**2017 Faith-Based and Community-Based Advisory Council Proposed Recommendations**

The following recommendations are provided, based on survey responses, to address the scope of activities outlined in Florida Statute 14.31.

**1. How faith-based and community-based organizations can best compete with other organizations for the delivery of state services, regardless of an organization’s orientation, whether faith-based or secular.:**

* Process map faith-based procedures and eliminate anything that doesn't benefit the client.
* It’s about awareness, leveling the field, and collaboration.

**2. How best to develop and coordinate activities of faith-based and community-based programs and initiatives, enhance such efforts in communities, and seek such resources, legislation, and regulatory relief as may be necessary to accomplish these objectives.:**

* Having a Central Office to oversee these initiatives (requires funding) and provide support (fielding the higher-level legislation and regulatory requirements) and by providing consultation and technical assistance to these program's leaders.
* It must happen regionally and roll up to a state-wide level, be nimble (i.e. less bureaucracy), and with an entrepreneurial spirit.

**3. How best to ensure that state policy decisions take into account the capacity of faith-based and other community-based initiatives to assist in the achievement of state priorities.:**

* Minimize bureaucratic, redundant reporting requirements. All proposals should have deliverables that measure changed attitudes, increased knowledge, and other results oriented outcomes instead of just measuring numbers served. Example number enrolled who found employment. Number of those still employed six months and 18 months later rather than number enrolled in job seeking skills training.
* Lobby. Call senators and representatives.
* Do state priorities allow for the involvement of faith based and CB organizations? Starting from the end result and working back with input from all segments of the FB & CB sectors including those they serve. Client satisfaction surveys?

**4. How best to identify and promote best practices across state government relating to the delivery of services by faith-based and other community-based organizations.:**

* Measure real outcomes not numbers served.
* Best practices can be identified during quality assurance monitoring.

Develop standards that do not restrict grassroots and entrepreneurial groups, watch for repetitive "services" that simple require more services to improve. Provide incentives for receiving less services rather than more, with involvement of clients in the next generation of helping those behind them.

**5. How best to coordinate public awareness of faith-based and community nonprofit initiatives, such as demonstration pilot programs or projects, public-private partnerships, volunteerism, and special projects.:**

* Pilot programs in areas that have shown the greatest interest in the faith based community engagement.
* Add media to every commission meeting.
* Develop a logo that is recognizable for ALL Florida faith-based initiatives. A statewide communication coordinator can develop an advertising campaign.
* Regional outreach, regional events where these opportunities can be viewed. Web site info so people can research them on their own if desired.

**6. How best to encourage private charitable giving to support faith-based and community-based initiatives.:**

* Give people and businesses better tax breaks for contributing.
* Advertise successes.
* Invite community church leaders to events which showcase successful faith-based initiatives in their community, so that they can share that with their congregations.

Awareness, support, recognition. Givers want to give to organizations that are doing great work. Help the smaller organizations to better showcase (and report on outcomes) that funders want to know about

**7. How best to bring concerns, ideas, and policy options to the Governor and Legislature for assisting, strengthening, and replicating successful faith-based and other community-based programs.:**

* Faith based committee designed by the governor to report community information back.
* Support faith based days at the Capitol.
* Social media works great.

**8. How best to develop and implement strategic initiatives to strengthen the institutions of families and communities in this state.:**

* Abide by all FOUR TANF goals.
* Bring together leadership from different agencies with likeminded goals including faith leaders. Look at the greatest needs in a community and decide how the faith community can contribute to that need.
* Generate an area plan by county or by state that gets buy-in from both governmental and non-governmental agencies and organizations.
* Address and fund mental health, housing, affordable child care and substance abuse treatment to impoverished and vulnerable Florida citizens first, so that they can focus on this higher-level issue of marriage and family.
* Break down barriers between competing organization - level the playing field and encourage (reward) the large organizations to bring along smaller organizations - build networks of providers accessible by all (awareness).

**9. How best to showcase and herald innovative grassroots nonprofit organizations and civic initiatives.:**

* Present at as many forums and conferences as possible. Get in touch with political figures and department secretaries to encourage them to include the faith based community.
* Encourage the media to prominently cover more positive activities.
* Include on Governor's website - then share with the State Agencies.

Let them know that there is an interest in knowing about the work they do. Reach down (and around) the well-known large traditional organizations and lift up the grassroots organizations who have great passion, energy and drive, but lack the knowledge and awareness to rise up as they are busy doing the work or keeping the doors open.

**10. How best to eliminate unnecessary legislative, regulatory, and other bureaucratic barriers that impede effective faith-based and other community-based efforts to address social problems.:**

* Legislative intent should be clearly stated and all regulations regarding implementation of the legislation should be reviewed by the sponsoring legislator to be sure the intent is not changed or corrupted by the agency implementing the legislation
* Be sure that leaders know that this is not one certain religion but a faith based initiative to bring all faiths together to help our communities.
* Look at ways to share information on what support is being given to specific needy families. It is very difficult if not impossible to determine what support is being given by a government agency for a family that is coming to a nonprofit organization for help. This can result in duplicative rather than complementary aid.
* Can't answer because I don't know what the current barriers are.
* Provide opportunities for smaller non-profit and faith based organizations information and awareness on how to navigate the complicated systems. For example, there may be great work being done throughout our state that could possibly be funded through the legislature, but they simply are not aware of the process or even where to begin.

**11. How best to monitor implementation of state policy affecting faith-based and other community-based organizations.:**

* Site visits. Client interviews.
* Conducting quality assurance monitoring and providing technical assistance and follow up to support their efforts.
* Have successful organization (Faith-Based), share their experience. Remove the fear and concern through communication and positive reinforcement.

**12. How best to ensure that the efforts of faith-based and other community-based organizations meet objective criteria for performance and accountability.:**

* State criteria isn't always objective to start with. Many state agencies have their own agendas that preclude CBOs.
* Include accountability in strategic planning.
* Analysis of valid and reliable data. Having a standardized set of deliverables or goals is required, in order to measure success (outcomes).
* Help them understand how to do it - what is involved, who do they create measurable objectives that are meaningful, how to use results (even if they are not are the desired results) to improve and not be viewed as failing.