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Local Officials Talk Water Quality, Infrastructure and ADA Compliance with Florida’s Congressional Delegation

*Members of the Florida League of Cities Federal Action Strike Team (FAST) Bring Local Issues to
Washington, D.C.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 19, 2019

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The Florida League of Cities Federal Action Strike Team (FAST) traveled to Washington, D.C. last week to meet with members of Florida’s congressional delegation and advocate for key federal issues that affect municipalities. Forty municipal officials representing all regions of the state participated in the trip, known as the FAST Fly-In, a bi-annual advocacy trip for members of the FAST committee.

“This was the largest FAST Fly-in group to date,” said Florida League of Cities President and Bartow Mayor Leo E. Longworth. “Each participant brought a unique perspective to our meetings, which helped our congressional delegation better understand the local impacts of the issues we discussed. I was proud to stand beside my fellow municipal officials and advocate for Florida cities with a unified voice. We really appreciate the delegation meeting with us and we look forward to working with them this year.”

During their time in our nation’s capital, local leaders focused their advocacy efforts on discussing key priority issues including infrastructure funding, water quality and water supply, reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program and the federal preemption of small cell infrastructure deployment.

In response to Florida’s water quality challenges last year with red tide and blue-green algal blooms, attendees stressed the importance of working together with federal, state and local partners. Florida cities commend the efforts of Florida’s congressional delegation to address this critical issue.

The group also discussed the issue of ADA compliance for municipal websites, an issue that is affecting an increasingly larger amount of Florida municipalities. FAST members advocated for the U.S. Department of Justice to establish a clear standard to make websites ADA-compliant

and ultimately decrease the costly litigation that municipalities, businesses and other stakeholders are facing.

“The FAST trip is our opportunity to meet with members of Florida’s congressional delegation and discuss pressing issues that require federal attention,” said FAST Chair and City of Sarasota Commissioner Willie Shaw. “We have a responsibility to work together at the local, state and federal levels to find bipartisan solutions that improve our quality of life. When we work together, our residents benefit and our communities thrive.”

The group met with 23 members of Florida’s congressional delegation, including Senator Marco Rubio. FAST members also attended the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs briefing where they spoke with representatives from the USDA Office of Rural Development, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

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Founded in 1922, the Florida League of Cities is the united voice for Florida’s municipal governments. Its goals are to promote local self-government and serve the needs of Florida’s cities. Florida’s cities are formed by their citizens and governed by their citizens. The League is founded on the belief that local self-government is the keystone of American democracy. For more information, visit floridaleagueofcities.com.