

Okaloosa County News Release

2/27/2012

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NR12-42

Okaloosa County's \$1.3 Million Medicaid Costs Nearly Doubles with Passage of HB5301 *\$1.3 Million Paid Annually to State Would Increase to an Estimated \$2.2 Million*

Okaloosa County and all Florida counties will have to pay substantially more if House Bill 5301 passes this week. This bill has already passed in the Senate (SB 1988). Counties are required by law to reimburse the state for Medicaid hospital costs and nursing home care for indigent patients, which was \$1.3 million in 2011. New requirements if HB 5301 passes would require:

- Counties to pay **85 percent of all existing unpaid (disputed) invoices**, resulting in a backlog payment of **\$570,000**.
- An additional **first year backlog of \$142,000** for unpaid (disputed) invoices
- Furthermore, **Okaloosa County** would be required to budget for future Medicaid and nursing home care overall at a **cost of \$2.2 million**, almost doubling our current annual budgeted amount of \$1.3 million.
- Money would be withheld from the county sales tax portions each month; therefore **requiring local governments to apply to the State for a refund**, if they believe a charge is incorrect. (For example, we now can validate if they are county residents or if they qualify, before remitting to state.)

"I think this is another example of the State balancing their budget on the backs of local taxpayers," stated Chairman Don Amunds, Okaloosa County commissioner.

Citizens can call their state representatives in order to stop another cost shift to counties, local government and taxpayers. For more information, contact the Okaloosa Board of County Commissioners, 850-651-7105 or 689-5030.

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