

# 2012 FLORIDA UNITED WAY CONSENSUS LEGISLATIVE AGENDA



## ADVANCING THE COMMON GOOD

Florida's 34 United Ways are the state's leading community change agents, investing contributions generously provided by people from all walks of life into fundamentally important health, education and income initiatives that improve the lives of individuals and families – and entire communities – every day. Local people solving local problems with local solutions. People and communities that Live United.

As with other for-profit and non-profit businesses, the ability of United Ways and communities to find and implement solutions to their problems is impacted daily by the decisions made by government at all levels. Rules, regulations, policies and appropriations decisions have an enormous impact on how - and if - United Way can move forward with community leaders and partners to successfully address some of the biggest challenges facing our state.

The *2012 Florida United Way Consensus Legislative Agenda* represents a core group of issues that Florida's United Ways strongly support. While there are numerous other issues for which the United Way advocates to support its mission and its partners, these represent the highest priority issues United Ways will focus on during the 2012 Florida Legislative Session.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

The Guiding Principles are the core precepts that Florida's United Ways urge the Florida Legislature to apply as it considers budgetary and legislative issues during the 2012 Legislative Session.

- ✓ **State Budget** – When considering budget reductions, the Legislature should make strategic (not across-the-board) cuts; maximize revenues to draw down all available federal funds; and focus on cost-effective, proven programs.
- ✓ **Local Control** – The 2012 Florida Legislature should support the authority of local government and locally approved entities to determine the best use of resources.
- ✓ **Focus on Prevention** – To the greatest extent possible, the 2012 Florida Legislature should orient state spending to prevention programs that will save the state money in the long run.

## PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY

### PRIORITY ISSUES:

- **Background Screening** – Florida's United Ways urge the 2012 Florida Legislature to create a comprehensive background screening system that, while ensuring protection of vulnerable populations, does not excessively burden volunteers, employers and employees and does not impede the ability of well-meaning volunteers and legitimate nonprofit agencies to provide critically needed assistance to people in their communities.
- **Community Care for the Elderly & Home Care for the Elderly** – Florida's United Ways support maximizing funding for Community Care for the Elderly and Home Care for the Elderly.
- **School Readiness** – Florida's United Ways support providing greater access to high quality school readiness programs for Florida's children.