

PBC Legislative Update

APRIL 24, 2011

VOLUME 5 NUMBER 13

IN THIS ISSUE:

State Issues

Legislative Priorities

1. Easter and Passover Abbreviated Session
2. Redistricting
3. Growth Mgmt.
4. Callery Judge
5. Pill Mills
6. Red Light Cameras
7. Traffic Control
8. NNC
9. Environmental Permitting/Mining Preemption
10. Local Option Fuel Tax
11. Non-Homestead Exemption Cap
12. State Budget
13. 911 –Good Sam
14. Pre Trial Legislation
15. Local Bill Update
16. Pensions

FEDERAL UPDATE

1. FY 2011 Approps
2. President's Deficit Reduction Plan
3. FY 2012 Budget Resolution

State Issues - Seventh Week of Session

Easter and Passover Abbreviated Session Week

Recognizing the Passover and Easter Holidays, the Senate took the week off from Tallahassee and the House only spent Wednesday and Thursday in Committee meetings and on the House floor. Those two days while short provided ample opportunity for the House to address a number of issues both good and adversarial to the County's interests. Happy Easter and Passover everyone!

Redistricting

By: Ericks Consultants and County Staff

The 2012 Legislative Session will start in January to begin the method of revising the Florida House and Senate State and Congressional district lines based upon the 2010 US Census results. In preparation of the reapportionment process, the House and Senate Redistricting Committees and Subcommittees met this past week to listen to presentations relating to the redistricting procedure and a background on Florida Demographics and its correlation with the US Census. While Reapportionment is just getting started, the committee meetings will pick up over the summer. Two House members from Palm Beach County will be represented on the Committees. Rep. Mack Bernard will serve on both the Redistricting and House Redistricting Committees. Rep. Joseph Abruzzo will serve on the Congressional redistricting Committee.

Growth Management

By: Ericks Consultants

On Thursday, by a 86-31 vote the House passed **CS/HB 7129**, also known as "The Community Planning Act", which makes a large number of changes to the procedure and factors by which local governments plan for and finance local transportation infrastructure.

Here is a link to the bill, incorporating all amendments adopted before final passage, available from the House website:

<http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Documents/loaddoc.aspx?FileName= h7129 e2.docx&DocumentType=Bill&BillNumber=7129&Session=2011>

The 343-page bill is too lengthy and detailed to fully summarize here, but it fundamentally rewrites Florida's Growth Management laws. Some of the more significant changes include:

- Refocusing the state role in managing growth to protecting the functions of important state resources and facilities.
- Removing the twice-a-year limitation on local government adoption of plan amendments.
- Modifying and clarifying the provisions regarding "agricultural enclaves"
- Providing definitions for a number of terms, including "antiquated subdivision;" "capital improvement;" "compatibility;" "floodprone areas;" "intensity;" "level

