

Rudolph F. Crew, Ed.,D., Superintendent of Schools

**SUBJECT: ADOPT A LEGISLATIVE POSITION ON PROPERTY TAXES FOR  
THE SPECIAL SESSION – JUNE 12-22, 2007**

**COMMITTEE: INNOVATION, EFFICIENCY & GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS**

**LINK TO DISTRICT**

**STRATEGIC PLAN: ESTABLISH GREATER ALLIANCE WITH LEGISLATIVE  
BODIES**

Unable to resolve major differences between the Senate and House proposals on property tax relief, Senate President Ken Pruitt and House Speaker Marco Rubio decided to have a Special Session on property tax relief. Although there is agreement that Floridians need tax relief, the two bodies and the Governor were not able to agree on how to structure the new tax system and how much tax relief would be provided during the regular session. The Special Session is scheduled for June 12-22, 2007.

School districts in Florida rely on property taxes to fund operating and capital needs. Since fifty-one percent of Miami-Dade County Public Schools' operation is reliant on local property taxes, the impact to the quality of education in our community could be catastrophic if overall funding is drastically reduced. Further, the Five-Year Capital Plan is dependent on the local funds generated from the 2-mill property tax levy.

The Florida House of Representatives' proposal would have eliminated the property tax altogether and replaced it with a 2.5 cent increase in sales tax, while the Florida Senate proposed property tax rollback of rates for cities and counties to the 2005-2006 levels. The two chambers differed on how deep the tax cuts should be and how to replace the lost revenues to local governments. In the last days of session, the Governor weighed in with his proposal doubling the homestead exemption for homesteaded property. The parties generally agree on providing a tax reduction for tangible personal property. The proposals for renters and portability remained substantially different.

Therefore, it is imperative the funding for school districts be held harmless and any reduction in funding from property is replaced with an alternative, stable, recurring, and long-term revenue source that is not sensitive to economic downturns.

**RECOMMENDED:** That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, support property tax relief and advocate that school district funding be held harmless and that any reduction in funding for public education K-12 be replaced with an alternative, stable, recurring, and long-term funding source.

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