

Draft Recommendations of the Select Committee on Hurricane Response and Preparedness

Evacuations		
	Draft Recommendation	Comments
1	On October 12, 2017, Governor Scott ordered the Department of Transportation to conduct a comprehensive evaluation on ways to expedite evacuation routes on I-75 from Wildwood to the Florida-Georgia border, and report its findings in January 2018. The Legislature should review findings of the final report and address the policy recommendations as it deems appropriate.	
2	Mutual aid agreements with municipal, county and, when necessary, federal law enforcement personnel should be utilized to aid in increased law enforcement presence, traffic control, crowd control, and law enforcement response and support of evacuation needs.	
3	The Division of Emergency Management, in consultation with the Department of Transportation and the appropriate local emergency management agencies, should develop and implement a real-time, web-based evacuation route/destination resource tool to assist the public in making informed decisions relating to the selection of evacuation routes and destinations.	
4	Extend the Suncoast Parkway to the Georgia state line to provide another north-south evacuation option.	
5	Fund a statewide statistically valid behavioral analysis for use by the state, regions and local governments in planning for and undertaking evacuations.	
6	The Department of Transportation should consider improvements to key ramps on limited access facilities in developing its work plan,	
7	The Department of Transportation should conduct exercises using contraflow lanes on portions of highways it determines such operations could facilitate evacuation during a future evacuation.	
8	In community education efforts for emergency preparedness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize the effectiveness of shorter evacuation options • Note the opportunity for people in non-evacuation zones to share their suitably constructed and prepared homes with family and friends in need of shelter • Encourage communities as part of their preparation to help neighbors with their preparation including the installation of hurricane shutters. 	
9	As additional passenger rail service becomes available, Florida should incorporate its use to help evacuate citizens.	

Draft Recommendations of the Select Committee on Hurricane Response and Preparedness

Energy: Electric Utilities and Petroleum		
	Policy Recommendation	Comments
10	On October 26, 2017, Governor Scott ordered the Department of Transportation to examine options to increase fuel capacity during emergencies such as hurricanes, and report its findings in January 2018. The Legislature should review the findings of the final report and address the associated policy recommendations as it deems appropriate.	
11	The Department of Transportation should contract for an independent evaluation of the feasibility of establishing strategically located petroleum distribution centers to alleviate storm-related impacts on fuel supply and distribution throughout the state.	
12	The Department of Transportation should utilize generators at key interstate interchanges and study the use of alternative energy sources for signalized intersections.	
13	Each county should use the Homeland Security product “Guidance for Developing a Fuel Contingency Plan” to create a better county fuel plan.	
14	During a state of emergency declared by the Governor, when a dealer exhausts the dealer’s supply of the lowest grade motor fuel, authorize the dealer to sell any remaining supply of higher grade motor fuel at the same price per gallon or liter as the price the dealer charged for a gallon or liter of the lowest grade motor fuel.	
15	Consider optimizing the use of rail transport, before, during and after a Hurricane event, to facilitate delivery of automotive and diesel fuel to effected areas in the state, utilizing rail tankers and mobile fuel transfer systems moved in tandem with the tankers via rail flatbed.	
16	<p>State and local emergency operation centers should activate a dedicated emergency private sector hotline for drivers distributing fuel and other emergency cargo to use as needed in communicating with emergency management officials during a major disaster. Appropriate hotline numbers should be made available at Florida seaports to all drivers departing with critical emergency goods and supplies.</p> <p>Consider providing incentives (fuel tax reduction, etc.) to drivers and transportation companies that install common protocol GPS tracking devices, which could be activated as needed during major disasters. The tracking devices will allow for real-time reporting of vehicles’ statuses to state and local emergency management officials.</p>	
17	Consider requesting a change in dates for the crossover of seasonal fuel to alleviate the low point in fuel inventory in tanks that occurs during hurricane season.	

