

2021

# SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

POLICY EDITION

“Still, there is an argument to be made that the recently concluded 2021 session, along with this week’s special session... may be among some of the most substantive bursts of activity for legislators in the past decade.”

**Gary Fineout**

POLITICO Florida





# HOUSE MAJORITY OFFICE

FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

REPRESENTATIVE MICHAEL GRANT, MAJORITY LEADER

Members,

This year, we achieved historic wins for Floridians. From the largest expansion of school choice in the nation to Florida's first flooding and sea-level rise plan, we took transformative action to change Floridians' lives for the better.

Together, we seized opportunities and took risks to address the long-term needs of the state with significant legislation to respond and prepare Florida for future emergencies, change the way Floridians get jobs forever, and ensure that every Florida child can read on grade level by 2030.

The information provided in this publication is intended to help House Republicans communicate the topline outcomes from the 2021 Legislative Session in a compelling and meaningful way. It is not a comprehensive description of the policies.

The Florida House Majority Office compiled the contents of this book with information available before June 4, 2021. To view a bill, review its current status, or read an in-depth analysis, visit [myfloridahouse.gov](http://myfloridahouse.gov).

Members, thank you for your unwavering service and dedication to the state of Florida. Florida will be a better place tomorrow because of the work we did today.

Sincerely,

Michael Grant  
Majority Leader

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2021

# SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

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## COMMERCE

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# SB 76 (HB 305)

REPRESENTATIVE  
**ROMMEL**

# INSURANCE



## **SB 76 makes changes designed to stabilize Florida's private property insurance market and reduce the flow of policies into Citizens Property Insurance Corporation (Citizens).**

### MAJOR MESSAGES

- Makes critical reforms to Florida's property insurance laws to curb fraud and excessive litigation that continue to increase rates and deter additional insurers from entering the Florida market.
- Changes the rate requirements for Citizens so that it functions as intended – to cover those that cannot obtain insurance elsewhere.

### CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Office of Insurance Regulation (OIR) has reported a significant increase in the number of roof damage claims, many of which include litigation.
- Citizens was intended to provide property insurance to those unable to find affordable coverage in the private market, but in many instances, has become competitive with the private market.

### BILL BASICS

- Aims to reduce fraudulent insurance roof claims by providing consequences to professionals and those working on their behalf who solicit or incentivize homeowners to file roof claims they would not otherwise have filed.
- Requires that all notices of initial and reopened property insurance claims be provided to an insurer within two years of the date of loss and that notice of all supplemental claims be provided within three years of the date of loss.
- Establishes presuit notice requirements for claimants and insurers for all property insurance suits against licensed and surplus lines insurers that are not brought by an assignee.
- Provides guidelines for determining when a claimant's attorney is entitled to attorney fees for property insurance litigation.
- Establishes that Citizens may add 1% per year to its cap on rate increases until it reaches a maximum of a 15% cap on rate increases.
- Clarifies that OIR has the authority to examine Managing General Agents in the same way that it examines insurers.
- Requires insurers to report claims litigation data to OIR on an annual basis.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 75-41  
SENATE 35-5

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS



# HB 77

REPRESENTATIVE  
**OVERDORF**

# DIESEL EXHAUST FLUID



**HB 77 protects Floridians by requiring safety mitigation and exclusion plans for public airports to prevent contamination of aviation fuel with diesel exhaust fluid (DEF).**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Ensures that Floridians are safe on aircrafts while protecting the environment.
- Prevents accidental use of DEF instead of a fuel system icing inhibitor by requiring safety plans for public airports.
- Protects Floridians by requiring DEF to be stored in a separate storage space and designating a specific area where DEF is added to vehicles.
- Ensures proper labeling and storage methods are used when handling DEF.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Airports use DEF in aircraft refueling equipment, fire-fighting equipment, and emergency generators.
- Some aircraft require fuel system icing inhibitor to function properly in cold weather.
- 31 aircraft in a three-year span were accidentally fueled with DEF-contaminated fuel or DEF-contaminated fueling equipment.
- Thankfully, all of these aircraft were able to return to the runway safely – HB 77 prevents possible future emergencies.

