



JUVENILE WELFARE BOARD OF PINELLAS COUNTY

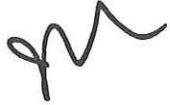
6698 68th Avenue North, Suite A □ Pinellas Park, FL 33781-5060

(727) 547-5600 □ FAX (727) 547-5610

An Equal Opportunity Employer

MEMORANDUM

TO: JWB BOARD MEMBERS

FROM: Jim Mills 

DATE: 5/5/00

RE: LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Due to a miscommunication, the April 26th report I prepared was held for the Board packet rather than being mailed directly. Sorry.

Will have a preliminary end of session report for the Board meeting on May 11th, though it will probably only capture a portion of what happened as the search of the wreckage for survivors and victims will still be underway.



JUVENILE WELFARE BOARD OF PINELLAS COUNTY

6698 68th Avenue North, Suite A □ Pinellas Park, FL 33781-5060

(727) 547-5600 □ FAX (727) 547-5610

An Equal Opportunity Employer

MEMORANDUM

TO: JWB BOARD MEMBERS

FROM: Jim Mills *JM*

DATE: 4/26/00

RE: LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

1. JWB LOCAL BILL REVISION

The bill has passed the House and has been sent to the Senate where it will go directly to the floor. No problems are anticipated in passage by that body. The bill contains the Board desired amendment to increase the membership to 11 and maintain the lay citizen majority membership (6). The conforming amendment was adopted by the House so the ambiguity of the originally committee approved version has been removed.

2. SCHOOL READINESS

The budget issues appear to be being resolved in the conference committees in a positive fashion. A \$71 Million increase for childcare should provide enough new money to offset the anticipated base reduction due to the new formula leasing plan. One of the reasons for the Pinellas reduction appears to have been our success over the years in capturing unspent/unmatched dollars from elsewhere in the state. It may well be that local matching dollars could continue to be unavailable in these other parts of the state. Additional dollars may then become available for Pinellas County capture. The operating budget for the Coalition has been approved (\$330,000) which means that the current DOE and DCF staff positions that will be engaged in Coalition implementation will continue to be in the budgets of those agencies (read, "employees") rather than the Coalition. The Education Conference Committee approved \$2 Million for local coalition grants.

The, "glitch bill," which seeks technical changes in the original legislation is proceeding without apparent problems.

3. REVENUE ENHANCEMENT

As previously reported, there are no legislative actions pending in this area. Most of the activity, such as it is, is on the administrative level. A committee amendment was introduced to the DCF Reorganization Bill that would provide state matching dollars for CSC/JWB contributions/support of the privatization (community-based care) efforts. There is no accompanying appropriation at this time. Since the legislation referred only to general statute, CSC's steps have been taken to add JWB's statutory authorization to the bill's language so that JWB may at least have an opportunity to participate should we choose to do so.

4. PRIVITIZATION (COMMUNITY BASED CARE) AND DCF REORGANIZATION

Little has changed in this legislation other than some Department generated clarifying amendments. This measure should pass, particularly in the less sweeping version that has emerged.

5. JUVENILE JUSTICE REORGANIZATION

No change. Passed Senate.

OTHER PRIORITIES

1. SPECIAL DISTRICT

No significant issues that would affect the special district status of JWB have been identified. There are proposals impacting the State Retirement fund in both the House and the Senate. These proposals relate to term for vesting, alternative investment options, benefit computation and police and fire benefits. The Senate also proposes a reduction in employer contributions, which could have a favorable budgetary impact. The two Houses are far apart and this may be a "bargaining chip" issue, which means the prospect of any thing emerging is real guesswork.

2. HEALTHY FAMILIES

No changes since your last report.

3. CHILDREN'S HEALTH

This continues to be a major struggle. Although the Healthy Kids Board has dropped its opposition to elimination of local match and a strong grass roots movement has developed supporting match elimination, resistance to any change remains stubborn. A proposal for an optional dental benefit – to be supported by local match – has emerged. The chances of local match elimination this session are not good, which should set the stage for a real struggle in 2001.

4. WAGES

The major local impact of pending WAGES legislation is the anticipated mandated merger of the WAGES Coalition Boards and the Workforce Development Boards. This is the standard organizational structure in most counties and only a few counties – Pinellas, Hillsborough among them, maintain separate Boards. The administrative support one-stops, and services are already merged through a joint funded; jointly awarded contract with Pinellas Works – a consortium of local providers headed by Lockheed-Martin.

5. CHILD CARE – See above

SWIMMING POOL SAFETY

This bill has now passed the Senate and its House companion remains on the House calendar where it has been since April 6th. The longer it remains in that state, however, the greater the concern that it will become entangled in end of the session maneuvering.

7. MEDICAID WAIVER MENTAL HEALTH

Pinellas County had briefly been amended into the House version, but has been just as quickly amended back out. On the Senate side, the bill has stalled in Committee and there is little likelihood of action this session. This was a key issue for Pinellas County as it could have added an additional upheaval right in the midst of the Privatization/Community-Based Care implementation. This will probably be an issue again next session.

8. LOCAL CHILD CARE LICENSING

The measure, which proposes a more equitable sharing of local licensing costs between local government and the state, remains alive. It is available for the general calendar for full house action and has only the Fiscal Policy Committee to pass to get to the Senate floor.