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The Legislature: A Tool for Special District Funding and Improved Operations

Chris Lyon - June 2, 2022

Local Bills/Special Acts

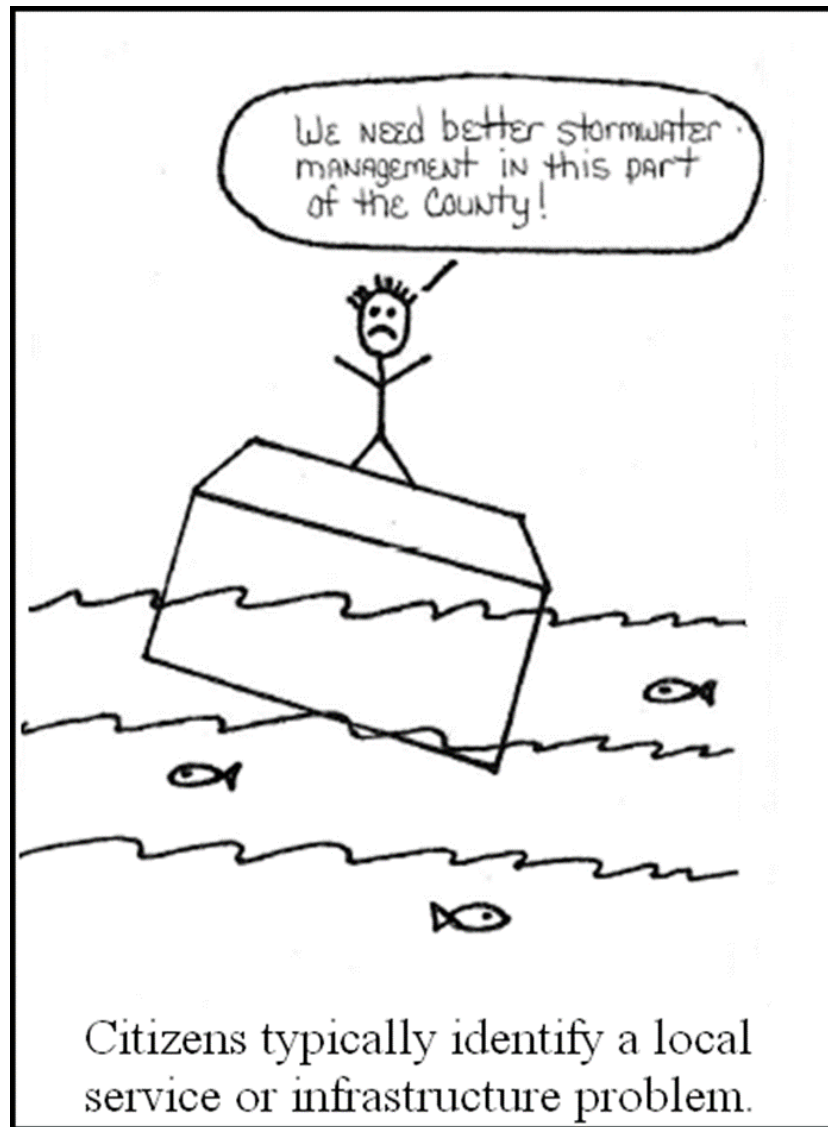
- ▶ Applies to an area or group less than total population of state
- ▶ Different requirements than general bills
- ▶ If your district was created by special act, it can only be amended by special act