of service;" "new town;" and others

- Encouraging innovative planning tools including visioning, sector planning, and rural land stewardship areas.
- Encouraging intergovernmental cooperation and agreements.
- Modifying the required content of local comprehensive plans in s. 163.3177, F.S.
- Eliminating the current requirement that comprehensive plans be financially feasible; requiring instead that the 5-year schedule of capital improvements necessary to achieve any adopted level of service be identified as funded or unfunded and assigned priorities.
- Requiring that the future land use element accommodate at least the minimum amount of land required to accommodate the medium projections of the University of Florida's Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) for at least a 10-year planning period, unless limited under s. 380.05, F.S.
- Setting forth in statute the basis for analysis for the future land use element.
- Setting forth in statute the requirements of the transportation element.
- Delineating which natural resources must be identified and analyzed as part of the conservation element.
- Requiring that water demands be analyzed for at least a 10-year period based on the demands for industrial, agricultural, and potable water use and the quality and quantity of water available to meet those demands, considering existing levels of water conservation, use and protection and applicable policies of the water management district and regional water supply plan.
- Setting forth in statute the requirements for the housing element.
- Eliminating required concurrency for parks and recreation, schools, and transportation.
- Allowing local government to adopt concurrency with regard to public facilities where it is no longer a state requirement, subject to principles, guidelines, standards and strategies, including adopted levels of service, to guide its application. Local government comprehensive plans must demonstrate, for required or optional concurrency requirements, that the levels of service adopted can be reasonably met.
- If concurrency is applied to transportation facilities, the bill provides standards by which the concurrency must be implemented, and establishes certain requirements for consultation with the Department of Transportation regarding facilities on the strategic intermodal system; must exempt public transit facilities from concurrency; and establishes criteria by which a local government must allow an applicant for a DRI development order, rezoning, or other land use development permit to satisfy the requirements, including regarding how proportionate share requirements can be computed and met.
- Setting forth requirements if school concurrency is to be adopted at the local level.
- Changing the existing law regarding transportation concurrency backlog areas to rename such areas transportation deficiency areas, and modifying the provisions regarding those areas.
- Modifying the process for adoption of comprehensive plans in s. 163.3184 to specify the roles of state agencies in review of local comprehensive plan amendments, and requiring almost all plan amendments to follow the expedited state review process. Small-scale amendments may follow the small-scale process in s. 163.3187, and amendments in an area of critical state concern, amendments proposing a rural land stewardship area, amendments proposing a sector plan, evaluation and appraisal review amendments, and plans for newly incorporated municipalities would follow the state coordinated review process. The processes for both the expedited state review and coordinated review are set forth in the bill.
- Providing for procedures and timelines for challenges to plans and plan amendments by affected persons or by the state land planning agency, including the standards of review.
- Revising the process for adoption of small-scale amendments.
- Modifying the evaluation and appraisal (EAR) process to require the local government to review its plan at least once every seven years, and if it determines amendments are necessary to reflect changes in state requirements, the local government must prepare and transmit amendments within 1 year for review under s. 163.3184.
- Allowing development agreements to extend up to 30 years, compared with the

current limit of 20, and allowing that to be extended under certain circumstances.

- Changing the requirements for periodic review of development agreements.
- Modifying the requirements and procedures for sector plans to encourage their use for appropriately large-scale (at least 15,000 acres) projects
- Modifying the requirements and procedures for rural land stewardship areas to encourage their use for appropriate projects.
- Modifying or deleting certain thresholds that under current law constitute substantial deviations with regard to a previously approved development of regional impact.
- Extending commencement, phase, buildout, and expiration dates for projects that are current developments of regional impact, in recognition of the 2011 real estate conditions, for a period of 4 years regardless of any prior extension.
- Extending permits or other authorizations that were extended beyond January 1, 2012 under section 14 of 2009-96, Laws of Florida, as reauthorized by section 47 of chapter 2010-147, Laws of Florida, and was ineligible for the permit extension granted by section 46 of chapter 2010-147, Laws of Florida, solely because of its extended expiration date, for a period of 2 years after its previously scheduled expiration date. The extension granted is in addition to the 2-year permit extension provided under section 14 of 2009-96, Laws of Florida. The bill also extends the commencement and completion dates for any required mitigation associated with a phased construction project such that mitigation takes place in the same timeframe relative to the phase as originally permitted.

The bill will next be sent to the Senate.

Callery-Judge Language

By: County Staff

Language consistent with legislation filed in previous years intended to benefit Callery-Judge Groves and other properties in Palm Beach County that are located in Limited Urban Service Areas (LUSA) in the County's tiered growth management plan was adopted on the floor of the House to the Growth Management Bill. This language is intended to treat those properties in LUSAs in the same manner in state law that properties in Urban Service Areas are treated. Most significant to those exemptions are some provisions regarding the elimination of state concurrency requirements. The bill will be heard next on the floor of the Senate.

Pill Mills/Prescription Drug Monitoring Program - HB 7095 by Rep. Schenck/SB 818 by Sen. Fasano

By: Foley & Lardner, Moya Group, Ericks Consultants, Corcoran & Johnston, and County Staff

On Thursday, HB 7095 passed the floor of the House of Representatives. This new legislation put restrictions on doctors and small pharmacies when it comes to dispensing addictive drugs. But, more importantly, the House bill allows the PDMP to move ahead, and would reduce the length of time to report information to the PDMP from 15 days to 7 days.

