



## **BROWARD METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION WEEK OF DECEMBER 4TH**

Happy Friday! We just concluded the final committee week before the 2018 Legislative Session officially convenes on January 9th. Several appropriations committees heard presentations on the Governor's Budget recommendations, and it became apparent from statements made by both House and Senate leadership that it is not likely the recommendations will be closely followed. Leadership in both Chambers indicated that there was not enough money to fund the Governor's budget in light of several large expenses facing the state. Budget committees also began hearing appropriations bills, while budget leaders also stated that financial constraints would mean higher caution in funding local requests.

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### **HURRICANE RECOVERY**

The House Select Committee on Hurricane Response and Preparedness went through 141 wide-ranging policy recommendations submitted by members for inclusion into a Hurricane response package (listed in the packet.) Members were given an opportunity to ask questions and hear testimony on each recommendation. The Chair announced that the committee will have until Dec 15th to input any new items or ideas into the recommendations draft. The committee plans to then have a preliminary draft report by January 8th, so the committee can provide its full report of adopted recommendations within the first few weeks of Session.

<http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Documents/loaddoc.aspx?PublicationType=Committees&CommitteeId=2978&Session=2018&DocumentType=Meeting%20Packets&FileName=schrrp%2012-4-17.pdf>

### **TRANSPORTATION**

#### **STATEWIDE ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY**

House Transportation & Infrastructure voted unanimously, but not without concerns, to approve a bill that would create the Statewide Alternative Transportation Authority under the Florida Department of Transportation. The new Authority is designed to move transportation planning and resources from traditional transportation to foster emerging technologies and innovation designed to move the greatest amount of people in the shortest amount of time. Of \$60 million in documentary stamp revenue designated for the

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Florida Rail Enterprise (FRE), the bill would dedicate \$25 million to Miami-Dade County and \$25 million to the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority, leaving only \$10 million divided amongst the rest of the state. Representative Jacobs expressed concern that two areas would be provided a dedicated revenue source that can be leveraged while other areas would not. The bill was presented by a co-sponsor, who stated that these particular regions were stepping forward to be innovative and that the FRE's budget was larger than just the documentary stamp revenue it receives. She also raised concerns that the new Authority created would be exempt from FDOT procedures and protocols. The sponsor stated that the purpose of the exemption was to prevent bureaucratic processes from impeding innovation. He committed to working with her in order to ensure the new Authority would still be transparent and follow protocols that would prevent losing public trust. The bill has two more committees of reference in the House. Its Senate companion was just filed today and has not yet received committee references.

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2018/00535>

### **PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES**

Senate Transportation voted unanimously to remove Chapter 120 exemptions of Transportation Authorities and Expressway Authorities for procedures relating to bid protests on contracts above \$325,000 or projects where the term of procurement exceeds 365 days. The bill sponsor openly stated the bill was in response to a South Florida Regional Transportation Authority operations procurement conducted last year, but that the bill would not be retroactively applied to this procurement. The bill has two more committees of reference in the Senate. It does not have a House companion.

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2018/00544>

### **METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS**

House Transportation & Infrastructure voted unanimously to approve a bill that would restrict the number of voting members allowed on the board of MPOs according to population. MPOs in regions with populations fewer than 500,000 would be restricted to 11 voting members, regions with populations greater than 500,000 would be restricted to 15 voting members, and regions above 1 million would remain the same. Voting members would be apportioned geographically. The bill would prohibit entire county commissions from serving on the board, prohibit weighted voting and require by-laws. The MPO AC spoke against the bill, testifying that Florida has a number of MPOs that are larger than whole states and even the combination of whole states, requiring a diverse and large voting board. The sponsor's concerns largely deal with local issues in Leon County. Members of the committee from Miami-Dade county expressed concerns over reaching a quorum with large voting memberships, to which the MPO AC responded was a localized concern and not representative of other areas. The bill has no Senate companion. It has two more committees of reference in the House.



