

A RESOLUTION TO THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, SUPPORTING FULL AND ADEQUATE  
FUNDING FOR THE STATE COURT SYSTEM AND THE SEVENTH  
JUDICIAL CIRCUIT TO ENSURE JUSTICE FOR ALL FLORIDIANS

WHEREAS, the voters of Florida approved an amendment to Article V of the Florida Constitution, commonly referred to as Revision 7, that addresses funding for the Judicial Branch of government; and

WHEREAS, currently, approximately half of the budget for the Seventh Judicial Circuit comes from County funds; and Revision 7 calls for the State to fund a larger portion of the Court's operational expenses beginning July 1, 2004; and

WHEREAS, the Florida State Courts System receives less than 1% of the total 2003/2004 State budget; and if funded fully, less than 2% of the State's 2004/2005 budget would be dedicated to the third branch of government; and

WHEREAS, as part of the third branch of government, the Seventh Judicial Circuit serves the citizens of St. Johns County; and in particular, it:

- Guarantees the freedoms we enjoy daily by upholding the law, protecting our individual rights and liberties, enforcing public order; and providing for a peaceful resolution to disputes;
- Safeguards victims' rights, determines guilt or innocence of the accused, and imposes appropriate punishments;
- Resolves personal, business, and property disputes;
- Protects families, children, the elderly and infirm;
- Facilitates case processing through programs that provide citizens with timely and efficient access to justice, thereby reducing the impact on the Court system and County services resulting from population growth;
- Provides due process services that protect each citizen's right to a fair and impartial trial through such services as court-appointed expert witnesses, interpreters, and court reporters; and

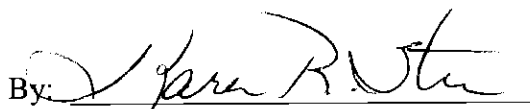
WHEREAS, the rights and freedoms of the citizens of St. Johns County depend upon an impartial and independent judiciary and on the ability of the State Attorney and the Public Defender to fulfill their vital roles; and

WHEREAS, without adequate funding, the Courts, State Attorneys, and Public Defenders will be unable to address all cases brought before the Courts, to serve vital public interests, and to protect our basic freedoms.

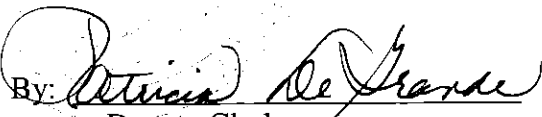
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of County Commissioners of St. Johns County hereby recommends and requests that the Florida Legislature fulfill its obligations under Revision 7 and ensure that the Florida State Courts System and the offices of the State Attorney and Public Defender of the Seventh Judicial Circuit receive full and adequate funding to support the personnel, programs and services identified for funding by the Florida Supreme Court and Trial Court Budget Commission.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of County Commissioners of St. Johns County, State of Florida, this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of March, 2004.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA

By:   
Karen R. Stern, Chair

ATTEST: Cheryl Strickland, Clerk

By:   
Deputy Clerk

Effective Date: 3-23-04

RENDITION DATE 3-30-04