H.B. 7095 by Rep. Rob Schenck contains the following provisions:

- Physicians, podiatrists, and dentists must register their professional licensure board in order to prescribe controlled substances for pain management;
- Registered practitioners must adhere to minimal standards of practice, which include evaluating the patient's medical history; conducting a physical examination; developing an individualized treatment plan; and performing a periodic review of the patient's treatment plan.
- Registered practitioners must also maintain a log of all controlled substance prescriptions, which must be made available to law enforcement and to the Department of Health, upon request.

- Health care practitioners who have been found to over- or inappropriately prescribe controlled substances will have their license suspended for at least six months and pay a fine of at least \$10,000 per incident.
- The regulation of pain clinics is amended to expand the definition of such clinics, while an exception is created for clinics wholly owned and operate by board-certified anesthesiologists, physiatrists, neurologists, or other specialists who have completed a fellowship, or are board certified, in pain medicine. Pain clinics must also comply with various facility, infection control, health and safety, and quality assurance requirements. However, these regulations will have a short lifespan, in that the bill would repeal pain clinic regulations on January 1, 2016.

The Senate bill, S.B. 818 by Sen. Mike Fasano, differs substantially from the House bill—it would limit the advertising of the offering of controlled substances; tighten the regulations of pain clinics; and authorize the sharing of information in the controlled substance database with other states. The Senate bill was passed with little comment from committee members on a unanimous vote with support from, among other parties, the Florida Medical Association and the Florida Retail Federation. S.B. 818 is now on the Second Reading Calendar.

Red Light Cameras

By: Ericks Consultants, Pittman Law Group, The Moya Group and County Staff

HB 4087 by Reps. Corcoran and Trujillo/SB 672 by Sen. Garcia

On Wednesday, the House Appropriations Committee passed HB 4087 by a slim margin of 12-10 with several members who voted in favor of the bill vowing not do so if the bill were to reach the Floor. This legislation would repeal the bill that passed last year that enacted the express authority for local governments to use red light cameras at traffic light intersections. This bill would prohibit the use of red light cameras across the state. Rep. Corcoran spoke in committee stating that red light cameras do not save lives, rather they cause more rear end crashes due to the cameras.

The Senate companion, SB 672 by Sen. Garcia, still has two more committee stops. It is currently in the Senate Community Affairs Committee.

Traffic Control Signals

By: Ericks Consultants, Pittman Law Group and County Staff

HB 149 by Rep. Ahern/SB 1180 by Sen. Latvala

House Bill 149 by Rep. Ahern passed the House Economic Affairs Committee on Thursday by a vote of 15-1. This bill would require certain time thresholds for yellow light timing. The requirements are 3 seconds for 25 mph or less and shall increase one-half second for each increase of 5 miles per hour plus 10%. The maximum time for a yellow light is 6 seconds.

The bill further renders any red light camera ticket unenforceable if the light is improperly programmed and does not consist of the required time interval pursuant to the lawful speed limit.

The Senate companion bill, SB 1180 by Sen. Latvala, is positioned to be heard on the Senate floor during the last two weeks of Session.

Numeric Nutrient Water Quality Criteria

By: The Moya Group, Ericks Consultants, Pittman Law Group and County Staff

HB 239 by Rep. Williams, T./SB 1490 by Sen. Evers

On Thursday, the House passed HB 239 by Rep. Trudi Williams by a vote of 90-27. This legislation prohibits the implementation of certain nutrient water quality criteria by the Department of Environmental Protection, water management districts, and government entities. It was amended to remove the prohibition against local governments from imposing the federal numeric nutrient criteria standards. The bill also reclassifies the waterways classification system. Most environmental groups are opposed to the new system, but amendments were offered to fix objections over the Everglades.

