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COUNTY BOARD, LAKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

ADJOURNED REGULAR SEPTEMBER, A.D., 2006 SESSION

NOVEMBER 14, A.D., 2006

MADAM CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNTY BOARD:

Your Revenue, Records and Legislation Committee presents herewith a Resolution presenting and requesting approval of the FFY 2008 Lake County Federal Legislative Program, and requests its adoption.

Respectfully submitted,

*Carol Spielman*  
 CHAIRMAN

VICE CHAIRMAN

*Ann B. Mare*

*David S.*

*Michael A. Gattett*

*Ed Koehler*

Revenue, Records and Legislation Committee

Aye	Nay
_____	_____
_____	_____
✓	_____
✓	_____
✓	_____
x	_____
_____	_____

## **RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, your Revenue, Records and Legislation Committee has worked to prepare a Lake County Federal Legislative Program for United States Federal Fiscal Year 2008; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed FFY 2008 Lake County Federal Legislative Program encompasses a variety of recommendations designed to upgrade the efficiency and effectiveness of county government, improvement the environment of Lake County, enhance criminal justice information flow in Lake County, and improve transportation in Lake County; and

**WHEREAS**, your Revenue, Records and Legislation Committee seeks your approval of the FFY 2008 Lake County Federal Legislative Program.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by this County Board of Lake County, Illinois, that the FFY 2008 Lake County Federal Legislative Program is hereby approved, a copy of which program is attached hereto and made part hereof; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this County Board does hereby approve and support those efforts necessary to draft, introduce, and support legislation designed to implement the objectives of this program, with those efforts to be executed by the County Administrator in coordination with the County Board Chairman and the Revenue, Records and Legislation Committee Chair; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that because of the unique and often unpredictable timing by which actions occur in Congress, the County Administrator - in coordination with the County Board Chairman and the Revenue, Records and Legislation Committee Chair - is hereby authorized and directed to take all appropriate actions regarding other legislative proposals that may impact Lake County government.

DATED at WAUKEGAN, LAKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS this 14<sup>th</sup> day of November, A.D., 2006.



## **LAKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS**

### **Federal Legislative Program for County FY2007**

As a local government, Lake County depends on both the state and federal government for authority and financial assistance to carry out its responsibilities and to effectively meet the needs of approximately 700,000 county residents.

Lake County's *Federal Legislative Program for the County FY 2007* includes recommendations on a variety of federal issues that are of significant importance at the local level. Issues are grouped by the following three categories.

- **Sponsored Initiatives** will be the primary focus of the County's legislative efforts in the coming year. Lake County will seek Congressional assistance to pursue these issues and take action when appropriate.
- **Supported Initiatives** include projects likely sponsored by other associations or agencies that are strongly supported by Lake County.
- **Monitor Statements** note Lake County's intention to evaluate some significant national issues that are of local interest, while not formally taking a position.

The success of this legislative program relies on the assistance of the Lake County Congressional delegation. The strong working relationship between the County Board and the County's Representatives and Senators is highly valued and Board Members look forward to working closely with the delegation during the coming year.

## SPONSORED INITIATIVES

**TOPIC:** Appropriations for Specialty Care and Diagnostic Testing

**ISSUE:** Specialty care consultations and diagnostic testing are critical resources for physicians when treating a patient for acute and chronic conditions, ranging from bacterial infections to ongoing management of diabetes or hypertension. However, if patients do not have any medical insurance, they often cannot afford to pay cash up front for expensive tests or consultation. Without these needed specialty consultations and tests, diagnosis can be delayed and treatment options are limited.

Therefore, funding is being sought to assist patients to pay for the specialty care consultations and diagnostic tests. Providing this assistance helps prevent patients from deteriorating to the point that they must receive care in local hospital emergency rooms, which is more costly. The funds will provide patients of the Lake County two safety net providers - HealthReach and the Lake County Health Department and Community Health Center (LDHD/CHC) with timely access to diagnostic services such as x-rays, ultrasounds, MRIs, CT scans, biopsies, cardiac stress test and referrals to specialists.

