**Date:**  September 15, 2015

**To:** Board of Commissioners

**From:**  Judith Ure, Management Analyst

**Subject:** State Legislative Representation and Lobbyist Services

At the conclusion of the 2015 legislative session, the Board of Commissioners expressed an interest in assessing the County’s current needs for state lobbying and legislative services and to potentially update the existing arrangement accordingly.

Since 2003, the County has engaged Public Affairs Counsel (PAC) for lobbying and legislative services. While there is no legal or policy mandate to solicit new proposals for services periodically, the current contract with PAC has expired and should be either renewed or replaced. In making such a decision, the Board may wish to consider the following information.

**Options**

The County’s legislative program can be managed in a variety of ways, including:

1. Renewing the current contract with PAC. As the terms of the existing contract were established in 2003, issues such as scope of work and compensation may need to be revisited.
2. Issuing a request for proposals soliciting interest from qualified firms to provide lobbyist and legislative services and enter into a new contract with the successful proposer.
3. Assigning or hiring a County staff person to coordinate legislative activities and lobby on the County’s behalf.
4. Relying on the Association of Counties, professional associations, County Commissioners, Department Directors, and other staff to meet the County’s legislative needs.
5. Any combination of the above.

A draft Request for Proposals (RFP) for state legislative representation and lobbying services has been prepared for the Board’s review in the event that members give direction to proceed with option 2 above.

**Considerations**

Although many issues may be considered by the Board in determining the best approach for the County’s legislative program, a few that have received mention to date include:

* How ready and continued access to the County’s legislative delegation will be facilitated.
* How a firm’s various clients who hold opposing positions are managed and how conflicts of interest are mitigated.
* How the County’s positions on proposed legislation will be coordinated with the Association of Counties (AOC).
* How the County’s legislative activities will be coordinated with other local public agencies, business organizations, and community groups.