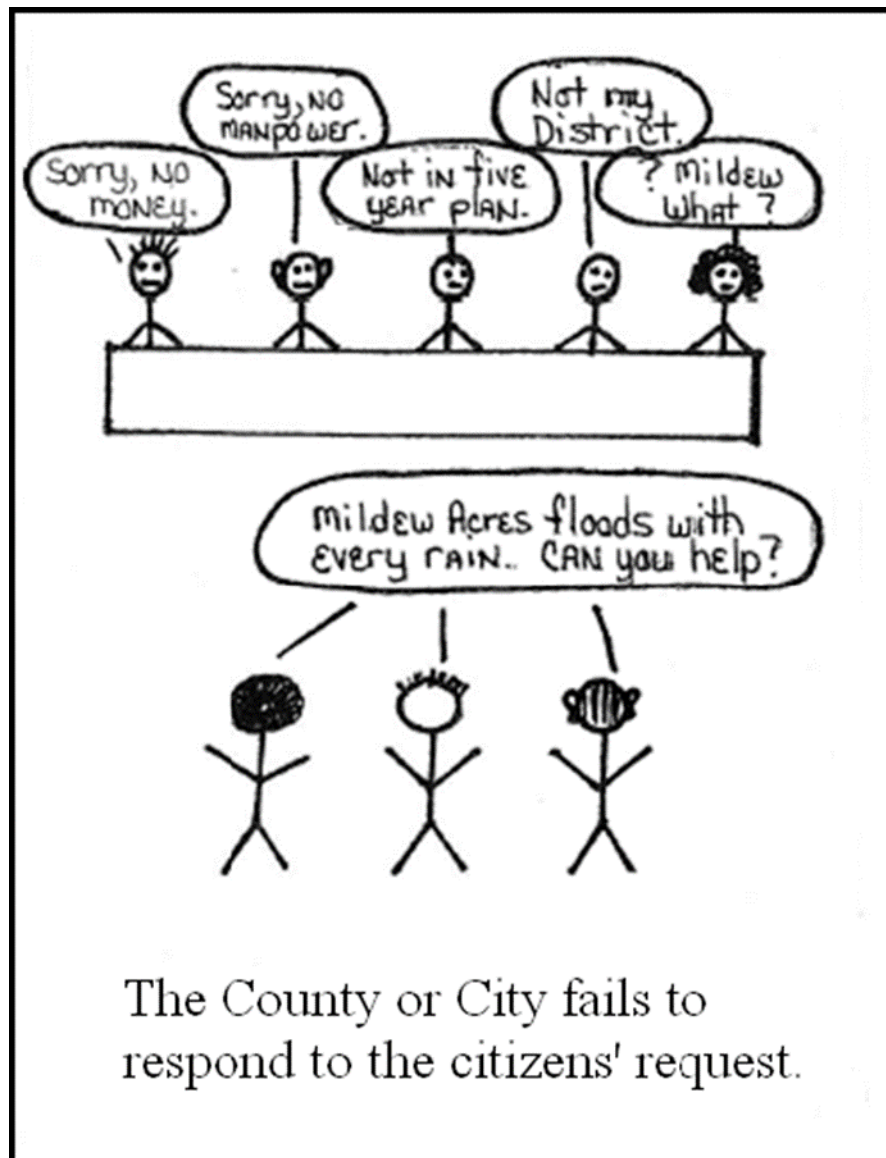


Local Bill Requirements

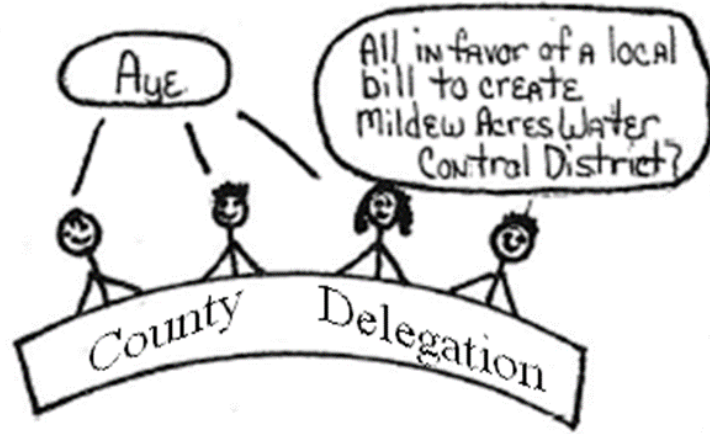
- ▶ Delegation Approval
- ▶ Publication of Notice of Intent to Seek Legislation or Referendum to be Effective
- ▶ Senate sponsor not required unless local bill affects more than 2 counties
- ▶ 3/5 vote of both Chambers if exception to general law
- ▶ If not exception, local bills approved by House on Local Bill Calendar (aka Consent Calendar)
- ▶ Once passed by House, a single Senator from the delegation, by rule, may remove a local bill from the Local Bill Calendar











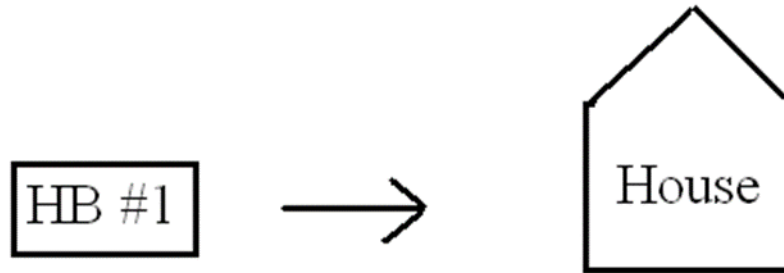
Local delegation approves
sponsoring local bill.



