

**SEMINOLE COUNTY GOVERNMENT
AGENDA MEMORANDUM**

SUBJECT: Legislative - Proposed State Budget Cuts to Juvenile Justice Services and Prevention/Intervention Programs

DEPARTMENT: Community Services **DIVISION:** P.A.Y. – Jean Jeffcoat Ext. 4671
Steve Lee **EXT.** 5741
AUTHORIZED BY: _____ **Contact:** Sally A. Sherman **EXT.** 7224

Agenda Date 3-25-03 Regular Consent Work Session Briefing
Public Hearing – 1:30 Public Hearing – 7:00

MOTION/RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution requesting the Governor's Office reconsider its proposal to reduce current funding levels for CINS/FINS and misdemeanor assessments and the elimination of misdemeanor probation and predisposition detention costs at the state level.

BACKGROUND:

An overview of the Governor's Recommended 2003-04 Budget has revealed several cuts that directly and indirectly impact County resources as related to Juvenile Justice. The Children in Need of Services/Families in Need of Services (CINS/FINS) provider for Seminole County is Girls and Boystown. The proposed 56% reduction in funding for Girls and Boystown would result in the elimination of their prevention programs. The impact would be no in-home counseling available for at-risk youth and the number of crisis shelter beds would be reduced. The elimination of juvenile misdemeanor assessments would mean no front-end screening to identify substance abuse and mental health issues in those offenders, which left unaddressed greatly increase the risk of recidivism, which in turn impacts public safety and resources.

The shifting of juvenile probation to the County would impact the General Fund budget by \$175,000 per year in staff costs alone and the figure for assuming predisposition detention costs would be over \$1.5 million annually.

Reviewed by:
Co Atty: _____
DFS: _____
Other: _____
DCM: SS
CM: [Signature]

File No. LEG01

Resolution

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED AT THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF SEMINOLE COUNTY, FLORIDA ON THE 25TH DAY OF MARCH, 2003.

WHEREAS, there has been a downward trend in juvenile arrests the past five years in Seminole County due in large part to having front-end prevention and diversion programs, along with a consistent continuum of services, available to at risk and delinquent youth; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's Budget proposes reducing CINS/FINS funding statewide by 56%, eliminating assessments for misdemeanor juveniles, and shifting misdemeanor probation and predisposition detention costs to the Counties; and.

WHEREAS, Children in Need of Services/ Families in Need of Services (CINS/FINS) is a statewide program that serves at-risk children and families who are proactively seeking or are in need of help, prevention services which are provided by Father Flanagan's Girls and Boys Town of Central Florida for Seminole County, and which would be eliminated under the Governor's Budget proposal; and

WHEREAS, The Florida Tax Watch study found that prevention programs cost about \$12,000 a year per child, compared to \$31,000 annually per child in a locked facility; and

WHEREAS, front end screening which identifies those young people with serious service needs such as substance abuse and mental health issues that greatly influence the risk of re-offending would no longer be available; and

WHEREAS, there is an infrastructure currently in place statewide to provide consistency of services to youth charged with misdemeanors, which would be seriously compromised with the shift of responsibility for juvenile misdemeanor probation to the counties and increase the likelihood of recidivism, creating both public safety and financial resource concerns for local citizens; and

WHEREAS, the proposed shift of pre-trial detention costs to local counties and taxpayers would negatively impact funding for other public safety initiatives and quality of life projects; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioner is desirous of expressing its support of the prevention/intervention programs and the continuum of juvenile justice services currently in place in this county, and wishes to support the current level of state funding for these services

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of County Commissioners of Seminole County, Florida, requests that the Governor's Office reconsider its proposal to reduce current funding levels for CINS/FINS and misdemeanor assessments, and the elimination of misdemeanor probation and predisposition detention costs at the state level.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be forwarded to Governor Jeb Bush and the Seminole County Legislative Delegation.

ADOPTED this 25th day of March, A.D. 2003.

ATTEST

Maryann Morse, Clerk to the
Board of Commissioners
In and for the County of Seminole,
State of Florida

Daryl McLain, Chairman
Board of County Commissioners

Date_____



March 12, 2003

The Honorable Jeb Bush
Governor of Florida
PL 05 The Capitol
400 S. Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Re: State Budget Cuts to Juvenile Justice Services and
Prevention/Intervention Programs

Dear Governor Bush:

On behalf of the Board of County Commissioners, we are requesting that you reconsider the proposal to funding levels for prevention/intervention programs presently in place and the proposed elimination of juvenile misdemeanor assessments and the shifting of juvenile misdemeanor probation and predisposition detention costs to counties. Please find the attached resolution adopted by the Board of County Commissioners related to this matter.

We are very much aware of the State's budgetary problems and appreciate the difficult decisions that must be made. However, we ask that you reconsider the proposal for state budget cuts to Juvenile Justice Service and Prevention/Intervention Programs.

Thank you for your attention to our concerns.

Respectfully yours,

Daryl G. McLain, Chairman
Board of County Commissioners

DGM/cac
Attachment

Cc: Commissioner Randall Morris
Commissioner Carlton Henley
Commissioner Dick Van Der Weide
Commissioner Grant Maloy