A Specialty Care and Diagnostic Testing Program has been established to assist the uninsured patients of HealthReach and LCHD/CHC with the most acute conditions. Estimated annual total cost of the program in year one is \$1.5 million to cover services for approximately 565 uninsured individuals. Administrative and clinical procedures are under development, and a dedicated fund has been established. The initiative has received a \$350,000 state grant as seed money confirmed for one year and application has been submitted for an additional two years of funding. So far donors include Health Care Foundation of Highland Park, Vista Health, Lake Forest Hospital, Highland Park Hospital and Condell Hospital. The LCHD/CHC plans to apply for funding from the Access Health Care Foundation created by the sale of Vista. Patients will also pay a portion of the fee.

The Specialty Care and Diagnostic Testing Program grew out of the Lake County Blue Ribbon Committee. This committee is a countywide group of hospital Chief Executive Officers and state legislators, who originally came together to examine issues of health care service in Lake County. The LCHD/CHC Executive

Director and Director of Primary Care Services have attended committee meetings regularly to assess health issues, and develop strategies to address the health care needs of the residents of Waukegan and its surrounding communities.

The lack of access to specialty care and diagnostic testing for uninsured residents of Lake County was identified by the Blue Ribbon Committee members as a significant barrier in the Lake County health care system. In August of 2006, a subcommittee of the Blue Ribbon Committee met to begin oversight of the development of a Specialty Care and Diagnostic Testing Program. Program development activities are proceeding in three specific areas – clinical, administrative, and financing. The unique collaboration between a public health department/federally qualified health center, legislators, private hospitals, and private foundations is a model for other Community Health Centers across the nation, and provides a strong support base for program sustainability.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Support the LCHD/CHC's request for a Federal Appropriation in Federal Fiscal Year 2008 through Senator Richard J. Durbin with assistance of the Illinois Primary Health Care Association,

**TOPIC:** Butterfield Road (County Highway 57)/IL Route 60/Canadian National Railroad Intersection Improvement – Phase I

**ISSUE:** The lack of nearby parallel arterial roadways combined with barriers to traffic circulation that are created by railroad tracks that cross within 500 feet of the intersection on IL Route 60 and Butterfield Road makes IL Route 60 a critical east-west arterial highway in southeast Lake County. In recognition of this importance, IL Route 60 has been designated part of the Strategic Regional Arterial (SRA) highway system in northeastern Illinois.

Both IL Route 60 and Butterfield Road carry heavy volumes of traffic. Butterfield Road accommodates between 15,000 and 25,000 vehicles per day (vpd) and IL Route 60 carries between 37,000 and 43,000 vpd adjacent to their intersection. Left and right turning volumes at this intersection are also extremely heavy. These heavy traffic volumes translate into low intersection Levels of Service during peak periods. The existing intersection operates at Levels of Service "D" and "E" in the A.M. and P.M. peak hours respectively with a number of movements at Level "F".

Compounding the congestion problems created by heavy traffic demands are impacts of rail operations in the area. The Wisconsin Central line which is owned by the Canadian National (CN) Railroad carries approximately six through-freight trains per day as well as switching operations between the CN Railroad and the EJ & E Railroad which intersect less than ½-mile to the north. This rail line also carries Metra Rail's North Central Service which operates 22 passenger trains per day.

**RECOMMENDATION:** It is clear that this intersection needs Phase I evaluation to determine a context sensitive solution to the increasing traffic at this intersection. The solution may include a railroad grade separation, particularly on IL Route 60, to reduce train delays. In addition, it may be necessary to grade separate the IL Route 60 and Butterfield Road intersection as well, to provide acceptable Levels of Service in the design year.

The maximum desirable at-grade improvement would consist of six travel lanes on IL Route 60 with four travel lanes on Butterfield Road, supplemented by dual left turn and single right turn lanes on all approaches. The possible need to grade separate the two highways becomes apparent through an evaluation of the Level of Service that would be provided by the "maximum" desirable at-grade intersection improvement.

The total funding needed for Phase I	\$3,000,000
Federal funds requested for FFY07	
<i>(typical federal share of 80%)</i>	\$2,400,000
Federal funds received for FYY07	\$200,000 *
<i>* pending as shown in House FFY2007 Transportation Appropriations bill</i>	

**TOPIC:** **Des Plaines Phase 2 Watershed Management Plan, Lake County, Illinois.**

**ISSUE:** The communities along the Des Plaines River have suffered considerable flood damage in the past. Flood damages currently average \$25 million a year along the upper reaches of the Des Plaines River, excluding the tributaries. Severe flooding in 1986 and 1987 caused over \$100 million in damages. These damage amounts do not include the considerable environmental damages occurring, tributary damages and the economic activity disruption damages. Also, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has projected a 26% increase in the average annual flood damages, just along the river, by the year 2010. In response to the documented flood damages, the Corps of Engineers developed a Phase 1 flood control plan that focuses on 6 structural flood control projects.

