



January 28, 2022



### **District 6 Update**

Last week, I had the opportunity to speak before the Florida Senate Appropriations Committee regarding a piece of legislation (Senate Bill 620) that would have significant negative impacts on Palm Beach County and local governments throughout Florida.

Standing side by side with my colleagues from across the state on behalf of the Florida Association of Counties, we explained to the Senate Committee that while their intentions were probably well-intended, there were a number of potential public safety dangers with the legislation. On the outside, this bill presents itself as a business protection bill. We can all agree that while encouraging supportive environments for our local businesses to succeed is a priority for all, there are circumstances where local governments must make immediate decisions to protect the safety of our residents.

The bill would authorize Florida businesses in operation for a specified number of years to sue local governments if those businesses believed that the actions of a local government caused a revenue reduction to that business of 15% or more. Had this piece of legislation been law back around 2010-2012 when Palm Beach County suddenly found itself in the midst of an increasingly deadly opioid overdose public health crisis caused at the hands of dangerous pain management clinic practices otherwise known as "pill mills", the County could have been sued by the pill mill operators when the County Commission issued a moratorium to halt the spread of these deadly drug dealing businesses disguised as pain clinics. As the bill was originally written, our moratorium would have been temporarily halted as lawsuits worked their way through the court

system while we continued to see headlines with photographs of babies crying in the backseat of cars operated by passed out parents in parking lots.

Thankfully, the sponsor of the legislation, Senator Travis Hudson, has been willing to listen to some of these concerns and we are currently discussing possible changes to the proposed legislation. Overall, local government leaders oppose preemptive measures in Tallahassee in the same fashion Tallahassee leaders oppose preemptive measures passed along to them by Washington decisions. But, we will take the opportunities given to us to have healthy public policy decisions with the hope that we come to some sort of agreeable proposed policy. If I've learned anything in my public service, it's better to walk away with a few small victories than one large defeat. I will continue to use my voice before our state and federal leaders to protect the rights of local communities to drive local decisions.



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### **Firefighter Cancer Awareness Proclamation**

On January 26, I presented an offsite proclamation at Fire Rescue Headquarters declaring January 2022 as Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month. This observance honors firefighters battling cancer and those who have lost their lives to cancer.

Firefighter occupational cancer is the leading cause of line-of-duty deaths in professional firefighters and has reached epidemic levels in the United States. Firefighters have

a nine percent greater chance of developing cancer and a 14 percent greater risk of dying from that cancer than the general population.

The excess cancer risk reflects chronic exposure to known carcinogens and other hazards as part of job-related responsibilities. Through this proclamation, we bring awareness of the cancer risk for firefighters so that support and assistance can be offered to our local heroes.

To watch the video of this presentation, visit [here](#).





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### **Affordable and Workforce Housing Workshop**

On January 25, the County Commission held a workshop to discuss affordable and workforce housing. This was a tremendously important discussion as home prices and rents have skyrocketed in Palm Beach County. I'm in the same boat as many of my constituents, having just received notice that my lease renewal will rise more than \$500 per month.

Each member of the Commission recognized how vital it is for us as a body to address this housing crisis immediately. I asked County staff to explore new strategies and potential revisions to current policies to help spur new affordable and workforce housing stock. It is imperative that our workforce can afford to live and raise their families in this County. I will update you as these strategies are implemented.

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### **South Florida Fair**

The final weekend of the South Florida Fair is here! This year's theme is Rockin' Robots. The exhibition will include larger-than-life-size robots, interactive robot activities, and a showcase for robotics in agriculture, manufacturing, education, and science. This annual

fair is one of Palm Beach County's most exciting family friendly events, so come on out through January 30th for a wonderful time!

For more information, including the daily schedule, visit [www.southfloridafair.com](http://www.southfloridafair.com).



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## **PBC Cooperative Extension to Offer Workshop for First-Time Homebuyers**

Are you thinking about purchasing a home? Learn about the steps to homeownership and how to obtain an affordable mortgage in Palm Beach County (PBC) by attending the University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) Extension First-Time Home Buyer workshop. The class is provided by the Palm Beach County Cooperative Extension, a local agency approved by Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The course is HUD-approved and is an 8-hour, pre-purchase, homebuyer workshop that meets the homebuyer education requirement for workforce housing and down payment assistance programs. Participants must attend two 4-hour sessions or one 8-hour session for successful completion of the 8-hour program.

Classes are \$10 per individual/couple. A scholarship is available to those who qualify. The sessions are offered online via Zoom in English and Spanish.

