

Messaging in Preparation for the 2010 Session and Beyond

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Education and Outreach

- Local Elected Officials
- Legislators
- The Public
- Your “Opponents”



Utilizing the Media

- Press Releases
- Media Events
- Developing media relationships



Social Media

- Twitter
- Facebook
- YouTube
- Flickr
- LinkedIn
- Blogs

Social Media is taking over the world!



Social Media

- By 2010, Gen Y will outnumber Baby Boomers – 96% of Gen Y have joined a social network
- 1 out of 8 couples married in the US last year met through social media
- Years to Reach 50 Million Users:
 - *Radio - 38 Years*
 - *TV – 13 Years*
 - *Internet – 4 Years*
 - *Facebook added 100 million users in less than 9 months!*



Social Media

- Don't just worry about getting your message out – LISTEN to what other people are saying about you.
- Building your footprint online so that when a rumor starts, you have the audience built up to hear the truth.
- Don't just focus on networking sites – send information to already established email lists.



Social Media

- BUT... do encourage your email list members to also follow you on social networking sites.
- Enlist third party advocates to help spread your message. Start with the advocates you have now – but as you grow your footprint, your advocates will also grow.



Social Media

CAVEAT: Be sure to follow any communications or legal policies your county might have put into place!



Legislation

Local governments tend to find themselves in reactionary mode legislatively.

We need to look for ways to be more proactive.



Beach Access

- Past legislation – unnecessarily punitive toward local governments
- Local Controversies – often stem from private property owners



Simple Solutions?

Civil enforcement of public rights - clarify that local governments have standing and provide for costs and attorneys fees.

This would make it more feasible for a local government to assert standing.



Simple Solutions?

- Presumption Against Beachwalking as Criminal Trespass – provide that simply walking along the beach is presumed not to be a crime in Florida.

This would help to ensure that the people can enjoy those portions of the beach that are public without the fear of arrest and prosecution. This would assist law enforcement and would not infringe on private property rights.



Simple Solutions?

ANOTHER CAVEAT: Any policy change we decide to move forward with must be carefully weighed in the context of the current beach litigation before the United States Supreme Court.



Oil and Gas

No Simple Solutions Here!



A Difficult Policy Discussion

Local governments and their associations, including FAC, FLC, and FSBPA are currently having to make tough choices about where to position themselves on the issue of offshore energy exploration.



Contributing to the Discussion

If we are sitting at the table, we can help guide the policy discussion.



The Risk of Opposition

If we oppose this at all costs, we run the risk of removing ourselves from the table entirely.

Drilling in state waters may be a political reality.



BUT...

There are very serious and complicated issues that must be examined going forward.

Environmental, economic, and social concerns must be carefully weighed and balanced.

The bottom line is... there are a lot of questions that need answering.



Policy Questions

- How can the legislature provide the utmost environmental protection for Florida's beaches, to protect Florida's unique environmental character as well as our tourism-based economy?
- Are there different environmental concerns surrounding natural gas and oil? Are there different environmental concerns in different regions of the Gulf Coast? How can those specific environmental concerns be addressed separately?



Policy Questions

- What infrastructure will be needed to support offshore energy exploration? Does that infrastructure currently exist? If not, what will be the impact of new infrastructure, from both a growth management and environmental perspective?
- What would the economic impact be to Florida in the event of a spill? What protections can be put in place so that Florida's economy is not placed at risk?



Policy Questions

- How would Florida's economy benefit from an offshore energy exploration program?
- How can we adequately protect offshore sand sources so that we will have the resources to restore and renourish our beaches in the future?
- Are there issues that need to be addressed in order to prevent conflict with military operations in the panhandle?

THE END

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