<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2018/00535>

### **MIAMI-DADE CHARTER COUNTY AND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SURTAX**

Senate Community Affairs and House Transportation & Infrastructure voted unanimously to approve a bill that would require the use all proceeds of a Charter County and Regional Transportation Surtax passed in Miami-Dade County be restricted to transportation purposes only. Allowable uses are: planning, design, engineering, and construction of fixed guideway rapid transit systems; acquisition of right-of-way for fixed guideway rapid transit systems, provided that the current owner of the right-of-way is a willing seller or lessor; purchase of buses and other capital costs for a bus system; payment of principal and interest on bonds previously issued related to fixed guideway rapid transit systems or bus systems; and as security by the governing body of the county to refinance existing bonds or to issue new bonds for the planning, design, engineering, and construction of fixed guideway rapid transit systems or bus systems. The bill only applies to Miami-Dade County. It has two more committees of reference in both the House and the Senate.

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2018/00688>

### **ELECTRIC VEHICLES**

Senate Transportation voted unanimously to pass a bill that would require the Florida Transportation Commission to study electric vehicles for longterm transportation planning purposes once the percentage of registered electric vehicles in the state reaches a certain threshold. The committee adopted an amendment that included hybrid vehicles and allowed the FTC to perform the study prior to the percentage threshold being reached. The intention of the bill is to prepare the state for the increased use of the technology, including understanding infrastructure needs and declining gas tax revenues. The bill has two more committees of reference. Its House companion has not yet been filed.

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2018/00384>

### **TEXTING WHILE DRIVING**

The House Speaker announced his intention this week to pass a bill that would make texting while driving a primary offense. Last year, the Speaker announced that he would commission a study of the issue, which has always experienced significant House opposition. He announced this week that statistics were “staggering” for accidents involving distracted drivers versus tickets issued for texting. A bill was filed this week by a Republican House member that was endorsed by Corcoran, similar to those filed and supported by Democrats in the House for years with no movement. This is a major turning point in the battle against texting and driving as the Senate has successfully moved Republican bills to make it a primary offense only to find the House would not support the measure.



## **FINANCE & TAX**

### **LOCAL TAX REFERENDA**

House Ways & Means voted unanimously to pass a bill that would stipulate that local tax referenda must have 60% vote threshold to pass when the vote is during a special election. Under the bill, a majority of voters would be sufficient during a general election. The committee adopted an amendment that removed a requirement that 60% of a local governing board be needed to increase the millage. The bill has one more committee of reference in the House and three more committees of reference in the Senate.

<http://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2018/00317>

### **TOURIST DEVELOPMENT TAX**

Senate Community Affairs voted unanimously to pass a bill that would expand use of Tourist Development Tax dollars to include work on “public facilities,” defined essentially as any capital project with a lifespan of 5+ years that is related to enhancing tourism. It also allows for related land acquisition. Projects would have to be recommended by local tourist development councils. The sponsor offered the example of hotels in his district that cannot enhance due to outdated water infrastructure and that infrastructure maintenance is necessary for attracting and retaining tourism population. The Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association (FRLA) and Florida Association of Destination Marketing Organizations, and Central Florida Hotel & Lodging Association opposed the bill out of concerns that it would take away money from promotion and be used for bonds instead. FRLA offered a recommendation of requiring majority votes of county commissioners to approve projects for funding and for a 5 year sunset. Multiple members who voted in favor of the bill expressed that they had concerns that the language was too broad and could result in funding going towards stadiums or create a slippery slope of losing promotional funding. The bill has two more committees of reference in the Senate. Its House companion has not yet been heard in its first committee.

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2018/00658>

### **CRC WATCH:**

Please see the link to all of the CRC proposals that affect local governments provided by the Florida League of Cities. These proposals are in various stages of movement. Please reach out with any questions on updates as to where each proposal is.

<http://www.flcities.com/docs/default-source/Advocacy/crc-legislative-bulletin-hyperlinks.pdf?sfvrsn=0>

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