

Sarasota County Commission **2025 State Legislative Program**

HOME RULE:

• OPPOSE cost shifts, unfunded mandates, or preemptions of Sarasota County Charter authority.

WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY:

- **SUPPORT** state funding of regional watershed restoration projects and of programs to monitor and reduce nutrient loading in watersheds and stormwater systems, including through the adoption of Florida-Friendly LandscapingTM practices.
- SUPPORT state funding partnerships with Advanced Wastewater Treatment (AWT) projects.
- **SUPPORT** full funding of the Water Protection/Sustainability Program Trust Fund for alternative water supply projects to improve impaired water bodies under the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) program.
- **SUPPORT** alternative water supply projects and legislation that strengthens water supply, supports aquifer restoration and provides irrigation water, flow, and habitat protection.
- SUPPORT state partnering with the Peace River/Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority.
- SUPPORT policies for streamlining consumptive use permitting and alternative water supplies.
- SUPPORT wetland restoration and mitigation to meet water quality and supply goals.
- **OPPOSE** preemption of local ordinances related to water quality, water use, and water supply.

TRANSPORTATION:

- **SUPPORT** the indexing of local Gas Taxes for inflation to support funding increased costs of operation, maintenance, and construction of transportation infrastructure.
- SUPPORT advancement of the S.R. 681 and Interstate 75 interchange expansion project.
- **SUPPORT** advancement of an interchange in the vicinity of Yorkshire Street and Interstate 75, and North Raintree Boulevard.
- SUPPORT additional funding for local multimodal transportation and mobility projects.
- SUPPORT innovative policies to cultivate sustainable and resilient communities and developments that integrate all modes of transportation, including walking, bicycles, electric vehicles, and public transit.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING:

• SUPPORT allocating the full amount of Sadowski funds for homelessness and local programs.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT:

- **SUPPORT** removing the term "mandatory" from the current statutes related to the evacuation of a cooperative and condominium properties. This is intended to reduce confusion and provide consistent messaging. Sarasota County does not use the terms mandatory or voluntary when referring to evacuation notices.
- **SUPPORT** for revisions to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act in favor of more equitable debris assistance across residential property types.
- SUPPORT providing counties with the same exemptions from building permits as afforded to public school districts.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT/PLANNING:

• **SUPPORT** the extension of Homestead Exemption for three years for homes that have been voluntarily demolished.

• SUPPORT local control of long-range planning, development, and natural resource protection.

ECONOMIC VITALITY AND SUSTAINABILITY:

- **SUPPORT** policies to partner with local governments in economic development initiatives, infrastructure investment, job creation, business development, and relocation.
- **SUPPORT** policies that assist local governments in achieving economic development in green business, sustainable agriculture, renewable energy, and clean technology.
- **SUPPORT** maintaining agricultural lands to strengthen economic contributions, support local food needs and provide habitat while meeting environmental goals and preserving agricultural heritage.
- SUPPORT policies, strategies, and funding that help local communities prepare resiliency efforts.

BEACH MANAGEMENT:

• **SUPPORT** increased funding for Gulf beach nourishment, erosion control projects, and protection of coastal ecosystems, such as sand dunes and maritime forests.

ENVIRONMENTAL:

- SUPPORT efforts to reduce harmful algae blooms in the Gulf of Mexico and bay waters.
- SUPPORT efforts to reduce the use of pesticides that directly or indirectly affect native pollinators.
- SUPPORT ban on offshore oil and gas exploration, hydraulic fracturing, and drilling in the Gulf of Mexico.
- **SUPPORT** continued funding for derelict vessel removal.
- **OPPOSE** preemption of local fertilizer ordinances.
- **OPPOSE** limitations on the ability to regulate wetlands and mitigate impacts to wetlands, or the protection of natural resources, including native habitats and trees.

JAILS, JUVENILE JUSTICE:

- SUPPORT state funding of jail diversion and efforts to reduce juvenile detention.
- SUPPORT increasing the fees provided for in Chapter 983 Florida Statutes to fund Teen Courts.

LIBRARIES/HISTORICAL RESOURCES:

- **SUPPORT** state funding of libraries at levels recommended by the State Library of Florida and advocated by the Florida State Library Association.
- **SUPPORT** full funding of the Historic Preservation Grant Program administered by the Florida Division of Historical Resources.

PARKS, RECREATION, AND NATURAL RESOURCES:

- **SUPPORT** regional trail and The Legacy Trail connectors grant funding requests through SunTrail and other state funding sources such as the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Recreational Trails Program.
- **SUPPORT** state funding for removal and control of nuisance invasive vegetation and animals on public lands including the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Upland Invasive Removal Program.
- SUPPORT land acquisition programs that prioritize conservation of land for wildlife habitat, focused on land that improves corridors and habitat for threatened plant and animal species.
- **SUPPORT** funding of the Florida Forever program for purposes including land preservation programs within the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, water management districts, and Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program.
- **SUPPORT** continued funding for Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission boating access improvement projects on coastal and inland waters.

• SUPPORT funding/policies to restore shorelines to natural state such as mangrove fringes/salt marshes.

SOLID WASTE:

- **OPPOSE** legislation limiting the ability of local governments to franchise the collection of solid waste.
- SUPPORT PFAS liability protection by providing exemptions for solid waste management and composting facilities and for water and wastewater treatment facilities and the disposal of concentrate and solids from PFAS litigation (releases of perfluoroalkyl and poly-fluoroalkyl substances)
- **OPPOSE** legislation excluding landfill gas collected from municipal solid waste landfills in the definition of renewable energy.
- **SUPPORT** legislation addressing a state recycling goal based on a Waste Reduction Model (WARM) instead of a tonnage model.