Legal notice section
Palm Beach Post

Per the Florida Constitution, unless a referendum is included, notice of intent to seek legislation must be published in a newspaper of general circulation within 30 days before a bill can be introduced to the Legislature.





The bill is filed in House prior to Legislative Session. A Senate companion bill is not necessary.





Local and
Federal
Affairs
Committee

The bill is referred by The Speaker
to appropriate House Committees.







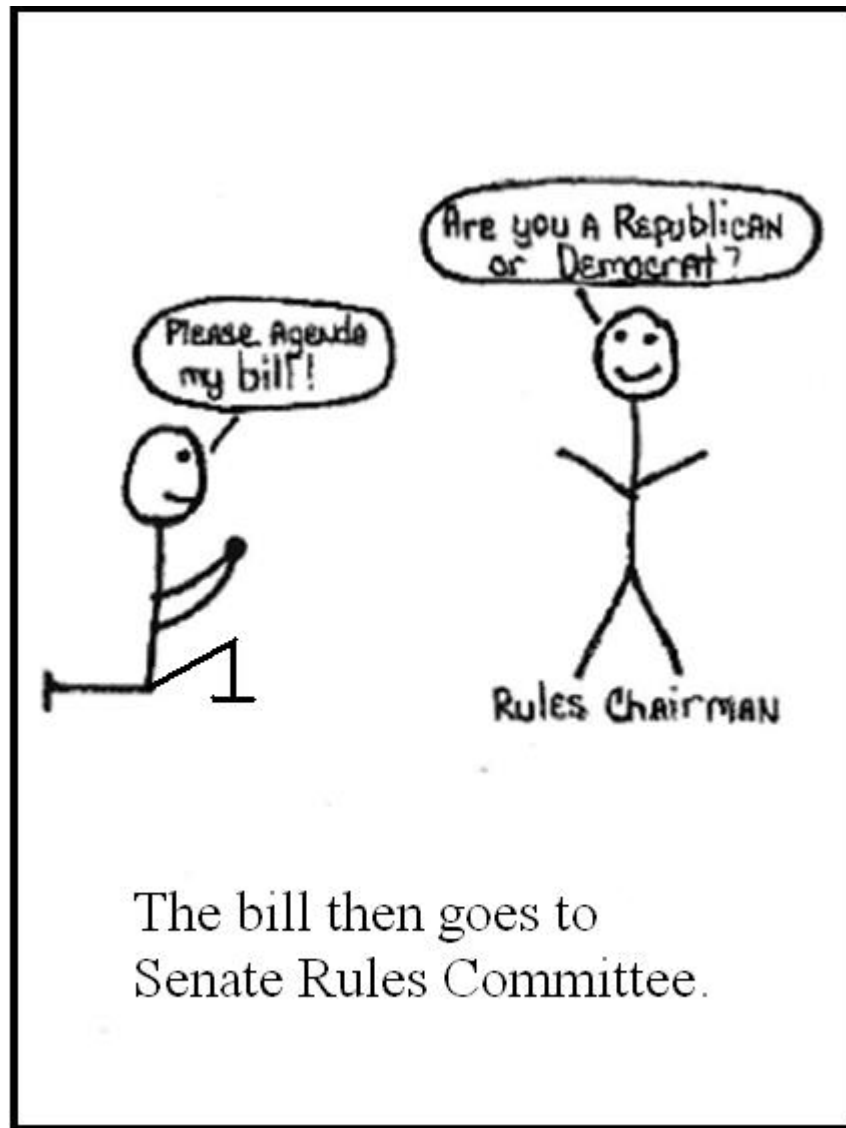
The bill is approved in committee.