The Senate companion, SB 1490 by Sen. Evers still has not been heard in its first committee of reference. It was temporarily postponed during the Senate Environmental Preservation and Conservation Committee on April 14th.

Environmental Permitting

By: The Moya Group, Ericks Consultants and County Staff

HB 991 by Rep. Patronis/SB 1404 by Sen. Evers

On Thursday, the House Economic Affairs Committee heard and passed HB 991 with a strike-all amendment by a vote of 17-0. The newest version of the bill is similar to the prior version, but it adds new exemptions of activity that do not need to qualify for a permit. The strike-all contains language that is supported by Palm Beach County and only allows a state agency to require as a condition of approval for a permit or as an item to complete a pending permit application, a permit or approval from any other local, state or federal agency if it has explicit statutory authority, and it requires expedited review of biomass plants if a local comprehensive plan does not include such. The bill requires many environmental permits to be issued within 60 days as opposed to 90 days.

The legislation gained even more environmental opponents this week as the bill was amended to preempt local government from prohibiting aggregate rock mining. Local governments are opposed to this language. The language pre-empts the authority of local governments to regulate all mines for construction aggregate materials. The pre-emption would apply to the regulation, permitting, enforcement of all matters relating to stormwater, drainage, wetlands, surface or ground water management, reclamation, consumptive use of water and imperiled, endangered or threatened species.

The Florida Association of Counties, Florida League of Cities, Audubon, and Sierra Club raised concerns, while the Associated Industries of Florida (AIF) supports the legislation. The Florida Stormwater Association raised concerns relating to their ability to comply with water quality standards. They stated that Section 18 of the strike-all affects their ability to craft local solutions for water quality problems. Rep. Patronis has welcomed and included all stakeholders to be a part of crafting this revised legislation, and has stated that he will continue to work with all interested parties to address their concerns.

The Senate companion, SB 1404 by Sen. Evers, was scheduled to be heard in its first committee of reference on April 14th, Senate Environmental Preservation and Conservation Committee, but it was not considered.

Local Option Fuel Tax

By: The Moya Group and County Staff

HB 1363 by Brandes/SB 1180 by Sen. Latvala

House Bill 1363 passed the House Economic Affairs Committee 17-0 on Thursday. The Transportation package's strike-all amendment included Palm Beach County's language that allows local governments to use their LOFT dollars on the installation, operation and maintenance, and repair of traffic and street lights. The Senate companion, SB 1180 by Sen. Latvala, contains the same language and has passed all of its committees of reference and is now in proper posture for a vote on the Senate floor.

Non-Homestead Property Assessments HB 381

By: Akerman Senterfit, Corcoran & Johnston, Ericks Consultants, and Foley & Lardner

HB 381 passed its final committee, Economic Affairs, 11-4 on Thursday and will now go to the floor. Its counterpart, SB 658 is agendaed in Budget next week but still may go to Rules afterwards. Committee meetings are scheduled to end on Tuesday. HB 381 proposes to reduce the annual growth in assessment limitation on certain non-homestead property from 10 percent to three percent upon voter approval of the amendment. The January 1, 2019, sunset of the non-homestead assessment limitation is repealed.

State Budget

By: Corcoran & Johnston, Ericks Consultants, and County Staff

The Senate and House are still over \$3 billion apart in regards to their spending plan for the next fiscal year. It is likely they will begin to resolve those differences in the upcoming week. The Chambers' respective budgets remain extremely different, with three main issues driving the conversations: Medicaid, education, and pension reform.

GOOD SAMARITAN ISSUE – 911

By: County Staff

HB 0091 by Rep. Bernard & SB1146 by Sen. Sachs

The 9-1-1 Good Samaritan bill, **HB 91 by Rep. Mack Bernard**, unanimously passed the House Judiciary Committee this week. It has been placed on the Second Reading Calendar.

