

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
COUNTY OF CENTRE
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

RESOLUTION 4 Of 2017

A resolution of the County of Centre, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, opposing proposed FY 2017-2018 state funding cuts for key human services and criminal justice programs in House Bill 218.

WHEREAS, counties provide crucial human services that protect the most vulnerable individuals, such as child welfare and protective services, mental health, intellectual disabilities, substance abuse treatment, homeless assistance, meal programs, lottery funded transportation, and others; and

WHEREAS, counties continually seek innovative approaches in the delivery of those services, such as the Human Services Block Grant model, which affords the opportunity to tailor available dollars to specific local needs with better outcomes for both client and taxpayer; and

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania leads the nation in the adoption and implementation of criminal justice system reforms and best practices, such as diversion, behavioral health services, and the Justice Reinvestment I and II initiatives; and

WHEREAS, the budget proposal amended into House Bill 218, Printer's Number 1236 contains sweeping cuts in funding for criminal justice, human services, and administrative programs that counties perform on the Commonwealth's behalf, amounting to millions of dollars; and

WHEREAS, under House Bill 218, these cuts would be significant and devastating to counties, including the following line-items specific to Centre County:

- Juvenile probation - \$114,046 (100%)
- Adult probation - \$125,000 (100 %)
- Intermediate punishment programs - \$142,029 (100%)
- Senior judge reimbursement - \$12,552 (100%)
- Court interpreter county grants - \$75,000 (100 %)
- County court reimbursement - \$28,000 (15%)
- Jurors cost reimbursement - \$3,000 (15%)
- Human Services Development Fund - \$13,000 (15%)
- Homeless Assistance - \$53,000 (15 %)
- Mental Health Services - \$100,000 (15%)
- Emergency Management Performance Grant Program - \$116,833 (100%)

WHEREAS, these cuts will affect Centre County's ability to administer restorative justice programs and to support other critical court related and human services programs; and

WHEREAS, these cuts will cause inmate populations to swell, decrease public safety, and result in a lack of uniformity in the provision of justice across the state; and

WHEREAS, the proposal argues that savings are to be had in reinventing government, but the cuts in House Bill 218 run exactly opposite to that objective, wholly dismantling successful initiatives already in place, reversing the significant and documented gains made by the commonwealth and counties, and thwarting investment in any new innovations as counties focus just on meeting minimum service delivery thresholds; and

WHEREAS, the eliminated funds and funding reductions do not come with relief for any mandates, nor do they reduce caseloads;

WHEREAS, the proposed cuts eliminates opportunities for local municipalities to receive match funding for disaster relief efforts; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Centre County remains committed to the important role we play in delivery of services to and safety of our communities; and


RESOLVED, that Centre County stands ready to work in partnership with the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania in support of counties' top priority for 2017, human services funding and system reform; and

RESOLVED, that Centre County calls upon the General Assembly and the Administration to meet their full responsibility to counties as their service delivery partners, and ultimately to their citizens most in need, in the FY 2017-2018 state budget; and


RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Centre County legislative delegation, to Governor Wolf, and to the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania.

ADOPTED by the Board of Commissioners of the County of Centre of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, this 16th day of May 2017.

CENTRE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Michael Pipe, Chair



Mark Higgins, Commissioner



Steven G. Dershem, Commissioner

ATTEST:


Natalie Corman, Deputy Administrator