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Memorandum

From: Jane Sargent, Mike Abrams, Rick Spees, Nick Falvo, and Jose Villalobos

To: Chairman Joe A. Martinez
Board of County Commissioners

CC: Joe Rasco

Date: February 3, 2012

Subject: January 2012 Monthly Report

State of the Union:

On January 24, President Obama delivered his State of the Union address before a joint session of Congress. In his speech, he broadly outlined a number of proposals on job creation, education, energy and taxes. An overview of the President's initiatives is included below. Over the next several weeks, the Obama Administration will be releasing more details about these proposals.

Congress will likely agree to some of his initiatives, such as an extension of the Social Security payroll tax cut. However, many others, including new taxes and immigration reform, are not expected to be enacted this year.

The President will implement some of his initiatives through Executive Branch actions that do not require Congressional approval, including creating a new Financial Crimes Unit to investigate fraud, promoting shale gas development, and establishing a new Federal trade enforcement unit to stop unfair trade practices.

In the State of the Union address, the President proposed to:

Manufacturing and Job Creation:

- Eliminate the deduction for outsourcing, make companies pay a minimum tax for profits and jobs overseas, and reward companies for bringing jobs back to the U.S. .
- Lower tax rates for companies that manufacture and create jobs in the U.S.

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- Create a new trade enforcement unit to crack down on unfair trade practices.
- Create more jobs and make the U.S. more competitive by investing in infrastructure projects, including high speed rail, using half of the savings from ending the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Education and Job Training:

- Create new partnerships between community colleges and businesses to train and place 2 million skilled workers.
- Reform job training and Unemployment Insurance and create one website that dislocated workers can use to help them find job services and training opportunities.
- Create a new competitive program that challenges States and school districts to work with their teachers to reform the teaching profession and attract, prepare, support, and reward good teachers.
- Urge states to require that all students stay in high school until they graduate or turn 18.
- Double work-study jobs and permanently extend the American Opportunity Tax Credit that provides up to \$10,000 for four years of college.
- Shift some Federal aid away from colleges that do not keep tuition down.
- Called on Congress to stop the interest rate on subsidized Stafford student loans from doubling on July 1.
- Committed to passing comprehensive immigration reform;
- Create a new Veterans Job Corps to provide communities funding to hire veterans as cops and firefighters and work to rebuild and enhance our parks and natural resources.
- Secure equal pay for equal work.
- Reform regulations and expand tax relief to startups and small businesses.
- Committed to funding research and development.

Energy:

- Promote safe, responsible development of natural gas to create jobs while ensuring public health and safety.
- Directed the Administration to ensure safe shale gas development by moving forward with new rules to require disclosure of the chemicals used in fracking operations on public lands.
- Incentivize manufacturers to make energy upgrades to their facilities and equipment.
- Called for action on clean energy tax credits and a national goal of moving toward clean sources of electricity by setting a standard for utility companies.

Other Reforms:

- A "Buffet Rule" to ensure those making over \$1 million pay a minimum effective tax rates of at least 30%.
- Eliminate tax deductions for those making over \$1 million.
- Prevent tax increases for taxpayers with incomes under \$250,000.
- End Federal subsidies – Food Stamps, unemployment benefits, and farm subsidies – for millionaires.
- Prevent tax increases for working families by extending the payroll tax cut.
- Called on Congress to give every responsible homeowner the opportunity to refinance.

- Establish a Financial Crimes Unit to work with U.S. Attorneys to go after large-scale financial fraud.
- Ban insider trading by Members of Congress.
- Prohibit lobbyists from bundling and bundlers from lobbying.
- Pass a balanced, fair deficit reduction plan.

We will keep the County informed of any relevant initiatives as the Administration releases more details over the next several weeks.

Appropriations/FY2013 Budget Request:

In December, Congress completed its work on the Fiscal Year 2012 appropriations process. The FY2013 process will begin in February. By law, the Administration must release the budget on the first Monday of February. However, there is no penalty for missing the statutory deadline.

The Obama Administration released the budget one week late last year, and have announced that the budget will be delayed again this year. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) announced last week that the 2013 budget will be released on February 13. After the budget is released, we will provide the County with a summary the relevant provisions.

The various Congressional committees with jurisdiction will start reviewing their parts of the budget in February. The House and Senate Budget Committees will hold hearings on the overall budget in March and begin working on the annual budget resolution. The House and Senate Appropriations Committees will begin their hearings in April and will start working on the FY2013 appropriations bills in May. While Congress should complete the appropriations bills by October 1, 2012, when the new fiscal year begins, they rarely do. We will keep the County information as the budget moves through the process.