Draft Recommendations of the Select Committee on Hurricane Response and Preparedness

18	<p>Implement a process to ensure greater communication and cooperation between electric utilities and local emergency management officials to provide for the efficient restoration of power and to ensure electric utilities, based on their assessments of system damages, restore electric service to all customers in the most efficient manner. Emphasis should be placed on facilities identified by the local emergency management officials as critical to the public health, safety, welfare, and security. Such facilities may include: emergency management and law enforcement facilities; health care facilities; shelters; critical utility, transportation, communications, government, and military infrastructure; and providers of essential goods and services.</p>	
19	<p>Direct the Public Service Commission (PSC) to prepare a study of the efficacy and costs of all technically feasible storm hardening measures for the electric power grid. The study, at a minimum, should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take into account all available post-storm forensic data, • Identify specific storm hardening measures that are likely to be most effective at reducing the number, frequency, and duration of storm-related power outages in certain regions of the state or certain types of geographic regions, • Evaluate the cost-effectiveness of each measure. • Evaluate funding mechanisms for storm hardening projects and provide recommendations concerning the use of specific funding mechanisms, including processes for approval of funding for projects. <p>Following completion of the study, establish a state grant program to be administered by the PSC under which local governments, in conjunction with utilities, may apply for grants to partially fund specific storm hardening projects, with such applications evaluated based on the expected cost-effectiveness of the project and the extent of projected benefits to customers.</p>	
20	<p>Consider repealing the statutory exception to statewide standards for vegetation management within power line rights-of-way for local governments that adopt plans that differ from the statutory standards.</p>	
21	<p>Create under the Florida Department of Transportation a category of direct appropriations for the purpose of purchasing and deploying emergency generators at highway-railroad crossings at Principal Arterial, Minor Arterial, and Major Collector roads as defined by the department for powering highway-railroad crossing gates, signals and traffic safety warning</p>	

Draft Recommendations of the Select Committee on Hurricane Response and Preparedness

	devices to protect the public from railroad traffic operating on Florida Strategic Intermodal System rail corridors.	
	<u>Shelters and Vulnerable Populations</u>	
	Policy Recommendation	Comments
22	Consider focusing efforts to address the adequacy of shelter availability on a county rather than regional basis.	
23	To the extent practical, make information regarding shelters available several days before a storm. In addition, make information regarding which shelters will accept pets available to the public sooner.	
24	Evaluate the merits and challenges of establishing shelter assignment system(s) for evacuees by zones. The goal would be to ensure evacuees know where their primary shelters are located. The system(s) should flexible and allow secondary shelter relocations.	
25	Make state owned facilities that are capable of being quickly adapted available as shelters.	
26	Make recruitment of health care practitioners, faculty and/or medical and nursing students from state colleges and universities part of the targeted recruitment of practitioners to serve in shelters	
27	Provide an exemption for individual assessment data provided by individuals to emergency management agencies for the purpose of damage assessment. Provide an exemption for information revealing the identity of persons registering for emergency sheltering with a local emergency management agency.	
28	Provide matching funds necessary to draw a 75-percent match in federal funds through a Victims of Crime Act grant through the Office of the Attorney General to install generators at Florida’s 42 certified domestic violence centers.	
29	Provide more state assistance with shelter management training at the local level.	
30	Consider the need to fund generators for hardened public shelters to create more emergency shelter capacity that can be adapted to meet the needs of vulnerable populations.	
31	<p>Create a single statewide special needs shelter registration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require all counties to use it. • Get county input on the data collected for the registration form, so no additional local process is needed – maybe convene a work group. • Maintain registrations in a single statewide database accessible to all county EOCs and the state EOC. 	

Draft Recommendations of the Select Committee on Hurricane Response and Preparedness

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require all counties to post the eligibility criteria and registration process – including a link to the statewide registration form - on their websites. <p>Counties would continue to set shelter eligibility/exclusions to suit local capacity.</p>	
32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require hospitals to shelter people excluded from shelters for medical reasons. This assumes a statewide special needs shelter registration process, so hospitals can estimate the number of people who will shelter. Require counties to review each shelter registration to pre-determine a need for hospital sheltering, identify the appropriate sheltering hospital, and communicate that to the registrant. Require counties to establish MOUs with qualifying hospitals to shelter people, and share registrant data with them. 	
33	<p>To address special needs shelter registration and staffing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require each county and local health department to develop a resource and staffing plan for the hurricane season on an annual basis. Require licensed or contracted entities that provide home health or home and community based services (home health agencies, nurse registries, APD group homes and support coordinators, and Medicaid MCOs) to work with clients to develop individual emergency plans, updated annually, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evacuation shelter selection; documented shelter registration; and a plan for staffing the client in the shelter. Require such licensees/contractors to staff clients or groups of clients in shelters. Require APD to determine and communicate before storm impact whether DD requirements will be waived for staffing in shelters (or other settings, such as group homes taking in other clients temporarily). Authorize state employees with clinical roles (nurses, certified behavior analysts, etc.) to work in shelters. 	
	Health Care Facilities and Medical Care	
	Policy Recommendation	Comments
34	Exempt from sales and use tax the purchase of any equipment that uses natural gas or liquefied petroleum gas to generate emergency electric energy at nursing homes and	

