

Summary of the 2006 Florida Legislative Session Housing and Homeless

During the 2006 Florida Legislative Session, many of the items on the Florida Coalition for the Homeless Legislative Agenda were included in bills proposed by the House and the Senate. While not every agenda item succeeded, progress was made with new and increased appropriations allocated to Florida's homeless programs.

Note: All policies and appropriations described below as passed by the Florida House and Senate must be approved by the Governor before they can be implemented.

On June 2, the Governor signed HB 1363 with the appropriations included in the bill.

HB 7173 and 1589 have not yet been signed or vetoed.

The general appropriations bill was signed by the Governor and included the following increases:

Preserve and Increase Funding for State Homeless Assistance Programs

- A \$2 million increase in Homeless Housing Assistance funding from \$5 million to \$7 million
- Local Coalition Funding increased from \$343K to \$700K

Affordable Housing

HB 1363 passed the House Chamber on Monday, May 1, 2006. On May 2, 2006, the Senate replaced their bill (SB 132) with HB 1363. On May 4, 2006 the Senate passed HB 1363, after negotiating with the House. In the negotiations, the House conceded to the lower Senate appropriation allocations.

Highlights of the final bill include:

Sadowski Housing Trust Fund – The provision to remove the cap on the Sadowski Housing Trust fund did not make it past the final committees in either the House or Senate.

30/30 Housing Vision – We did not see the implementation of the 30/30 Housing Vision where 30 percent of the funds for housing be set aside for developing housing for people living at or below 30 percent of the area median income.

However, we did secure a definition of extremely low income households as those households at or below 30 percent of AMI; and \$30 million appropriations set aside for the development of housing for ELI households. This is a step in the right direction.

Surplus Property – Requires local governments to inventory and make available surplus property (land and buildings) suitable for affordable housing. The land may offered for sale and the proceeds used to purchase land for development of affordable housing, sold with a restriction requiring the development of affordable housing and/or donated to a non-profit housing organization for permanent affordable housing.

Provides provisions and procedures for local governments to request state surplus land.

Community Workforce Housing Innovation Pilot Program – To provide affordable rental and home ownership for essential service personnel (i.e. teachers, police, firefighters, nurses) as defined by each municipality

Affordable Workforce Housing means housing that is affordable to a person who earns not more than 120 percent of AMI

Mobile Homes – authorizes local governments to assist mobile home park residents classified as very-low income, low-income or moderate income being displaced as a result of redevelopment with financial assistance to help with the cost of relocation, purchasing a new manufacturer home and/or relocating to other suitable affordable housing. Funding for this program is a supplemental fund under the Florida Mobile Home Relocation Trust Fund.

Developer incentives – many of the bill’s provisions are incentives for developers to build affordable housing

Property Tax Assessments – for affordable housing properties serving extremely-low, very-low, low and moderate incomes, the actual rental income from rent-restricted units shall be considered by the property appraiser for assessment purposes.

Appropriations included in HB 1363:

- \$75.9 M— Rental Recovery Loan Program.
- \$15 M – Farmworker Housing Recovery Program and the Special Housing Assistance and Development Program (Homeless people are included)
- \$17 M – Rental Recovery Program.
- \$100 K – Technical and training assistance
- \$82,904 K – Hurricane Recovery (from the Florida Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program Fund to the Department of Community Affairs as approved US HUD to meet the needs of communities impacted by Hurricanes Wilma and Katrina, with a prioritization toward affordable housing in the most impacted areas of the state.)
- \$50 M – Implement Community Workforce Housing Innovation Pilot Program.
- \$30 M – To assist in the production of housing units for extremely-low-income persons

Youth Aging Out of Foster Care

HB 7173 – Welfare of Children – Passed the House on Tuesday, May 2, 2006. On May 2, 2006, the Senate replaced their bill (SB 1798) with HB 7173. On May 5, 2006 the Senate passed HB 7173.

This bill contains several provisions regarding the welfare of children in the state of Florida. While the majority of the bill is centered on the prevention of child abuse, there are provisions that concern youth aging out of foster care including:

- expanding the eligibility pool
- requiring the development of a plan for each community-based care (CBC) service area
- providing for the direct deposit of funds
- authorizing CBCs to purchase housing and other services
- providing for the expansion of Kidcare coverage for eligible young adults until age 20

Hate Crimes

There were 2 different Hate Crimes bills introduced in both the House and Senate during the 2006 legislative session and all died in committee.

Homeownership for All Specialty License Plate

HB 1589 – creating a specialty license plate for affordable housing passed the House on May 3, 2006. On May 3, 2006, the Senate replaced their bill (SB 2238) with HB 1589. On May 4, 2006 the Senate passed HB 1589.