While Phase 1 will eliminate 25% of the identified existing damages along the river, there is a need for a follow-up flood control and environmental restoration project for the entire Upper Des Plaines River watershed, including the tributaries.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Water Resource Development Act of 1999 authorized construction of the Phase 1 projects and a Phase 2 feasibility study. The primary goal of the Phase 2 study is to reduce existing flood damage and prevent increases in future damages while protecting and restoring the environmental integrity and beneficial uses of the river and its tributaries. Phase 1 focused on structural solutions for damage along the river, whereas Phase 2 is a more comprehensive watershed plan, which includes tributary damages, non-structural approaches and environmental restoration projects throughout the watershed. Funding is requested to continue the development of a comprehensive, multi-agency watershed management plan that includes all the tributaries and a mainstem impact analysis.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), Lake County Stormwater Management Commission, Cook County, Illinois and Kenosha County, Wisconsin signed a project partnership and cost share agreement on February 26, 2002, which included the Project Management Plan (PMP).

A \$500,000 appropriation was included in the FFY2007 budget as proposed by the House for the Army Corps of Engineers budget. The Senate included \$1 million in their appropriation bill. Additional work will be needed when the Congress reconvenes following the November 2006 elections.

**TOPIC:** Watershed Plan Implementation Project: STAG Request

**ISSUE:** Lake County requests \$2 million to implement high priority environmental restoration, ecological enhancement, water quality improvement; and stormwater infrastructure projects identified in detailed, comprehensive watershed management plans for the Upper Des Plaines and Fox River watersheds. Specifically, in-the-ground project funding is sought for the following subwatersheds:

- Squaw Creek Watershed (Fox River),
- Sequoit Creek Watershed (Fox River),
- Fish Lake Drain Watershed (Fox River),
- Indian Creek Watershed (Des Plaines River),
- Bull Creek (Des Plaines River),

- Newport Creek (Des Plaines River), and
- Upper Des Plaines River Watershed.

These seven watersheds have experienced flood damage along with degraded water quality and habitat due to urbanization and agricultural activity. Development pressure is increasing in all seven watersheds with potential to exacerbate the current flooding, water quality, and other problems in each watershed while also negatively impacting natural resources.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Comprehensive watershed plans have been completed for Squaw Creek, Sequoit Creek, Fish Lake Drain and Indian Creek. Plans are nearing completion for Bull Creek and Newport Creek. These plans include:

1. Identification of flooding problems, a water quality assessment and natural resource inventory;
2. Locally supported, site-specific action plan that identifies in-the-ground solutions to remedy current watershed problems; and
3. Programmatic recommendations that can be applied throughout the watershed to prevent future problems from occurring.

Current watershed management plans identify site-specific structural and non-structural solutions and eco-system restoration projects to remedy existing degradation. These projects will improve water quality and habitat while enhancing stormwater management and infrastructure for each of the above listed watersheds. Lake County requests federal funds to implement the highest priority projects recommendations in each of the watersheds

**TOPIC:** Squaw Creek/Round Lake Drain Section 206 Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Project

**ISSUE:** Round Lake Drain (RLD) is a relatively small tributary to Squaw Creek that flows westward from the northwest corner of Round Lake to its confluence with Squaw Creek, where the RLD flows into the southern end of Long Lake. The total length of the RLD is approximately 13,000 feet (or about 2.5 miles). The Squaw Creek watershed is characterized by numerous small lakes, streams and wetland areas, typical of the glacially-shaped terrain of northern Lake County. The ecosystems that developed, and the plants and animals present, were strongly influenced by this geo-glacial terrain. However, the natural character of these ecosystems has



been degraded significantly over the last few centuries, due to development by humans. Much of the development in the Squaw Creek watershed has taken place along the RLD subwatershed, and thus most interest has been focused on that subwatershed. Observations of this stream/subwatershed have shown that the vegetation along most of the streambank is not natural and must be replaced to reestablish a reasonably natural system. Some of the stream reaches have been straightened and channelized, and should be re-meandered to restore a natural setting. Also, there are reaches of severe bank erosion, reaches that contain trash and debris and numerous degraded wetlands. All of these features can be considered as evidence of ecosystem degradation and of the need for ecosystem restoration.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The in-the-ground projects resulting from the Squaw Creek CAP 206 Study will be multi-objective wetland and floodplain restoration projects. These multi-objective projects are the most cost-effective manner to enhance natural resources by restoring habitat and improving water quality. In addition to the ecosystem benefits, the projects may also have some limited positive effects on flooding along Round Lake Drain.