Senator Maria Sachs' companion bill, **SB 1146** relating to Drug Overdoses has been placed on the Senate Judiciary Committee agenda for Monday, April 25th. Both pieces of legislation provide that a person acting in good faith who seeks medical assistance for an individual experiencing a drug-related overdose may not be charged, prosecuted, or penalized for specified offenses in certain circumstances. It also provides that a person who experiences a drug-related overdose and needs medical assistance may not be charged, prosecuted, or penalized for specified offenses in certain circumstances. This issue is a priority of the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Department.

Pretrial Programs

By: Ericks Consultants and County Staff

HB 1379 by Rep. Dorworth & SB 372/SB1398 by Sen. Bogdanoff

Palm Beach County continues to oppose **HB 1379 by Rep. Chris Dorworth** relating to pretrial programs. This legislation is otherwise known as the "bail bondsmen bill." In addition to the Florida Association of Counties, law enforcement agencies also vehemently oppose the bill. The bill would limit access to many pretrial programs by requiring defendants to pay for bonds and keeping some of them from entering pretrial

programs until at least 48 hours after initial incarceration.

The Counties and law enforcement contend that the bill would lead to increased costs for taxpayers as more people will sit in jail because they cannot afford to pay bonds. This will leave many people unnecessarily in jail for significant periods of time.

The bill was amended to exempt low-income people who cannot afford the bonds, allow pretrial diversion to those who have been incarcerated for 48 hours, and would only apply the provision to those counties with a population of 350,000 or more.

The bill was highly charged and passed by a vote of 10-8. It has passed both of its committee references and awaits its next stop on the House Floor. The language from **SB 372 by Sen. Ellyn Bogdanoff** has been amended onto **SB 1398**, also sponsored by **Sen. Ellyn Bogdanoff**, relating to Judiciary. It has one committee of reference remaining, Rules.

Local Bill Update

By: County Staff

HB 1489 by Rep. Albritton - Sebring Airport Authority, Highlands County

House Bill 1489 by Rep. Albritton creates the powers to establish, operate, and maintain foreign-trade zone (FTZ) status under the alternative site framework (ASF) in DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, and Okeechobee Counties and the Cities of Belle Glade, Pahokee, and South Bay. All of the impacted counties and the Cities of Belle Glade and Pahokee have issued letters of support for their inclusion in Sebring Airport Authority's FTZ under the ASF, with the stipulation that the zone will be made available on a uniform basis to companies within the region, in a manner consistent with the legal requirement that each FTZ be operated as a public utility. The purpose of the zones is to attract and promote international trade and commerce.

The advantages of using FTZs include:

- Customs duty and federal excise tax, if applicable, are paid when the merchandise is transferred from the zone for consumption.
- While in the zone, merchandise is not subject to U.S. duty or excise tax. Certain tangible personal property is generally exempt from state and local ad valorem taxes.
- Goods may be exported from the zone free of duty and excise tax.
- Customs security requirements provide protection against theft.
- Merchandise may remain in a zone indefinitely, whether or not subject to duty.
- The rate of duty and tax on the merchandise admitted to a zone may change as a result of operations conducted within the zone.
- Merchandise imported under bond may be admitted to a FTZ for the purpose of satisfying a legal requirement of exporting the merchandise. For instance, merchandise may be admitted into a zone to satisfy any exportation requirement of the Tariff Act of 1930, or an exportation requirement of any other Federal law (and many state laws) insofar as the agency charged with its enforcement deems it so.

House Bill 1489 passed the House Economic Affairs Committee on Thursday with a unanimous vote of 17-0. Its next and final committee stop is the House State Affairs Committee.

HB 741 by Rep. Berman - Lake Worth Drainage District

House Bill 741 passed the House Economic Affairs Committee 16-0 on April 12th. It is now available to be brought up for a vote on the House Floor. This legislation expands the powers of the Lake Worth Drainage District by granting it the authority to enter into interlocal agreements with local governments and public and private utility providers to develop and operate water supply facilities in Southeast Florida.

HB 1045 by Rep. Clemens - Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District

House Bill 1045 passed the House Economic Affairs Committee 15-1 on March 31st. It is ready to be brought up for a full House vote. This local bill creates section 8 of the Loxahatchee Groves Water Control District’s (District) charter providing for the dedication of width of four roads located within the District.