This license plate is being sponsored by Florida Association of Realtors and it remains unclear, through HB 1589 how the money will be distributed and/or used for affordable housing in Florida.

Other Appropriations within the Health and Human Services Budget specific to homelessness (copied from the budget)

432 SPECIAL CATEGORIES		
GRANTS AND AIDS – CHALLENGE GRANTS		
FROM GENERAL REVENUE FUND	2,116,025	
433 SPECIAL CATEGORIES		
GRANTS AND AIDS - FEDERAL EMERGENCY SHELTER GRANT PROGRAM		
FROM GENERAL REVENUE FUND	1,185,990	
FROM FEDERAL GRANTS TRUST FUND		3,034,474
FROM GRANTS AND DONATIONS TRUST FUND		809,793
FROM WELFARE TRANSITION TRUST FUND		809,793

434 SPECIAL CATEGORIES
 GRANTS AND AIDS - HOMELESS HOUSING ASSISTANCE GRANTS
 FROM GRANTS AND DONATIONS TRUST FUND . . . 7,000,000

435 SPECIAL CATEGORIES
 GRANTS AND AIDS - CONTRACTED SERVICES
 FROM GENERAL REVENUE FUND 800,000
 FROM TOBACCO SETTLEMENT TRUST FUND 225,000
 FROM SOCIAL SERVICES BLOCK GRANT TRUST FUND 300,000

In addition to existing recurring projects, the following project in Specific Appropriation 435 is funded from non-recurring tobacco settlement trust funds:

~~Positive Spin – Hillsborough..... 225,000~~ Vetoed by the Governor

In addition to existing recurring projects, the following project in Specific Appropriation 435 is funded from non-recurring general revenue funds:

Homeless Supportive Services - Clay, Duval, Nassau..... 100,000

From the funds in Specific Appropriations 435, the following project is funded from non-recurring supplemental emergency social services block grant funds made available to address 2005 hurricane impacts:

Elderly Housing Assistance - Broward..... 300,000

436 SPECIAL CATEGORIES
 RISK MANAGEMENT INSURANCE
 FROM GENERAL REVENUE FUND 337

437 FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS CASH ASSISTANCE
 FROM GENERAL REVENUE FUND 148,451,485
 FROM WELFARE TRANSITION TRUST FUND 32,104,504

438 FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS
 OPTIONAL STATE SUPPLEMENTATION PROGRAM
 FROM GENERAL REVENUE FUND 26,533,020

439 FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS PERSONAL
 CARE ALLOWANCE
 FROM GENERAL REVENUE FUND 314,456

TOTAL: SPECIAL ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS
 FROM GENERAL REVENUE FUND 179,871,092
 FROM TRUST FUNDS 44,550,033

TOTAL POSITIONS 3.00
TOTAL ALL FUNDS

224,421,125

Summary of Activities by the Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County

Rayme Nuckles and Lesa Weikel traveled to Tallahassee four times during the 2006 Florida Legislative session.

During these trips, we had a total of 50 meeting with legislators, legislator's staff and committee staff (this does not include the meetings held by other advocates during Homeless Legislative Day). We focused on the members of key committees (listed below) that had been assigned the affordable housing bills, including 30/30 and Sadowski.

Senate Committees:

Community Affairs

Michael S. "Mike" Bennett (R) – Chair
Vice Chair: Mike Haridopolos (R) – Vice Chair
Charlie Clary (R)
Steven A. Geller (D)
Anthony C. "Tony" Hill, Sr. (D)
Alfred "Al" Lawson, Jr. (D)
Ken Pruitt (R)
J. Alex Villalobos (R)

Government Oversight and Productivity

Nancy Argenziano (R) – Chair
Alfred "Al" Lawson, Jr. (D) – Vice Chair
Lee Constantine (R)
Rudy Garcia (R)
Gwen Margolis (D)
Jim Sebesta (R)

Transportation and Economic Development Appropriations

Mike Fasano (R) – Chair
Gwen Margolis (D) – Vice Chair
Paula Dockery (R)
Anthony C. "Tony" Hill, Sr. (D)
Jim Sebesta (R)
Daniel Webster (R)

House Committees:

Local Government Council

Ken Sorensen (R) – Chair
Julio Robaina (R) – Vice Chair
Thomas Anderson (R)

Mike Davis (R)
Terry L. Fields (D)
D. Alan Hays (R)
Matthew J. Meadows (D)
Yolly Roberson (D)