Draft Recommendations of the Select Committee on Hurricane Response and Preparedness

	assisted living facilities. Limit the exemption to a maximum of \$30,000 for the purchase of equipment for any one facility.	
35	Amend statutes to allow the Governor’s executive order declaring a state of emergency to give greater flexibility to the Department of Health to allow providers from other states to assist in storm response and recovery, either in person or through telehealth. This would reduce the need for the Governor to issue a supplemental executive order during the storm or recovery efforts.	
36	Amend s. 465.0275, F.S., to clarify that residents of other states who may be in Florida for their medical care during a storm also are covered under the prescription refill authorization.	
37	Nursing homes should be required to provide for adequate emergency power necessary to protect their residents from unsafe temperatures. Additional requirements should be placed on assisted living facilities, taking into account differences in populations and capitalization.	
38	<p>Require facilities to share certain provisions of its emergency management plan with residents, a resident’s designated family member, legal representative or guardian. Post the information to AHCA’s consumer information website for health care facilities.</p> <p>Information to be provided may include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An overview of the facility’s emergency management plan. 2. Whether the facility is located in an evacuation zone. 3. Whether the facility intends to shelter in place or relocate to another location such as a related facility. 4. Whether the facility has the requisite emergency power source. 5. Process for sharing information with residents, a resident’s designated family member, legal representative or guardian, if the emergency plan is activated. 6. A working phone number for the facility for use by the resident’s designated family member, legal representative or guardian to make contact post-disaster. <p>The information required could be standardized and facilities would be required to update and maintain its information timely.</p>	
39	To address review and approval of facility Comprehensive Emergency Management Plans (CEMP):	

Draft Recommendations of the Select Committee on Hurricane Response and Preparedness

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require counties to submit an annual report to AHCA/DOEA on approval requests, approved Comprehensive Emergency Management Plans and timelines. • Require facilities to submit plans to the county for approval within 90 days after licensure, and notify AHCA/DOEA when plans are submitted and when approved. • Require APD approval of all its clients' plans (including those not in group homes). 	
40	<p>To address the quality of facility Comprehensive Emergency Management Plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require more specific elements to be covered in emergency plans, including specific plans for hardening and contact information, and which staff is obligated to take what actions on what pre-storm and post-storm timelines. • Require facilities to conduct annual staff training within 2 months prior to hurricane season on the policies and procedures for implementing the emergency plan, and conduct facility-wide evacuation drills at least annually. • Increase licensure inspection quality to assess compliance and the ability to implement plans, and discipline for compliance failures. • Apply these standards to developmental disability group homes, too. 	
41	<p>To address facility staffing during emergencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require emergency plans to specifically address how the facility will maintain staffing, including accommodating staff families during evacuation, etc. • Create a list of essential personnel with authority to move about during curfews and obligate state and local curfew orders to exempt them. 	
42	<p>To improve the ESF-8 data reporting system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish the reporting system in statute. • Require AHCA to create the system, in consultation with DOH, DOEA, APD and any other relevant party; transfer funds from DOH to AHCA. • Add generator information (whether the facility has a generator, fuel type, burn rate, etc.) in Florida Health Stat (the ESF-8 facility reporting system) for nursing homes, hospitals, ALFs, hospices. 	
43	<p>Exempt from sales and use tax exemption diesel fuel and propane purchased by a health care facility during a declared disaster.</p>	
44	<p>Evaluate the merits of creating an at risk registry to identify and assist in the evacuation of vulnerable individuals and patients from patient care facilities, like nursing homes and</p>	