HB 4191 by Rep. Hager - Palm Beach County

House Bill 4191 was heard and passed the full House on Wednesday by a unanimous vote of 115-0. This local bill was requested by the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners and repeals the South Lake Worth Inlet Advisory Committee. It was determined that the advisory committee was no longer needed, as the dredging of the inlet and subsequent changes to adjacent property that included the development of a county park had been completed. It is now in Messages in the Senate.

Pensions

By: Ericks Consultants, Moya Group, Pittman Law Group, Corcoran & Johnston, and County Staff

There was no new movement this week to House Bill 1405 by Rep. Workman and **Senate Bill 2100** by Sen. Alexander relating to pension reform that are the main pieces of legislation relating to FRS employee retirement changes. The attached chart is a side by side of the major components of how the bills compare to one another.

CS/CS/HB 1405 (effective 7/1/11)	SB 2100 (effective 6/30/11)
EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTION	EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTION
Requires a 3 percent employee contribution for members of all classes of the FRS pension plan and investment plan. Section 24.	Tiered system: Requires 2% contribution for the first \$25,000, 4% for the next \$25,000, and a 6% contribution for compensation above \$50,000 for all employees. Section 28, page 162.
	Provides that DROP employees are not required to contribute to retirement. Section 29, page 161.
	Requires members in the Elected Officers Class who are members of the Legislature and statewide elected officials to contribute a higher percentage: 3, 5, and 7% for the same \$25,000 tiers as above.
DROP	DROP
Closes the Deferred Retirement Option Program to new participants. Section 12.	Closes DROP to new participants 7/1/16. Changes the interest rate for DROP to 2% for members enrolled on or after 7/1/11. Section 13, page 65
RETIREMENT ELIGIBILITY – AGE/YEARS OF SERVICE (CS)	RETIREMENT ELIGIBILITY -- AGE/YEARS OF SERVICE
Increases retirement eligibility for initial enrollees from age 62 to 65 or from 30 to 33 years of service. Section 4, page 13.	Maintains existing retirement age in statute. Section 6, page 19. <i>Drafting error on page 97 that changes Special Risk Retirement age to 62 or 30 years of service - will be corrected in conference.</i>

Special Risk - Increases retirement eligibility for initial enrollees from age 55 to 60 or from 25 to 30 years of service. Section 4., page 14	Prohibits SMS retirees that retired after 7/1/10 from re-enrolling in the OAP. Section 11, page 45.
	Prohibits SMS or Elected Officials class rehired after 7/1/11 from reenrolling a state administered retirement system. Section 18, page 76.
	COMPENSATION - DEFINED BENEFIT PLAN
	Beginning 7/1/11, AFC excludes: annual leave or sick leave buyouts, overtime salary more than 300 hours, and fringe benefits (e.g., housing allowance). Section 6, page 18. Compensation excludes: overtime payments exceeding 300 hours, and annual leave.
	VESTING
	Employees hired on or after 7/1/11 in the Defined Contribution Plan vest in their employee contributions, interest and earnings immediately, less administrative and investment fees. Section 22, page 113.
	Vesting in employer contributions is 20% after 1 year, 40% after 2 years, 60% after 3 years, 80% after 4 years, and 100% after 5 years. Section 22, page 114.
	Vesting for the Defined Benefit Plan is 10 years for all employees beginning after 7/1/11. Section 6, page 21
	DEFINED BENEFIT PLAN
	Regular, special risk and OAP/ORP eligible employees.
	DEFINED CONTRIBUTION
	<i>Requires participation by Elected Officers Class and Senior Management Class beginning 7/1/11 in the defined contribution plan, unless eligible for special risk or ORP. Section 7 and 22.</i>
SPECIAL RISK CLASS	COLA
New criteria to designate a position as special risk. Existing special risk members must meet the new criteria or move to regular class. Section 6.	Phases out COLA starting 7/1/11, for employees hired prior to that date. (Employee with 10 years 6/30/11 who works 15 more years will get a COLA for the first 10 years only.) Section 16, page 71.

