

FLORIDA SHERIFFS ASSOCIATION



Florida's 67 Sheriffs and the Florida Association of Counties are working together to ensure that inmate medical expenses are paid for by the appropriate individuals and that the public is not penalized by paying higher taxes to cover their treatment.

Current law requires that Counties and Sheriffs provide medical services to persons who have been charged with a crime, or who are being held in county detention facilities. It also states that when no contract exists between a county detention facility and a third-party provider, that the third party may seek reimbursement from the county's general fund. Without a statutory cap or a contract negotiated, the third party provider may then seek reimbursement at the "usual and customary rate" —a rate very few individuals actually pay and certainly not the rate indigent individuals pay. Unfortunately, taxpayers end up responsible for paying full fee rates to providers for a person who would otherwise receive indigent rates.

- This bill would reduce expenditures by Sheriff's offices, counties and municipalities to the Medicaid rate for all inmate medical care, treatment, hospitalization and transportation to the same level paid by the State Department of Corrections, which is 110 percent of Medicare allowable rates. This would allow counties to be able to control costs by providing set rates when no contract exist between a medical provider and a Sheriff for arrestees.
- The bill would also exempt ER physicians from the fee cap when providing services in the Emergency Room, because they do not have the ability to negotiate agreements outside the scope of the statute and are often under a federal mandate to treat and stabilize the inmate/arrestee.
- OPPAGA reviewed the Department of Corrections inmate medical costs for 2007-08 and found that if medical expenses were capped at the Medicare rate, the state would have **saved \$10,800,000**, or 2.5 percent of the overall medical costs. Sheriffs spent an estimated \$280,115,000 on inmate medical cost for 108 county detention facilities and 60,500 inmates. If we applied the 2.5 percent costs savings the state received, counties would **save more than \$7,000,000**.

The Florida Association of Counties also supports this bill. For Further information, please contact your local Sheriff or Frank Messersmith at 850-508-5858.



Vote YES on SB 218 and HB 319
Give Taxpayers a Break—control inmate medical costs

www.flsheriffs.org