Draft Recommendations of the Select Committee on Hurricane Response and Preparedness

	ALFs. The registry is to be under the purview of the Florida Department of Health, or designate agency	
<u>Agriculture</u>		
	Policy Recommendation	Comments
45	Consider exemptions from sales and use tax and other tax relief to address long-term economic impacts of Irma to the agricultural sector.	
46	Appropriate funds for storm and recovery related research for commercial crops grown in Florida.	
47	Continue to fund the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' (FDACS) Best Management Practices (BMP) program and consider providing supplemental funding for other FDACS programs directly tied to agriculture production fees.	
48	Consider funding the State Agricultural Response Team (SART) as well as providing funding for an organized forensic review of agricultural storm damage and identification of next steps for recovery efforts.	
49	Assist with efforts to secure post disaster supplemental funding from the U.S. Congress for Florida agriculture.	
<u>Future Hurricane Expenditures and Tax Relief</u>		
	Policy Recommendation	Comments
50	Create a reserve fund to receive regular revenue deposits to build reserves to help pay costs associated with future hurricane strikes in Florida. Monies used from the fund would be replenished over a period of years.	
51	Consider providing for ad valorem property tax abatement for homesteaded property rendered uninhabitable by Hurricanes Mathew, Hermine, or Irma.	
52	During a state of emergency, prohibit governmental entities from holding public meetings regarding budgets.	
53	Create a disaster preparedness sales tax holiday.	
<u>Housing</u>		
	Policy Recommendation	Comments
54	Create a temporary program to provide funding for affordable housing recovery efforts to address the impact of hurricanes Irma and Maria on affordable housing stocks.	

Draft Recommendations of the Select Committee on Hurricane Response and Preparedness

	<p>Fund the program through appropriations from the Local Government Housing Trust Fund and the State Housing Trust Fund to the Florida Housing Finance Corporation for purposes of providing funds to eligible entities for affordable housing recovery efforts and assisting with building and rehabilitating affordable rental housing. The program would have two components: one based on the current State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) Program and one based on the State Apartment Incentive Loan (SAIL) Program.</p> <p>Funding for each program should be targeted to counties based on a damage funding formula that takes into consideration FEMA/other (e.g., insurance) data showing the extent and intensity of damage and proportion of households impacted by Hurricane Irma, as well as counties impacted by Puerto Rican evacuees from Hurricane Maria impacts.</p>	
55	Consider ways to lower the cost of affordable housing development and incentivize more units at affordable rents.	
56	Identify incentives for local communities to purchase and redevelop trailer parks destroyed in a storm into affordable housing that meets current building codes.	
57	Direct the Department of Economic Opportunity to expedite emergency comprehensive plan approvals with local governments and the Department.	
58	Identify additional mechanisms and incentives to harden existing homes against disaster.	
	<u>Beaches, Sanitary Sewers, Stormwater, Flooding, and Debris Removal</u>	
	Policy Recommendation	Comments
59	<p>Establish in the Department of Environmental Protection a statewide voluntary program for domestic wastewater collection system assessment, investment, rehabilitation, and electric power outage mitigation planning. The program would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide regulatory incentives for utilities to implement the program. • Allow financially disadvantaged utilities to apply for grant funds to implement the program. • Allow certified utilities to demonstrate they are making the right investments to protect the public health and environment. 	
60	<p>Local governments should review current policies and consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prohibiting tree trimming and discontinuing non-containerized yard waste collection service 72 hours prior to hurricanes. 	

