improved mobility downtown. The estimated total project cost is \$15,000,000.

Highway Trust Fund: SUPPORT long-term funding for the federal Highway Trust Fund. The current funding of the Highway Trust Fund is not sustainable and needs to be addressed through alternative sources of revenue that do not interfere with local governments' ability to finance local transportation needs. The City of Sarasota supports long-term transportation planning and funding that includes local decision-making authority, invests in long-term transportation solutions, supports sustainable multimodal choices and maintains a strong federal commitment.

Marketplace Fairness Act: Support passage of the Marketplace Fairness Act. On May 6, 2013, the Senate overwhelmingly passed S. 743, the Marketplace Fairness Act, and the House is now considering H.R. 684, a similar version. The Marketplace Fairness Act allows state and local governments to allow online retailers to collect sales taxes. It does not create any new tax or increase any existing tax, but it does provide for the enforcement of state and local governments' authority and levels the playing field between Main Street and online retailers.

Marian Anderson Site Clean-up: SUPPORT incentives for development of brownfield site cleanup through the Federal New Market Tax Credit. The Marian Anderson site consists of 13 acres and development of this site would provide jobs and be a key economic development project for the community. Project clean-up is estimated between \$500,000 to \$3,000,000 depending on the end use of the property.

Municipal Bond Fairness: Oppose any effort to remove or cap the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds. Since the federal income tax was imposed in 1913, the interest earned on municipal bonds has been exempt from federal taxation. The tax law was specifically designed to encourage investment in public infrastructure. Tax-exempt financing allows local control and decision-making over what investments need to be made. State and local governments shoulder more than 75 percent of the costs of financing the nation's public infrastructure. Eliminating or limiting the tax-exempt status on municipal bonds will increase the costs borne by taxpayers.

U.S. 41 North Trail Multi-Modal Improvements: SUPPORT improvement on U.S. 41 from 14th Street to University of South Florida to include roundabouts at key intersections and a reconstruction of the corridor to provide better bike, pedestrian and transit facilities. The estimated project cost is \$53,000,000.