



Agenda Item Summary

File ID: 21-0412

DEPT-7

Meeting Date: 9/14/2021

PLACEMENT: Departmental

TITLE:

APPOINTMENT OF A COUNTY COMMISSIONER TO THE FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES (FAC) ACCESS 67 INITIATIVE TO IMPLEMENT A FULL APPROACH TO DELIVER HIGH-SPEED, RELIABLE, AND AFFORDABLE BROADBAND INTERNET TO ALL FLORIDIANS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Board is asked to appoint a County Commissioner and a County staff person who will assist the County in matters related to the ACCESS 67 Broadband Initiative recently created by the FAC.

DEPARTMENT: Administration

PREPARED BY: **Name:** Donna Gordon

Title: Executive Aide

REQUESTED BY: Taryn Kryzda, County Administrator

PRESET:

PROCEDURES: None

BACKGROUND/RELATED STRATEGIC GOAL:

This is an Additional Item as the letter was received after the Draft Agenda was released.

Over the past few years, the Florida Association of Counties (FAC) and various partners have worked diligently to address the Digital Divide that exists across the State of Florida. FAC recognizes that the lack of broadband access limits Florida's counties in delivering public safety, healthcare, economic development, and education. Last year, FAC launched the **ACCESS 67 Initiative** to implement a comprehensive approach to empower our members to develop solutions to address the impacts of the lack of access to critical telecommunication and information technology resources in Florida communities.

During the 2021 summer, the FAC announced the creation of the **Presidential Select Committee on Broadband** (Select Committee) at the FAC Annual Conference in Orlando. The Select Committee is focused on eliminating the Digital Divide in Florida by implementing a comprehensive approach to deliver high-speed, reliable, and affordable Broadband Internet to all Floridians. The Select Committee will coordinate FAC's ACCESS 67 Initiative to:

- Advocate for the adoption and implementation of state and federal policies that contribute to

the development of solutions that address the lack of access in our local communities.

- Collaborate with key stakeholders who share a common goal in developing solutions to address the lack of access in our local communities.
- Educate our members with local solutions by sharing best practices among Florida's counties and similar communities and organizations from around the country.

The FAC is requesting each county to appoint a County Commissioner with the support of County staff to serve as its **County Champion** for Broadband. *County Champions* will be the point person to assist the Select Committee and FAC in advocating, collaborating, and educating on Broadband policy for solutions and best practices. Attached is the FAC's Call to Action letter - that outlines the set of actions that the Select Committee has discussed. FAC requests full participation in this major policy priority.

The Select Committee aims to have **67 County Champions** as soon as possible to coordinate each county's response to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity's Office of Broadband on critical broadband assets, infrastructure, and planning as well as steer future advocacy efforts of FAC.

ISSUES:

Appoint a Commissioner to the Florida Association of Counties ACCESS 67 Initiative.

The County Administrator is recommending Michael Merker, Chief Information Officer, as the staff person who will assist the County in matters related to the Initiative.

LEGAL SUFFICIENCY REVIEW:

None

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

RECOMMENDATION

Move that the Board appoint a County Commissioner and Michael Merker to the ACCESS 67 Initiative.

ALTERNATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

Direct staff accordingly.

FISCAL IMPACT:

RECOMMENDATION

None

ALTERNATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

None

DOCUMENT(S) REQUIRING ACTION:

- ☐ Budget Transfer / Amendment ☐ Chair Letter ☐ Contract / Agreement
☐ Grant / Application ☐ Notice ☐ Ordinance ☐ Resolution
☐ Other:

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