The bills are now in posture that will most likely involve the appointment of a conference committee from both chambers to the resolve the differences in both bills.

FEDERAL UPDATE *By: US Strategies*

FY 2011 Appropriations

On Friday, April 15th, President Obama signed HR 1473, the \$1.05 trillion appropriations measure that will fund the federal government for the balance of the current fiscal year. Both chambers of Congress passed the bill on Thursday, April 14th, the House by 260-167, the Senate by 81-19.

The House vote in favor of the bill included 179 Republicans and 81 Democrats; opposing it were 59 Republicans (about one in four) and 108 Democrats (about three in five). With that many Republicans voting against the measure – some because it did not cut the budget as deeply as they would have liked, others because it did not contain the policy provisions they sought – passage required a large number of Democratic votes. The Senate vote was 81-19. Voting against passage were 15 Republicans, three Democrats, and Vermont independent Bernard Sanders.

While policy provisions barring funding for the 2010 health care overhaul law and for Planned Parenthood were included in the House package, they were rejected in the Senate, thus clearing the bill to be sent to the President without any modifications. The House had adopted the health care funding rider on a 240-185 vote and the Planned Parenthood rider on a 241-185 vote, but both fell short of even a simple majority in the Senate, and well short of the 60 votes needed for adoption.

A White House statement issued following Congressional approval of the measure says that, "Although the administration would not have agreed to many of these cuts under better fiscal circumstances, the bill reflects a compromise that will help the federal government live within its means while protecting those investments that will help America compete for new jobs."

President's Deficit Reduction Framework

In a speech delivered Wednesday, April 13th, at George Washington University, President Obama presented what the White House described as "a comprehensive, balanced deficit reduction framework to cut spending, bring down our debt and increase confidence in our nation's fiscal strength, while supporting our economic recovery and ensuring we are making the investments we need to win the future." Compared to the House Budget Committee's FY 2012 budget resolution, the President relies less on fundamental changes to Medicare and Medicaid and more on higher taxes paid by higher earners and reform of the tax code to eliminate several tax breaks. It also relies on cuts in security as well as non-security spending.

FY 2012 Budget Resolution

On a 235-193 vote, the House on Friday, April 15th adopted H. Con. Res. 34, the House Budget Committee's FY 2012 budget resolution with the Chair of the Committee, Paul Ryan (R-WI), describing the bill's passage as a "defining moment." Four Republicans joined all Democrats in opposing the bill, which cuts about \$6 trillion in spending over the next 10 years and proposes major changes to Medicare and Medicaid programs.

Ryan reports that the measure eliminates hundreds of programs; reflects the ban on earmarks; brings non-security discretionary spending to below 2008 levels; reduces deficits by \$4.4 trillion over the next decade compared to the President's budget; puts the budget on the path to balance and pay off the debt; eliminates roughly \$800 billion in tax increases imposed by the President's health care law; prevents the \$1.5 trillion tax increase called for in the President's budget; calls for a simpler, less burdensome tax code; lowers tax rates for individuals, businesses and families; and improves incentives for growth, savings, and investment.

The House bill is given little chance of passage in the Senate. The Senate's budget resolution will be taken up by the Senate Budget Committee following the two-week recess for Easter and Passover which has now started, but most observers say reconciliation between the House and Senate on a budget plan will be difficult, if not impossible.

Palm Beach County

Board of County

Commissioners

Karen T. Marcus, Chair

Shelley Vana, Vice Chair

Paulette Burdick

Burt Aaronson

Steven Abrams

Jess R. Santamaria

Priscilla A. Taylor

County Administrator

Robert Weisman

Palm Beach County

Legislative Affairs

301 North Olive Avenue

Suite 1101.4

West Palm Beach, FL

33405

Todd J. Bonlarron

Director

Phone

Office (561) 355-3451

Mobile (561) 310-7832

Fax

(561) 355-3982

E-mail

tbonlarr@pbcgov.com

We're on the Web!

www.pbcgov.com