A soft earmark was included in the Senate appropriation for the Army Corps of Engineers.

**TOPIC:** Slocum Watershed Management Plan, Lake County, Illinois

**ISSUE:** Critical components of the infrastructure are failing, especially the outlet drainage way for this whole watershed. Very little coordination is occurring among the watersheds' local governments and other agencies. Guidance to the local governments is needed to achieve a coordinated, prioritized and systematic approach to benefit the whole watershed.

**RECOMMENDATION:** This proposal addresses the long-term goals and service needs of the County and is a logical first step in responding to the projected growth in demand for services and infrastructure functions. It strives to meet the County Board Goals of Planned, Balanced Growth through Effective Stormwater Management and Natural Resource Protection and Enhancement. A relatively small investment in this proposed project would result in large returns, including access to federal and state grants, expanded assessment revenues and the efficient utilization and coordination of other public funds. If funded, local governments in the watershed will

be asked to contribute a total of \$30,000 in cash and contribute in other ways.

**TOPIC:** Countywide Wetland Preservation and Restoration Plan

**ISSUE:** The 2002 Lake County Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan identified a need for a plan to identify wetland preservation and restoration projects countywide as a multi-objective method to reduce flood damages and improve water quality. Although Lake County has a comprehensive wetland inventory dating to 1992, we lack a countywide plan identifying wetlands needing preservation and/or restoration as a way to reduce flood damages, improve water quality, and protect high quality natural resources. We need to preserve and restore our remaining wetland resources since the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission projects a 63% increase in population in the Des Plaines River watershed from 1990 to 2030, a 68% increase in households, and a 102% increase in employment. Lake County lost over 42% (38,000 acres) of its wetlands since settlement. The new development pressure has the potential to exacerbate flooding, degrade water quality, and negatively impact wetland resources.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The first step towards addressing the problem is to prepare a countywide Wetland Preservation and Restoration Plan. We seek to determine the highest quality wetlands to preserve and, for wetlands that are already preserved through conservation easements or deed restrictions, the best ones to restore as a multi-objective method to reduce flood damages and improve water quality. We expect the plan promulgation process will: (1) examine the county's remaining wetland resources and their potential flood damage reduction, water quality functions, and natural resource value, (2) use county database information to identify areas that continue to experience flood damages, (3) identify those wetlands that should be preserved or restored, and (4) develop a prioritized list of these resources that can be used by SMC, other agencies, and local groups to implement projects.

**TOPIC:** Integrated Criminal Justice Information System

**ISSUE:** Lake County requests \$5 million to assist with the implementation of a multi-year technology plan to integrate the computer networks of all of the police departments in Lake County with each of the County's criminal justice departments and to provide a universal interface with the State of Illinois.

Over the past four years, Lake County has lead a very significant coordination effort resulting in Lake County criminal justice agencies and Lake County local law enforcement departments to sign off on the Integrated Justice Implementation Architecture and Planning Document. This interagency support and commitment to a common path for criminal justice integration separates Lake County from others and provides the opportunity to truly be a "model" for integrated criminal justice information systems in the State of Illinois.

Funding will be used over the next several years to assist in the integration of each of the County's criminal justice departments and the municipal police computer networks in Lake County. An integrated justice system will improve the quality of programs through interdepartmental data accuracy assurance, redefined workflows, and expanded tracking systems. Additionally, integrated justice systems will enhance a police department's timely access to information, including an suspect's past and pending charges. A second phase of this project will provide a universal interface between Lake County criminal justice agencies, the State of Illinois, neighboring counties, and the State of Wisconsin.