The bill goes to the Full House
on the local bill calendar





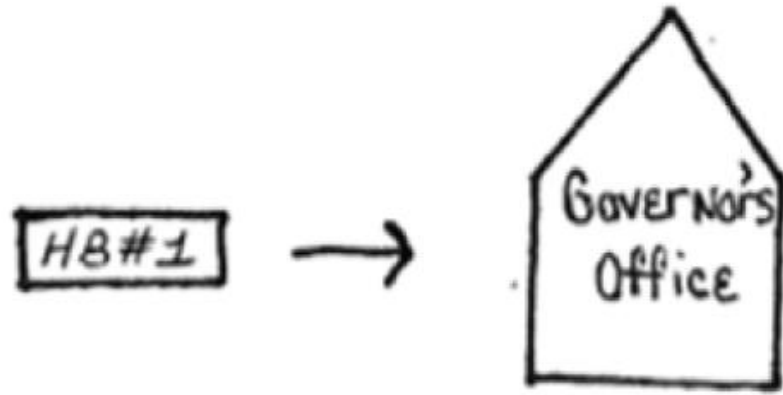
The bill then goes to
Senate Rules Committee.





If approved by the Senate, the bill is engrossed, enrolled and sent to the Governor.





Bill is presented to the Governor.
If the bill is not vetoed within 15 days (7 days if the Legislature is still in Session), it becomes law without his signature. He may also sign it into law.



Fundamentals for Local Bills

- ▶ Acquaint yourself with all local Delegation Members.
 1. www.myfloridahouse.gov
 2. www.flsenate.gov
- ▶ During off-season make appointments and introduce yourself and your district to your Senators and Representatives.



Fundamentals continued...

- ▶ Invite your legislators for a facility tour.
- ▶ During campaign season, offer to host “meet and greet” events or walk precincts.



Understand the Local Bill Legislative Process

- ▶ How an idea becomes a law
 - ▶ Discuss your request with your representatives at least 5 or 6 months prior to the beginning of session (if possible).
 - ▶ Present your request at the delegation meetings but brief members individually beforehand.



Understand the Local Bill Legislative Process continued...

- ▶ Committee referrals are important!
 - ▶ Make your desire for minimal committee references known to your sponsors.
- ▶ Legislative Staff are important!
 - ▶ Elected official's staff should know you.
 - ▶ Committee staff should also know you.



2022 Local Bill Stats

- ▶ 46 local bills filed
 - ▶ 21 related to independent special districts
 - ▶ 15 modified charters
 - ▶ 5 created new districts
 - ▶ 1 dissolved existing district
 - ▶ 17 passed = 80%
 - ▶ 15 hired lobbyists = 88%



Appropriations (\$\$\$)



Appropriations Process

- ▶ An annual budget is the only bill the Legislature is constitutionally required to pass each Session.
- ▶ State's fiscal year is July 1 - June 30
- ▶ FY 2022-2023 = \$112.1 billion
 - ▶ Agencies submit budget requests in October
 - ▶ Governor must issue budget recommendations at least 30 days before Session begins
 - ▶ Senate and House committees create budgets
 - ▶ Each chamber passes a budget



Appropriations Process (cont'd)

- ▶ Conference committees appointed to negotiate differences
- ▶ Both chambers must pass identical budgets
- ▶ Governor has line-item veto authority over budget



Appropriations for Special Districts

- ▶ Legislators must request funding for individual projects
 - ▶ House requests must be filed as a bill
 - ▶ 1,729 House Appropriations Bills filed in 2022
 - ▶ Only 13 by independent special districts
 - ▶ Independent Special District Projects in 2022-2023 Budget (\$9.81 million total):
 - ▶ Water Projects
 - ▶ \$4.06 million - Lehigh Acres Municipal Services Improvement District*
 - ▶ \$2.5 million - Englewood Water District*
 - ▶ \$312,500 - South Indian River Water Control District
 - ▶ \$40,000 - Hobe-St. Lucie Conservancy District
 - ▶ Local Government Fire Service
 - ▶ \$1.5 million - Holley-Navarre Fire District (Station 44)
 - ▶ \$900,000 - Ocean City-Wright Fire Control District* (Station and Training Ground)
 - ▶ \$500,000 - Lealman Special Fire Control District* (Ladder Truck)

*Hired lobbyists



Appropriations for Special Districts

- ▶ Does hiring a lobbyist improve your chances?
 - ▶ 6 of 13 districts seeking appropriations hired lobbyists = 46%
 - ▶ 4 of 7 successful districts hired lobbyists = 57%
 - ▶ Of \$9.81 million total, \$7.96 million represented by lobbyists = 81%



LOBBYIST



What society thinks I do



What my mom thinks I do



What politicians think I do



What clients think I do



What I think I do



What I really do

quickmeme.com





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