



## ***Economic Development Priorities and Legislation***

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Each year, the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners sets legislative priorities to ensure the county receives resources and support to best serve its residents. Economic development priorities for 2017 included a focus on Enterprise Florida and regional initiatives for the Glades.

The County's on-going ability to partner with Enterprise Florida to incentivize businesses to relocate to or expand in Palm Beach County was a key component of the 2017 legislative agenda. To that end, County Commissioners prioritized funding the state's economic development toolkit in a manner that supports continued economic growth and financial stability for regional businesses and those seeking to relocate to Palm Beach County. Since 2009, 21 businesses received more than \$55.5 million in state and local incentives to relocate to or expand in Palm Beach County. This includes more than \$11.2 million in incentives provided by the County as a match to state funds. Incentivized businesses made more than \$644.5 million in capital investments to complement incentive funding. In addition, these companies commit to creating more than 3,550 new jobs and retaining more than 6,200 existing jobs as a condition to receipt of incentive funding.

In an effort to provide economic growth and stimulus to the Glades region, the County developed a broad range of legislative funding priorities consistent with the Glades Regional Master Plan to improve mobility, quality of life, and economic sustainability in the Glades region. Priorities included road reconstruction and repaving in the Glades as well as storm water improvements to support economic and housing development. Also part of the County's 2017 legislative agenda were the advancement of the Glades Region Inland Logistic Center (formerly known as the Inland Port); improvements, renovations, and repairs to the Pahokee Marina to enhance economic tourism; and facility improvements at West Tech to accommodate expansion of career academy programs. Glades area housing was a 2017 legislative priority, with a focus on improvements to existing affordable housing units as well as the development of new affordable housing units.

In June 2017, Florida Governor Rick Scott signed the 2017-2018 state budget into law. The \$82.4 billion budget allocates \$12.9 billion to transportation and economic development efforts across the state. This allocation includes significant support to Glades regional initiatives, including \$1.2 million for the Pahokee Marina and \$1.02 million for the reconstruction of Avenue J in Belle Glade. Also of significance is the creation of the Florida Job Growth Grant Fund. The \$85 million fund replaces direct incentive programs previously administered by Enterprise Florida to promote business relocation to or expansion in Florida. The fund will stimulate economic development through investments in public infrastructure and workforce training projects rather than through incentives to a single business entity. The Department of Economic Opportunity will work with Enterprise Florida and other state and local partners (including local governments, community colleges, and technical centers) to identify potential projects and submit proposals. Infrastructure projects will focus on promoting economic diversification, regional economic

recovery, or targeted industry economic enhancement. Public roads, sewers, electrical grids, and telecommunication facilities are all examples of eligible infrastructure projects. Workforce training projects will support efforts to provide transferrable, sustainable jobs skills applicable to more than a single employer. The Governor will ultimately make the award decisions.

Palm Beach County remains dedicated strengthening our economy and employing our workforce. At the direction of the Board of County Commissioners, we will continue to promote healthy growth and economic development through a variety of means, including legislative advocacy and the submission of proposals to the newly created Florida Job Growth Fund. Our partnerships with the Business Development Board and other business- and work force-focused organizations remain critical to the success of our efforts to promote Palm Beach County as an ideal destination for business based on the overall assets and attributes of our diverse county.