



## KEN BURKE

### CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT - PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

Clerk of the County Court • Recorder of Deeds • Clerk and Accountant of the Board of County Commissioners  
Custodian of County Funds • County Auditor • Clerk of the Water and Navigation Control Authority

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#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

### Clerk of Court Supports Legislation Aimed at Clarifying Constitutional Role as County Auditor

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – PINELLAS COUNTY, FL –April 16, 2008** - A pair of bills in the 2008 Legislative Session, SB 640 and HB 399, would clarify the circuit court clerk's role as the "county auditor." Historically, Florida clerks have performed the role of auditor under constitutional and statutory authority, according to Ken Burke, Pinellas County Clerk of Court.

"This legislation is important. Clarification of the clerk's role as auditor will better enable clerks to act as the taxpayers' watchdog and advocate. As county auditor, the clerk provides independent oversight of county spending and revenue practices, while ensuring county government's compliance with fiscal laws," said Burke.

"For nearly 200 years clerks have provided Floridians independent fiscal protections by an independent auditor," explained Burke. The pending legislation better explains this fundamental duty without expanding the current practices or the authority of the clerks."

Florida TaxWatch, a statewide, non-profit, non-partisan research institute, released a *Briefing* explaining why the organization believes the pending legislation would improve local government accountability. The institute's president and CEO testified at the Senate Community Affairs Committee hearing discussing SB 640. His comments and the briefing accompany this press release and are available on the Clerk's website at <http://www.pinellasclerk.org>. Select "[Media: Photos & Information](#)" from the upper left-side menu.

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#### ABOUT THE CLERK'S OFFICE

The Clerk of the Circuit Court was established as a public trustee by the Florida Constitution in 1838. The Clerk of the Circuit Court serves as the Clerk of Courts, the Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners, Auditor, Recorder and Custodian of all County Funds.