Growth Management

Randy Johnson (R) – Chair
Mike Davis (R) – Vice Chair
Anna Holliday Benson (R)
Jennifer Carroll (R)
D. Alan Hays, (R)
Bob Henriquez (D)
Carlos Lopez-Cantera
Ari Abraham Porth (D)
William L. Proctor (R)
Shelley Vana (D)

Transportation and Economic Development Appropriations

Don Davis (R) – Chair
Marcelo Llorente (R) – Vice Chair
Loranne Ausley (D)
Gus Michael Bilirakis (R)
Ellyn Setnor Bogdanoff (R)
Susan Bucher (D)
Donna Clarke (R)
Marti Coley (R)
Joyce Cusack (D)
Mike Davis (R)
Richard Glorioso (R)
Gayle B. Harrell (R)
Adam Hasner (R)
Edward L. Jennings (D)
Randy Johnson (R)
Dick Kravitz (R)
Sheri McInvale (R)
Pat Patterson (R)
Ray Sansom (R)
Irving L. Slosberg (D)

We worked closely with Rep. Kevin Ambler who is an influential member of the House Health and Human Services Appropriations committee which is responsible for the DCF budget. He worked very closely with DCF Secretary Lucy Hadi.

We met with Senator Tom Lee’s policy advisor Ron Pierce on April 20 to gain Senator’s Lee’s support to match the House’s budget proposal for local coalition funding.

Hand delivered to each Senator and Representative at least one hand-delivered copy of the 2006 Homeless Legislative Needs Booklet – Lay the Foundation for Affordable Housing by the fourth week of session.

Produced the following Collateral Material for Educational and Training

- A 2006 Homeless Legislative Needs Booklet – Lay the Foundation for Affordable Housing, a 20-page informational booklet to educate lawmakers, their staff (and advocates) about the needs of homeless and extremely-low income people and what the lawmakers could do to help meet their needs.
- The 2006 Advocacy guide distributed during Legislative day as a training resource for homeless service providers and advocates to us during their advocacy activities in Tallahassee.
- A 2-page information and fact sheet about the need for hate crimes law to include ‘homeless status.’
- A 2-page information sheet listing the legislative items FCH supports to improve and expand services available for homeless and extremely-low income people living in Florida.
- All material needed for the 2006 Homeless Legislative Day including agenda, complete packets, printing of 30/30 material.
- Press release distributed statewide by Rondy Johnson at FCH and by Lesa Weikel to media outlets in Hillsborough County.

All material produced included either the Miami Coalition for the Homeless Logo and/or a written statement recognizing MCH’s involvement in the advocacy efforts.

- The Miami Coalition for the Homeless logo was included on most material, as space allowed.
- If space limitations were a factor, the following statement was included: “Presented by the Florida Coalition for the Homeless, Funded by the Miami Coalition for the Homeless; Coordinated by the Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County”

Coordinated FCH’s Homeless Legislative Day in Tallahassee on Wednesday, March 29, 2006. Fifty homeless service providers and advocates from through the state of Florida participated in the advocacy event

Coordinated 7 email action alerts to Local Coalitions and Continuum of Care Lead Agencies (as listed by the Office on Homelessness). In addition, all participants of Legislative Day were included in the action alerts emails after March 29, 2006.

March 6, 2006 Contact Legislators to support 30/30 and Sadowski bills

March 9, 2006	Contact House Local Government about 30/30
March 24, 2006	Contact Legislators to support 30/30, Sadowski, Hate Crimes
March 27, 2006	Prep Material for Legislative Day
April 17, 2006	Contact House Fiscal Council members to remove the Sadowski cap and maintain ELI appropriations in the bill
April 21, 2006	Contact members of the Health and Human Services Budget Conference Committee; ask that the Senate move up to the House budget recommendation on line 435 for local coalition funding
April 24, 2006	Targeted alert to advocates in Miami-Dade, Broward, Duval, and Pinellas to contact Budget Conference Committee members concerning budget line 435

Coordinated key FCH members and local coalition leaders through phone calls to contact key Legislators as needed for committee votes and budget conference support needed to pass bills appropriations through the process.

Media

As affordable housing was a “hot” topic throughout the 2006 Legislative session, newspapers across the state ran numerous stories, editorials, op-eds and letters to the editors regarding affordable housing. Both newspapers serving Hillsborough County published editorials in support of our affordable housing efforts; however the letter to the editor HCHC submitted was not published.

During Legislative Day, one Tallahassee TV station covered the press conference. This TV station shared footage of the press conference with its Tampa affiliate.

Reporting of Activities

HCHC provide MCH with weekly reports during the 2006 Legislative Session.