Draft Recommendations of the Select Committee on Hurricane Response and Preparedness

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discontinuing collection service 48 hours prior to hurricane/tropical storm. This would allow time to get solid waste management employees off the street so they can prepare for the storm and make sure materials in trucks have time to dispose of items and landfills have time to process. • Prioritizing services post storm, i.e. suspend recycling and yard waste to remove municipal solid waste as quickly as possible. • Suspending bulk pick up for a period of time after storm. • Requiring roll off containers to be covered prior to storms. 	
61	Create a way for law enforcement to recognize solid waste management workers as “second responders” with special signage; making sure they are in uniform with safety vest	
62	Identify areas where rebuilding after a disaster may be high-risk and consider options for not rebuilding in those areas, including the purchase of these properties and using them to create additional open space and natural buffers.	
63	Fund Grants through the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for vulnerability analysis to develop cost feasible mitigation strategies that could be implemented incrementally for vulnerable development areas in partnership with the federal government.	
64	Invest in plans that cost effectively mitigate flood risks to developed areas, including protection of greenways and blueways that act as flow ways or provide temporary storage during high water events.	
65	Provide priority in the distribution of state matching funds associated with Hurricane Irma for beach recovery to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Severely impacted beach management projects that leverage substantial federal cost sharing and/or local match; and 2. Consistent with the statewide Beach Management Program and Strategic Plan, feasibility studies, design and construction of new projects or other erosion control alternatives for critically-eroded segments of beach that are not part of an existing solution. 	
66	Consider long range plans to migrate critical infrastructure, like water and sewer treatment plants out of flood plains or have them hardened to prevent damage during a flood event. Establish policies to discourage investment in new facilities in flood plains unless they are hardened to avoid damage from floods.	
67	Produce a complete and accurate 3D map of the state for use in numerous emergency management and infrastructure planning applications.	

Draft Recommendations of the Select Committee on Hurricane Response and Preparedness

<u>Education</u>		
Policy Recommendation		Comments
68	Solicit federal funding for unreimbursed operating cost for facilities, social services, counseling services.	
69	Consider providing additional funding to school districts that incurred additional costs due to the influx of additional students from hurricane Maria.	
70	Consider providing financial assistance to schools systems for the purchase of generators for schools that serve as shelters.	
<u>Miscellaneous</u>		
Policy Recommendation		Comments
71	Provide financial assistance to those counties with inadequate emergency operation centers that are most vulnerable to damage and that require modernization or replacement.	
72	Direct the Division of Emergency Management to create a comprehensive volunteer database so that they can deploy volunteers quickly following disasters (i.e., nurses, doctors, people to muck out homes, etc.).	
73	Consider expanding the Volunteer Leave Law (s. 110.120, F.S.) to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include organizations in addition to the American Red Cross that are active in disaster response and recovery, • Provide administrative leave for annual training, • Extend the number of days they can volunteer. 	
74	Support and encourage the Federal Governments Integrated Public Alert and Warning System’s (IPAWS) (https://www.fema.gov/integrated-public-alert-warning-system) enhancement that is underway jointly by FEMA and the FCC.	
75	Create within the Division of Emergency Management (DEM) a real-time tracking system for all FEMA public assistance program grant requests for aid or reimbursement. The system should provide easy, online access for the public, but, at minimum, provide detailed information for an entity making application for assistance or reimbursement and provide the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance on the proper form for submission of an application for assistance • Date the application was received and any claim number assigned 	

Draft Recommendations of the Select Committee on Hurricane Response and Preparedness

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any deficiencies in the form of the application that need correction before processing • The current person/agency where the application is pending for review or approval and date it was received by that reviewer/approving authority • A good faith estimated completion date on which action will be taken by the current reviewer/approving authority • An “approval flow chart” listing the next review/approval steps and the respective agencies responsible • Date of approval (obligation of funds) and projected date for receipt of payment • Immediate notification to an applicant for any requests for additional information. <p>The program should also include sufficient data analytics to assess and report average wait times for all applications at each stage of the review/approval process by each agency so delays can be identified and corrected. If possible, the data analytics should also assist the reviewer/approver to identify any potentially fraudulent or inflated claims, as well as potential deficiencies in applications that may create delays for review/approval. Finally, data analytics should provide DEM with information to assist it and other governmental agencies to improve their own processes in hurricane recovery, as it relates to expense reimbursement and disaster assistance.</p>	
76	Amend current law relating to the system of communications and warning established as part of the state comprehensive emergency management plan to require that a qualified interpreter is included in any televised broadcast of a developing weather emergency.	
77	Consider expanding the use of the Division of Emergency Management’s Shelter Retrofit” funds provided by the Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund to include local projects to enhance emergency power generation and surveys to evaluate and resolve ADA compliance and provide for functional and access needs.	