



Duval County Legislative Delegation

CHAIR
REPRESENTATIVE DANIEL DAVIS

VICE CHAIR
REPRESENTATIVE REGGIE FULLWOOD

Delegation Meeting
April 9, 2014
322 Capitol
Tallahassee, FL

SENATORS
AARON BEAN
AUDREY GIBSON

REPRESENTATIVES
JANET H. ADKINS
DANIEL DAVIS
REGGIE FULLWOOD
MIA L. JONES
CHARLES MCBURNEY
LAKE RAY

The meeting was called to order at 5:04 p.m., with welcoming remarks by Representative Daniel Davis, Chair.

PRESENT: Senators Bean and Gibson
Representatives Adkins, Davis, McBurney, Ray and Jones
Excused: Representative Fullwood

A quorum was present.

The Chair called upon Russ Armistead, CEO of UF Health Jacksonville, who requested the members consider a repeal or delay in the new tiering law that is proposed to go into effect this year. Mr. Armistead explained the law was passed three years ago (2011) that redistributes the Lower Income Pool (LIP) funds, which will have a \$38 million negative impact for UF Health Jax. This law also impacts all of the major safety-net hospitals as well. This is an unsustainable financial platform as they are dependent on state funds. Part of the reason is they have almost three times the Medicaid and indigent care work load in Duval County and half the commercial business compared to other hospitals. Hospitals make money on commercial patients which covers the indigent patients. However, UF Health Jax has only 10% commercial patients compared to other hospitals that have approximately 30%. In addition, they have about 17% uninsured rate compared to about 5% to 8% of other hospitals. Their Medicaid is 38% to 40% of other hospitals. Therefore, the repeal or delaying will buy them another year and is very important to their sustainability.

Questions and answers followed.

Tony Carvalho explained IGTs (Inter-governmental transfers) which is local tax money used to draw-down federal dollars. Jacksonville has contributed \$21 million which will draw-down \$30 million which goes back to the hospital. Buy back rates and impacts to other hospitals were discussed.

They have asked the federal government for new LIP funding while there is some movement to delay the tiering law they need the repeal or delay. The repeal or delay can be done during the appropriations process in conference, possibly in proviso language. Members questioned who may be opposed to the repeal or delay of the tiering implementation.

A motion was made to compose a resolution requesting repeal or delay of the tiering implementation, along with a letter to the Senate President and Speaker of the House indicating the delegation's unanimous support of a repeal or delay of tiering and reference the IGTs. The motion was adopted unanimously.

Janet Owen, University of North Florida – Requested that members of the delegation support the House budget position that does not reduce UNF’s operational support issue (previously received in the 2012 session, and maintained in the 2013 session) by \$2.25 million. She also requested that the members support the House position on facilities construction, which could bring as much as \$9 million to UNF for a renovation project that will increase UNF’s capacity for awarding degrees in STEM fields. Lastly, she requested support from the delegation for the appropriation of \$4 million in recurring funding to address academic and student service enhancements, to improve UNF’s performance on metrics being measured by the Board of Governors, and which will ultimately determine future funding levels.

Layne Smith, Mayo Clinic – Informed the members that the Senate has \$2,500,000 in the budget for the Mayo Cancer Center, but the House takes a different approach – they adopted the Governor’s proposal of the Comprehensive Cancer Center Initiative. However, Mayo is eliminated from participating in the Governor’s plan because of the wording. Because Mayo is based in three different states, the parameters provide only for Florida based institutions. They are working on a solution that will allow Mayo to participate as 80% of their patients are from Florida.

John Sullivan, Duval County Schools – Explained the top issue is class size, currently the House changes how penalties are calculated to school-wide basis instead of individual class level – please support the House position; Also, regarding the lowest performing elementary schools and additional instruction time - the House budget maintains the 100, the Senate budget increases that number to 300.

Mario Rubio, City of Jacksonville – discussed issues and specifically regarding of road projects.

Ward Blakely spoke representing the Cecil Field Spaceport Project.

Senator Bean asked for update on local bills, which was provided. The Chair will speak with Rules and the Speaker’s Office.

Representative McBurney discussed a handout he provided regarding the USS Adams Museum Project, which is being sponsored by a group that wants to open a ship-based museum in downtown Jacksonville. They have raised approximately \$1.7 million and need about \$3.5 million and are asking for \$1 million from the state. He recently received the request and is asking for ideas or suggestions. The Chair suggested it be revisited next session.

Members discussed Representative Fullwood’s handout on the Florida Children’s Initiative (New Town Success Zone) – line item 111, which was vetoed last year. There is money in the Senate but not in the House. The project is located in Jacksonville, Orlando & Miami. Representative Adkins requested information on the reason for the veto. Rep. Adkins and Jones will follow the issue.

Rep. Jones requested members support EWC and the HBCU. The funding for library resources in the House is significantly less than in the Senate – please support the Senate position for technology upgrades and support for the Call Me Mister Program.

Rep. Adkins discussed the Community in Schools Program a statewide program that was vetoed last year and asked for the delegation’s support.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:51 p.m.

Note: A recording of these proceedings is on file in the delegation office, City Hall, Jacksonville, and is available to the public and media. Also a MP3 link is on the delegation website.