Lake County was very pleased to receive \$300,000 in federal support for this project in FY04. In addition to this federal assistance, by the close of 2006, Lake County will have spent roughly \$5.2 million in County funds and thousands of man-hours on the Integrated Justice project. In 2005, Lake County made significant enhancements to the Circuit Clerk system so that it can integrate seamlessly with other justice information systems. In 2006, Lake County will accomplish the following:

- Complete a case management systems for the State's Attorney's Office;
- Develop a proof of concept project with the City of Waukegan to facilitate integration with the court system;
- Begin work on the implementation of a Public Defender system;
- Begin work on upgrading the Court Administrator's system;
- Begin work on the implementation of a new Jail system; and
- Begin work on the implementation of a Law Enforcement Records Management System.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Additional assistance is needed to complete the systems and realize all of its benefits. A soft earmark was included in the House appropriation for Law Enforcement Technology.

Future federal assistance will enable the County further integrate its justice information systems along with acquiring new information management systems, including:

- A Law Enforcement Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System; and
- Electronic field entry of tickets and forms by Police Officers.

## SUPPORTED INITIATIVES

**TOPIC:** Community Development Block Grant Funding

On February 7<sup>th</sup> of this year, the Bush Administration proposed a “*Strengthening America’s Communities Grant Program*” that originally included a 50% reduction in CDBG Program funding (currently at \$4.7 Billion dollars nationwide), the consolidation of 17 other federally funded programs, and the transfer of a number of Department of Housing and Urban Development programs to the Commerce Department. Proposed elimination or consolidation of previous housing and community development programs currently under HUD to the Commerce Department’s economic development programs would result in a drastic shift in philosophical funding priorities that may be an enormous nationwide detriment to continued housing and community development programs. HUD is designed to support local communities and urban interests along with providing direct assistance for low and moderate-income residents. The Commerce Department is designed to support economic growth, business interests and corporate needs.

Current workout sessions indicate that pending CDBG programs could face a 6–8% decrease in this year’s final budget allocations. The proposed transfer of the CDBG Program to the Commerce Department received a lot of opposition and, reportedly, will not be implemented this coming fiscal year. However, as expected, should the “*Strengthening America’s Communities*” initiative remain throughout coming annual future federal budget proposals, Lake County may no longer receive CDBG funding (and could possibly lose its HOME Investment Partnership Program funding)

for its housing and community development projects that principally assist its low and moderate income Lake County residents, including additional CDBG Programs for residents in the Cities of Waukegan and North Chicago.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Continued strong support is needed for continued or increased housing and community development program funding, and in particular maintaining the Community Development Block Grant Program in the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. A wide spectrum of support has manifested to preserve and enhance the program, including the US Conference of Mayors (USCM), the National League of Cities (NLC), the National Association of Counties (NACo), the National Association of County and Community Economic Development (NACCED), the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO), the National Community Development Association (NCDA), and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC).

**MONITOR STATEMENTS**

**TOPIC:** Limits on Mercury Emissions and Other Hazardous Pollutants

**ISSUE:** A recently released NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) study demonstrates that Lake Michigan contains the heaviest load of mercury of all the Great Lakes, the majority of which is generated by coal-fired power plants close to the Lake Michigan shoreline.

Once mercury falls into waterways, it is converted by bacteria into a potent form called methylmercury that becomes more concentrated and dangerous as it moves up the food chain. Infants and young children are particularly vulnerable to methylmercury because their nervous systems still are developing. Although fish are considered good sources of protein and, in some species, beneficial fatty acids, women of childbearing age, pregnant women and children as old as 15 are advised to limit how much they eat.

Under a new EPA rule adopted in March 2005, the "Clean Air Mercury Rule", utilities will have until at least 2018 to reduce mercury emissions by 70 percent. Power plants with high emissions will be able to buy credits from cleaner plants to avoid or delay installing pollution controls. This credit-exchange system does little to curb pollution in Illinois and other states with high

emissions if polluters are permitted in such states to continue buying pollution credits.

More broadly, a wider spectrum of hazardous pollutant emissions is regulated by the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts; nonetheless, such toxins likewise remain environmentally persistent and continue to pose risks to humans.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Lake County supports legislation allowing power companies and other industrial polluters in states with high emissions to sell pollution credits while prohibiting them from buying pollution credits in order to continue releasing mercury into the air. More broadly, Lake County supports enhancements to the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts to protect the public from the wide spectrum of hazardous air- and water-borne pollutants