To purchase tickets, visit <https://homebuyerred.eventbrite.com>

### Workshop Dates in English:

Jan. 14 & 21 (Fridays)	9 a.m. - 1 p.m. (two sessions)
Jan. 24 & 25 (Monday and Tuesday)	5 p.m. - 9 p.m. (two sessions)
Feb. 18 & 25 (Fridays)	9 a.m. - 1 p.m. (two sessions)
Feb. 17 & 24 (Thursdays)	5 p.m. - 9 p.m. (two sessions)
March 18 & 25 (Fridays)	9 a.m. - 1 p.m. (two sessions)

### Workshop Dates in Spanish:

Jan. 18 (Tuesday)	8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. (one session)
Feb. 8 & 15 (Tuesdays)	5 p.m. - 9 p.m. (two sessions)

For more information, please contact Cyndi Longley at [clongley@pbcgov.org](mailto:clongley@pbcgov.org) or 561-233-1744.

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## **District 6 COVID-19 Testing Sites**

Lakeside Medical Center, 3200 Hooker Highway, Belle Glade 33430. Mon - Sat, 9 am - 4 pm. No appointments needed. Walk-ups welcome. Any age. No cost.

C.L. Brumback Health Center, 38754 State Road 80, Belle Glade 33430. Mon, Thurs, & Friday, 8 am - 4:45 pm. No appointments needed. Walk-ups welcome. Any age. No cost.

Commons Park, 11600 Poinciana Blvd, Royal Palm Beach. Mon & Fri, 9 am - 5 pm. Wed, 12 pm - 5 pm. No appointments needed. No cost.

Wellington Village Hall Parking Lot, 12300 Forest Hill Blvd. Mon - Sat, 8:30 am - 8 pm. Appointments may be booked through [www.curative.com](http://www.curative.com). No cost.

Wellington Green Park, 2175 Wellington Green Drive. Mon - Fri, 8 am - 5 pm. Drive-thru. No appointments necessary. No cost.

For a full list of sites throughout the County, visit [here](#).

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## **Press Release!**

### **Housing Rehabilitation Assistance**

Palm Beach County's Department of Housing and Economic Development (HED) has announced the availability of American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) Owner Occupied Housing Rehabilitation assistance funds for Fiscal Year 2021-2022.

Funding will assist income eligible homeowners, residing in the **unincorporated area of Palm Beach County**, with substantial rehabilitation to correct code violations or items that will soon become a code violation. Properties **MUST** be located within a federally designated Qualified Census Tract (QCT). Properties located outside of a QCT, may not be eligible to apply for assistance. **NOTE:** Applicant must provide a statement on how their household was financially impacted by COVID. **PROPERTY'S ASSESSED VALUE CANNOT EXCEED \$352,371.**

ARPA Owner Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program applications will be available online by visiting the website at <https://pbcgov.com/HED> beginning **Monday, January 24, 2021 at 8:00am – Monday, February 28, 2022 at 11:59pm** (or until 90 applications have been submitted). Applications will be processed on a first submitted, first qualified, first served basis, subject to funding availability. **NOTE:** *Additional program information and required documents needed for application submittal are available on the website at [pbcgov.com/HED](https://pbcgov.com/HED).*

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** ALL applicants are required to attend a Virtual Mandatory Orientation prior to application submittal. Interested parties may register at <https://survey.pbcgov.com/s3/HED-Owner-Occupied-Housing-Rehabilitation> beginning Monday, December 13, 2021. **NOTE:** Applications will not be reviewed if proof of orientation attendance is not provided.

For additional information, please contact:  
Palm Beach County Department of Housing and Economic Development (HED)  
Mortgage and Housing Investments Division  
Telephone: (561) 233-3600  
Email: [HEDverify@pbcgov.org](mailto:HEDverify@pbcgov.org)

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## **Grocery Card Program**

The Palm Beach County Community Services Department (CSD) has launched a new Grocery Card Program for eligible Palm Beach County residents. The department is issuing \$400 pre-loaded grocery cards to be used for food purchases within the county. The program will end when the funding source has been depleted.

To qualify, at least one or more individuals within a household must meet the following criteria:

- Qualifies for unemployment or experienced a reduction of household income, or incurred significant costs, or experienced other financial hardships due to COVID-19; and,
- Has not received a food card in the past from Palm Beach County Community Services Department; and,
- Has a household income at or below 200% Federal Poverty Guideline (FPG).

All participants must be able to provide documentation to prove they were impacted financially by the COVID-19 crisis. Applications must be submitted online; this program is a limited-time offer and is subject to funding availability.

For a full list of eligibility requirements and to apply, visit [www.FoodAssistancePBC.org](http://www.FoodAssistancePBC.org).

For additional information, please contact the CSD's Contact Center at 561-355-4700.

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## In Closing

### COVID-19 testing sites

To find vaccine sites near you, click here: [Interactive Vaccine Locator](#)

### Health Care District Weekly Vaccination Schedule

For rental assistance, click here: [Emergency Rental Assistance Program](#)

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