Federal Grant Announcements:

With the completion of the FY2012 appropriations process, federal agencies have begun to release their grant announcements for this fiscal year. In January, we forwarded various grant announcements to the County for their consideration. Should the County decide to pursue any opportunities, we are available to help obtain Congressional letters of support and provide any other assistance in the grant application process. Two of the key announcements released in January are:

FY 2011 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grants: On January 30, 2012, the application period for the FY2011 SAFER grants opened. SAFER grants are intended to assist local fire departments with staffing and deployment capabilities in order to respond to emergencies, assuring communities have adequate protection from fire and fire-related hazards. Over \$380 million is available. FEMA anticipates making 400 awards. The application period closes at 5:00 PM EST February 24, 2012.

There are two categories of grants: Hiring of Firefighters and Recruitment and Retention of Volunteer Firefighters. Career departments may apply only under the hiring category.

Volunteer and combination department may apply under both the hiring and the recruitment and retention categories. Recruitment and retention grants can be used to defray a wide range of costs including insurance, reimbursement for costs associated with training, tuition assistance, physicals, and uniforms.

For the FY2011 SAFER Hiring Grants:

- There are no annual salary limits and no cost-share requirements.
- There is no retention commitment. Grantees that are hiring firefighters – whether they are rehires, new hires, or retained firefighters – do not have to commit to retaining the SAFER-funded firefighters beyond the period of performance. However, no firefighter layoffs are permitted – of either SAFER-funded or non-SAFER firefighters – during the grant's period of performance.
- The period of performance has been reduced to two years.
- Grantees who are unable to back-fill firefighting positions that are vacated due to documentable economic hardship may petition FEMA for a waiver of staffing maintenance requirements. To qualify for this waiver, the economic hardship must affect the entire public safety sector in the jurisdiction and not only the fire department.
- Funds may be used only for salary and associated benefits costs for full-time firefighters. They may not be used for overtime, other than overtime costs which departments routinely pay as a part of the base salary or the firefighter's regularly scheduled and contracted shift hours. They also may not be used for training or equipment.

FEMA has established the following funding priorities:

- First priority: Rehiring laid-off firefighters;
- Second priority: Retention of firefighters who face imminent layoff and/or filling positions vacated through attrition but not filled due to economic circumstances;
- Third priority: Hiring new firefighters.

Information about the grants is available at <http://www.fema.gov/firegrants/safer/index.shtm>.

Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Grants: This week the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance and the Office for Victims of Crime released the grant announcement for the "Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking". The FY 2012 program will fund Enhanced Collaborative Model Task Force sites that take a comprehensive approach to combating all forms of trafficking -- sex trafficking and labor trafficking of foreign nationals and U.S. citizens (male and female, adults and minors). Cooperative agreements of up to \$500,000 are expected to be awarded.

Eligible applications include state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies and nonprofit victim service organizations. The grant announcement requires two applications (one from a state, local, or tribal law enforcement agency and one from a victim service provider) from each task force location. Applicants must work collaboratively with one another to produce their applications.

Grantees, except those funded in FY2011, who are currently receiving human trafficking funding from BJA and OVC are eligible to apply for this funding. Information about these grants is available at: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/funding/current-opp.html>

Congressional Badge of Bravery:

Last year, the Miami Dade County Police Department nominated two outstanding officers for the 2010 Congressional Badge of Bravery, which honors law enforcement officers for exceptional acts of bravery while in the line of duty. On January 31, 2012, the U.S. Department of Justice released the 2010 recipients. Unfortunately, the County's nominees were not selected for the award. The complete list of recipients is available online at: <https://badgeofbravery.ncjrs.gov/index.aspx>.

As we have previously informed the County, the nomination period for the 2011 Law Enforcement Congressional Badge of Bravery is currently open. Nominations must be submitted by the head of the law enforcement agency by February 15, 2012 through the online system, available at www.ojp.gov/BJA/CBOB. Those selected to be recipients will be awarded a Congressional Badge of Bravery for acts of bravery performed between January 1, 2011 and December 31, 2011.

More information about the Law Enforcement Congressional Badge of Bravery Program or the nomination process, visit www.ojp.gov/BJA/CBOB.

Activities for February:

The House and Senate will be out of session the week of February 20th for the President's Day recess. The President will release his FY2013 budget request on February 13. We will report to the County on any initiatives in the his budget that may impact the County. We will also continue to work with the County on our other assigned issues and any new matters as they arise.