



# HELP SAFEGUARD THE CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION OF FLORIDA'S RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES:

## INCREASE FUNDING AND RESOURCES FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT CYBERSECURITY PROTECTION

The Florida League of Cities **SUPPORTS** legislation dedicating state resources for the development and enhancement of municipal cybersecurity by providing funding for technical assistance, threat assessments, employee training, infrastructure improvements and data protection, including the protection of exempt and confidential information such as law enforcement personnel information and security plans for government buildings and other key critical infrastructure.

### BACKGROUND

Florida's **local governments are routinely entrusted with gigabytes of personally identifiable, confidential and proprietary information** about the businesses and citizens who live and operate within their jurisdictions.

Recent high-profile cyber incidents in the public sector have highlighted the **emerging and costly challenges that cities face** in protecting this data. In fact, a recent study by Cyber Florida shows **public sector organizations made up 78% of ransomware victims from 2016 to 2019**. Unfortunately, many smaller local governments don't have the resources to address these constantly evolving threats.

The impact on local government operations when a system is compromised can mean **longer response times for police and fire personnel**, delays in service delivery to utility customers or holdups in the permitting process for businesses.

### KEY MESSAGES FOR 2022

Local governments urgently need help from the state in three primary areas: **technical assistance, training and infrastructure improvements**.

- **Technical assistance:** Outside experts should be retained to conduct threat assessments to identify operational and system vulnerabilities so that all are irrevocably addressed before they are exploited.
- **Training:** Local governments should increase training for employees, emphasize the importance of being a cyber-aware organization and develop response plans in the event of a security breach.
- **Infrastructure improvements:** Finally, many cities and counties must devote resources to improving critical cyberinfrastructure to ensure that hardware and software are impenetrable.

With resources and support from the Legislature, **Florida can set the standard for ensuring the cybersecurity of its local governments, citizens and businesses.**

The League will continue to monitor the federal infrastructure bill. If it passes, it may impact or address these funding priorities.

*NOTE: American Rescue Plan Act funding has specific use guidelines and may not be used to fund these priorities.*



For more information, contact **Tara Taggart** at 850.701.3603 or [ttaggart@flcities.com](mailto:ttaggart@flcities.com).