



Oppose Repeal of Rate Exemption for County Health Departments

A provision in the Senate Department of Health Conforming Bill (CS/SB 1662, pg 2, line 34) repeals County Health Departments' (CHDs) exemption from rate control (s. 216.262(1), F.S.). Imposing rate on CHDs will cripple their ability to meet the health needs of their communities by significantly impeding their capacity to create new positions and appropriately compensate health care professionals.

Florida is unique in that our CHDs work in partnership with both state and county government. Florida's public health system is recognized as one of the best in the nation. Much of this success is due to a centralized administrative system but decentralized priority setting process that primarily takes place at the county and community level.

Key Points

- CHDs are not fully state funded. Positions and programs within the Departments are funded with local and federal dollars, as well funding from private foundations. Only 30% of CHD's estimated revenues are funded with state general revenue.
- In many instances, local governments provide funding to their CHDs to fund programs and positions for local priorities. These local priorities may require additional staff.
- CHDs are often the recipients of local and federal grants, which frequently require additional staff.
- Under rate, CHDs will have a fixed number of positions and will not be able, or will be severely limited in their ability, to create new positions to meet community health needs.
- Rate requires that vacant positions revert to the minimum salary for the position grade. This will make it nearly impossible to hire professional staff such as doctors, nurses, and dentists since starting salaries in state government for these position grades are not competitive.
- Rate will impose additional administrative costs and workload at a time when the demand for CHD services is increasing.

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