



February 10, 2012

The Honorable John Wood, Chairman
House Health and Human Services Quality Sub-committee
214 The Capitol
404 S. Monroe Street,
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

Re: House Bill 1263-Health Department Reorganization.

**BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

Alan Brock
Chairman, District 1

Randy Merritt
Vice-Chairman, District 2

Mike Stewart
District 3

Jerry Moore
District 4

Lynn Artz
District 5

J. David Edwards
County Administrator

Heather J. Encinosa
County Attorney
(850) 224-4070

Dear Representative Wood

First of all, it was a pleasure meeting you last week at the Florida Association of Counties (FAC) annual Legislative Day reception. I enjoyed our discussion and look forward to future opportunities to discuss with you issues that affect the citizens that we represent.

The purpose of this letter, which I am writing on behalf of the Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners, is to express our concerns to the strike-all amendment to House Bill 1263 which reorganizes and shifts the operating costs of the local health departments to the counties. This amendment would be a significant unfunded mandate for all county governments.

Wakulla County is a fiscally constrained county and in a Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern (RACEC). One mill in Wakulla County generates less than a million dollars in ad valorem revenue. As a result, with a millage rate of 8.5000 Wakulla County's annual ad valorem receipts are less than \$10 million dollars. Additionally, for the last 4 years, through annual budget and staffing reductions the county has been able to reduce operating costs 10.9% below FY06/07 funding levels while maintaining the same levels of service. To compound this budget situation, the proposed November 2012 Property Tax ballot initiative, if successful, will further hinder our County's ability to meet the needs of our citizens.

The proposed amendment would increase operational costs on the County's stressed General Fund by approximately \$1.8 million. This would make Health Department needs directly compete with other essential county services such as public safety programs that include fire, emergency medical services, and our Sheriff's Department.

County Administration
Post Office Box 1263
Crawfordville, FL 32326
(850) 926-9500
(850) 926-9006 FAX

February 10, 2012

Page 2

We respectfully urge you to vote again this amendment as it is an unfunded mandate to county governments. If you have any questions or comments concerning Wakulla County's position on this matter, please contact David Edwards, Wakulla County Administrator (dedwards@mywakulla.com) or Tim Barden, Deputy County Administrator (tbarden@mywakulla.com).

Sincerely,



Alan Brock

Chairman, Wakulla County Board of Commissioners

Cc: Wakulla County Legislative Delegation

Board of Commissioners

David Edwards, County Administrator

Heather Encinosa, County Attorney

Padraic Juarez, Wakulla County Health Department Director

John Wayne Smith, Florida Association of Counties