## BILL BASICS

- The safety mitigation and exclusion plans are required at public airports at which:
  - Aviation fuels receive onsite treatment with fuel system icing inhibitors.
  - Aviation fuel is delivered by a publicly or privately owned fixed-base operator.
  - Any aircraft fuel delivery vehicle or ground service equipment that uses DEF is operated within 150 feet of any aircraft.
- Ensures consistency by requiring development of uniform industry standards that align with National Air Transportation Association operational best practices.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 114-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS** PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS



**SB 100 repeals the Multi-use Corridors of Regional Economic Significance (M-CORES) program and creates programs to address highway congestion and safety issues reported by the M-CORES task force.**

**MAJOR  
MESSAGES**

- Addresses the concerns reported by the task force by repealing the M-CORES program and implementing new transportation work programs.
- Confronts congestion and safety issues caused by population growth in rural areas by widening two lane arterial rural roads.
- Upgrades existing through roads with targeted improvements to manage congestion points and requires Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to create a project to achieve free flow of traffic on U.S 19.

**CRUCIAL  
CONTEXT**

- Beginning in August 2019, the M-CORES task force conducted a series of surveys, open houses, webinars, and various other events to give the public opportunities for their voices to be heard on traffic issues in Florida.
- The public comments received by FDOT in the task force deliberations revealed significant opposition to the M-CORES program.
- SB 100 is a direct response to reports from the task force.

**BILL  
BASICS**

- Ensures that projects and programs are up-to-date by requiring consideration of previous relevant studies' guidance and recommendations.
- Preserves the character of the impacted communities by requiring targeted improvements to existing facilities to enhance the economic prosperity of the surrounding area.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 115-0  
SENATE 39-1

**STATUS** PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# HB 403

REPRESENTATIVE  
**GIALLOMBARDO**

# HOME-BASED BUSINESSES



**HB 403 allows home-based businesses to grow and thrive in their communities and throughout the state without the burden of unnecessary regulations and unfair taxation by local jurisdictions.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Allows startup businesses to flourish without high overhead by limiting the regulations that local governments can place on home-based businesses.
- Encourages entrepreneurship by limiting business taxes to only the county and municipality where their home-based business is physically located.
- Enhances home-based businesses' ability to grow by allowing up to two employees that do not reside in the home.
- Empowers business owners to challenge impractical local mandates.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- 40% of Florida businesses are home-based.
- Disney, Apple, Amazon, and Google all started as home-based businesses.

## BILL BASICS

- Ensures the safety of residents by requiring business activities to comply with local or state regulations with respect to signage and equipment, and processes that create noise, vibrations, heat, smoke, dust, glare, fumes, or noxious odors.
- Protects home-based businesses by requiring local governments to treat home-based businesses like any other business in the city, while still subjecting them to residential regulations like parking and zoning.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 77-41  
SENATE 19-18

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# SB 430 (HB 991)

REPRESENTATIVE  
**BUSATTA  
CABRERA**

# RETAIL PETROLEUM FUEL MEASURING DEVICES



## SB 430 enhances consumer protections by revising security measures against gas station skimmers.

### MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects consumers, gas station owners, and all Floridians by cracking down on skimmers.
- Strengthens security by requiring owners to install at least two security measures, such as security tape.
- Protects Floridians' payment information by requiring owners to report a safety violation within three business days and authorizes the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) to take immediate responsive action.

### CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- A card skimmer is an electronic device that is illegally installed inside gas pumps to collect a consumer's credit or debit card information when a card is swiped through the reader. Criminals sell the consumer's information or use the information to make illegal purchases.
- Since 2015, DACS has discovered and removed 4,860 skimmers.

### BILL BASICS

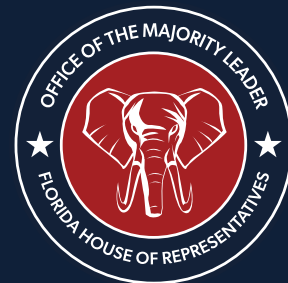
- Curbs issues with skimmers and establishes consistent consumer protection measures by preempting the regulation of fuel measuring devices to the state.
- Enhances safety measures by requiring an owner to install at least one additional approved measure if using pressure-sensitive security tape.
- Safeguards owners from excessive fines by prohibiting DACS from issuing a fine if noncompliance is a result of damage or alteration after repair of the security measure.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 111-4  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS



# HB 663

REPRESENTATIVE  
**SALZMAN**

# COTTAGE FOOD OPERATIONS

**HB 663 empowers small businesses by easing burdensome regulations on cottage food operations that produce foods that are already declared safe for production at home.**



## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Helps make Florida a national leader in promoting the cottage food industry.
- Benefits entrepreneurs and their customers by allowing for the sale and delivery of cottage food products through the mail.
- Benefits customers by improving access to cottage foods.



## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- A cottage food product is a non-potentially hazardous food product produced in an unlicensed home kitchen.
- Approved cottage food products in Florida:
  - Loaf breads, rolls, and biscuits
  - Cakes, pastries, and cookies
  - Candies and confections
  - Honey
  - Jams, jellies, and preserves
  - Fruit pies and dried fruits
  - Dry herbs, seasonings, and mixtures
  - Homemade pasta
  - Cereals, trail mixes, and granola
  - Coated or uncoated nuts
  - Vinegar and flavored vinegars
  - Popcorn and popcorn balls



## BILL BASICS

- Allows for the sale and delivery of cottage food products via USPS or commercial mail delivery service.
- Raises the gross annual sales threshold to \$250,000.
- Allows cottage food operators to have business partners.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 90-28  
SENATE 30-10

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# HB 667

REPRESENTATIVE  
**MOONEY**

# BUILDING INSPECTIONS



**HB 667 reduces construction costs and time by modernizing and streamlining building inspections in Florida.**



## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Ensures builders can focus on what they do best – construct homes and places of business – and not have to deal with antiquated, inefficient building inspection departments that increase costs and slow construction.
- Improves efficiency through modernization by requiring local enforcement agencies to receive inspection requests electronically and allowing them to conduct virtual inspections.
- Expands fairness and accountability by requiring a partial refund on permit fees if inspectors fail to give a specific reason for failed inspections in a timely manner.



## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Any construction work that requires a building permit also requires plans and inspections to ensure the work complies with the Building Code to protect workers and future occupants.
- Some building departments already allow permit holders to electronically request inspections while others do not – instead, they require permit holders to call the building department during its business hours, which limits the time when a permit holder can request an inspection.
- Allowing electronic requests provides builders and inspectors a real-time schedule, including cancellation, location, and contact information for their scheduled inspections.
- As a result of COVID-19, many building departments began performing virtual inspections in order to continue services while protecting staff and contractors – current law does not expressly authorize or prohibit this.



## BILL BASICS

- Requires local enforcement agencies to allow electronic inspection requests such as through e-mail, online forms, or mobile applications.
- Authorizes agencies to conduct virtual inspections through visual or electronic aids without having to be physically present at the job site – prohibits virtual structural inspections for large buildings to maintain safety.
- Requires agencies to refund 10% of permit and inspection fees if they do not provide specific reasons for a failed inspection within five business days.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 118-0  
SENATE 39-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# HB 735

REPRESENTATIVE  
**HARDING**

# PREEMPTION OF LOCAL OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING



**HB 735 allows small businesses to grow and thrive throughout the state by getting local government out of the way.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Allows Floridians to be free to work statewide without jumping through hoops like extra fees, licensing requirements, and exams.
- Encourages professionals to work anywhere in the state by removing the extra burdens that local licensing creates by preempting occupational licensing to the state.
- Preempts occupational licensing to the state to end the patchwork of local regulations.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- There are 412 cities and 67 counties in Florida; and many have adopted licensing requirements for occupations not regulated by the state. Cities and counties are requiring licenses for certain occupations that are unnecessary.
- 19 counties require a painting license. For example, in Hillsborough County, to obtain such a license, an applicant must have a year of experience and pay a \$280 licensing fee. Indian River County actually requires a test, in addition to two years' experience, and a \$50 licensing fee.
- Broward County requires a license for residential interior remodeling. While a statewide license is needed for commercial interior design, one is not required for residential interior design or decorating. Applicants must have three years' experience, pass applicable exams, and pay a \$200 processing fee. No other counties have this license type.

## BILL BASICS

- Prohibits local governments from requiring a license for a job scope that does not substantially correspond to that of a contractor or journeyman (skilled worker in a building trade or craft).
- Authorizes counties and municipalities to issue journeyman licenses in various different trades.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 82-32  
SENATE 22-18

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# HB 855

REPRESENTATIVE  
**MORALES**

# BARBER SERVICES



**HB 855 allows more Floridians to work without excessive regulation by removing requirements that prevent barbers from serving customers outside of an authorized barbershop.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Allows barbers to serve their customers in convenient locations without having to jump through unnecessary regulatory hoops.
- Supports barbers and clients by deregulating and increasing market competition.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Exceptions to current regulations were previously only for a client of ill health, in connection with filming movies, professional fashion photography, or the television industry, for a manufacturer or trade show demonstration, or for an educational seminar.
- Many barbers had to operate out of homes and outdoor venues during the COVID-19 pandemic – there's no reason to stop them from continuing to provide safe services with more convenience.

## BILL BASICS

- Authorizes barbers to shampoo, cut, or arrange hair outside of a barbers shop without having to make arrangements through a registered barbershop.
- Removes the need for one of these circumstances in order for a barber to perform services.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 115-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS** PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS



# SB 912 (HB 859)

REPRESENTATIVE  
**GRANT**

# LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT



**SB 912 prepares for future emergencies by expanding the list of permits eligible for tolling during a State of Emergency.**



## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Allows permit holders to adapt to any changing conditions that come about as a result of a State of Emergency by expanding “tolling” to include consumptive use permits and local government development agreements.
- Provides relief to Floridians by ensuring that the tolling expansion retroactively applies to any State of Emergency declarations issued since March 1, 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.



## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- During a State of Emergency, it often is difficult or impossible to exercise rights under a permit or other authorization.



## BILL BASICS

- Extends the existing tolling statute to additional permits and applies the relief retroactively to March 1, 2020 when the initial COVID-19 State of Emergency order was issued.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 114-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# HB 919

REPRESENTATIVE  
**TOMKOW**

# PREEMPTION OVER RESTRICTION OF UTILITY SERVICES



**HB 919 protects Floridians' access to affordable, reliable energy sources.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects consumers by prohibiting any state political subdivision from restricting or prohibiting types or fuel sources of energy production used, delivered, converted, or supplied by electric utilities, natural gas utilities, natural gas transmission companies, etc.
- Preserves choice by maintaining the availability of all types of fuel sources.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Some local governments in Florida have proposed resolutions to move to completely renewable energy by a certain date and to prohibit the use of other fuel sources.

## BILL BASICS

- Voids any action preempted by the bill that existed before or on July 1, 2021.
- Does not prohibit the board of a municipality or governmental entity from adopting rules, regulations, and policies governing an electric or natural gas utility that it owns or operates and directly controls.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 81-34  
SENATE 27-13

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# HB 1059

REPRESENTATIVE  
**ROBINSON, W.**

# CONSTRUCTION PERMITS



**HB 1059 modernizes the building permit process by requiring local enforcement agencies to bring multiple parts of the permit process online.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Modernizes the building permit process by removing unnecessary barriers to obtaining construction permits.
- Creates an efficient construction permit process by requiring local agencies to make permits available online.
- Ensures stability throughout the construction permit application process by preventing delays by reducing building permit fees if local enforcement agencies fail to meet deadlines for reviewing applications.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Current law requires local governments to enforce the Building Code and issue building permits.
- Current law also requires state agencies, state universities, Florida College System institutions, and public school districts to enforce the Building Code in certain situations. Each local government entity may provide a schedule of reasonable fees in order to defer the costs of inspection and enforcement of the Building Code.
- Currently, counties or municipalities can take up to 180 days to approve or deny an application, which prevents projects from being started and keeps people from working.

## BILL BASICS

- Streamlines the building permit process by requiring local enforcement agencies to:
  - Accept all parts of building permit applications electronically.
  - Post the current application status for building permits online.
  - Reduce building permit fees if they fail to meet deadlines for reviewing applications.
  - Allow applicants for permits for single-family homes to correct their applications prior to rejection.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 113-0  
SENATE 38-0

**STATUS** PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS



# HB 1239

REPRESENTATIVE  
**TOMKOW**

# BROADBAND INTERNET INFRASTRUCTURE

**HB 1239 provides funding and additional resources to support the build-out of broadband infrastructure in underserved and unserved areas.**



## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Provides a pathway for rural communities in Florida to gain access to broadband internet services they desperately need.
- Removes obstacles standing in the way of unserved areas gaining access to connectivity by creating a grant program within the Office of Broadband to fund up to 50% of the total cost for projects seeking to expand broadband infrastructure in the areas that need it most.
- Encourages broadband companies to build out infrastructure to underserved and unserved consumers by requiring municipal electric utilities to offer a discounted rate of \$1 per attachment per year for any new pole attachment necessary to make broadband available.
- Helps make Florida a destination for remote work.



## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The lack of broadband internet services disadvantages communities and citizens, particularly economically and educationally.



## BILL BASICS

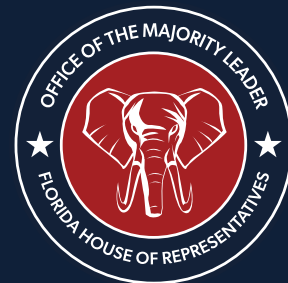
- Requires the Office of Broadband to create annual broadband service maps and incorporate federal broadband activities in its strategic plan.
- Increases transparency measures for the grant program by requiring the Office of Broadband to publish a list of all grant applications received each year.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 115-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR



# HB 1313

REPRESENTATIVE  
**LAMARCA**

# DIGITAL DRIVER LICENSES AND IDENTIFICATION CARDS

**HB 1313 modernizes Florida by providing Floridians with a digital option for proof of driver license or identification.**



## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Updates Florida’s options for proof of ID by requiring Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) to establish a secure and uniform system for issuing digital proof of ID.
- Protects Floridians by prohibiting any private entity from storing, selling, or sharing any personal information collected from scanning a digital ID.



## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Since 2014, DHSMV has been required to prepare for the development of a secure and uniform system for issuing an optional digital proof of driver license. To this end, DHSMV is in the process of developing the Florida Smart ID.
- Louisiana was the first state to introduce digital IDs and began offering them to residents in 2018.
- A digital driver license comes in the form of a smart phone app protected by biometrics or a personal identification number. Instead of handing over a physical license to a police officer or store clerk, an individual could display the relevant information on his or her smart phone or send it electronically.



## BILL BASICS

- Modernizes the process of updating an ID by making it possible to remotely add endorsements, change classes of driver licenses, suspend licenses, deactivate an ID, or wipe a person’s credentials.
- Increases security for digital IDs by making manufacturing false digital IDs a third degree felony, and the possession of a false digital ID a second degree misdemeanor.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 117-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS



## **HB 1463 modernizes and improves efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability relating to the reemployment assistance system.**

### **MAJOR MESSAGES**

- Moves the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) CONNECT system to a cloud-based, modular system to ensure the system is always there when Floridians need it.
- Establishes an Office of Economic Accountability and Transparency within DEO to improve efficiency, accountability, and public messaging.

### **CRUCIAL CONTEXT**

- A modular, cloud-based system will allow DEO to update and fix the system without having to shut down the entire website.
- Allows an employer to file initial claims on behalf of its employees who are a part of a mass separation from the employer.

### **BILL BASICS**

- Requires monthly project status reports to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, OPPAGA, and the Florida Digital Service to complete the modernization quickly and efficiently.
- Provides flexibility to DEO relating to the administration of the federally funded Florida Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program and provides for expedited permitting for certain homeowners affected by natural disasters.
- Adds the DEO Secretary to the Board of Directors for Enterprise Florida and CareerSource Florida.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 118-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR

# SB 7072 (HB 7013)

REPRESENTATIVE  
**INGOGLIA**

# SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS



**SB 7072 protects Floridians and candidates from arbitrary and unfair censorship by expanding transparency and holding Big Tech accountable.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- We cannot allow Big Tech companies to operate in darkness while manipulating social media – a kind of 21st century public square.
- Expands transparency by requiring Big Tech companies to publish standards used to ban posts, deplatform users, and shadow ban and to apply them consistently.
- Protects users by requiring Big Tech companies to inform users about changes to their terms of use and allow them to opt out of post-prioritization and shadow banning algorithms.
- Protects our democracy by ensuring that candidates for office in Florida are not deplatformed or shadow banned.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Deplatforming: permanently or temporarily deleting or banning a user from a social media platform for more than 14 days.
- Shadow banning: limiting or eliminating the exposure of a user or their content.
- Post-prioritization: placing certain content or material ahead of, below, or in a more or less prominent position than others in a newsfeed, feed, view, or search results (excluding advertisements).

## BILL BASICS

- Requires social media platforms to publish, inform users of, and consistently apply the standards used for banning posts, and deplatforming and shadow banning users.
- Allows users to opt out of post-prioritization and shadow banning algorithms and ensures users are notified within seven days of being censored or deplatformed.
- Authorizes users to seek civil relief from companies that fail to consistently apply standards or provide proper notice of censoring or deplatforming.
- Prohibits social media platforms from deplatforming political candidates – the Florida Election Commission may fine a platform that does so \$250,000/day for a statewide candidate and \$25,000/day for all other candidates.
- Failure to comply with user and candidate protections constitutes a violation of the Florida Deceptive and Unfair Trade Practices Act.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 77-38  
SENATE 23-17

**STATUS**

SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR

# HB 969

# CONSUMER DATA PRIVACY



REPRESENTATIVE  
**MCFARLAND**

**HB 969 would have protected Floridians by enhancing current and creating new data privacy protections.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- While we celebrate the spirit of American ingenuity and innovation, we must also ensure there are protections for Floridians' private information.
- Would have empowered consumers with the right to find out what information companies have about you, tell them to delete and/or correct the information, and refuse to allow companies to sell your data.
- Would have protected consumers by providing remedies for data breaches or failure to comply with a request to delete, correct, or opt out of information being sold or shared.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- HB 969 would have expanded the provisions in the Florida Information Protection Act of 2014 that requires commercial and government entities, which store or maintain a Floridian's personal information, to take reasonable measures to protect such information and report data breaches.

## BILL BASICS

- Would have protected small businesses by applying these provisions to "controllers" or companies that meet two of the three following criteria:
  - A minimum threshold of 50,000 or more Floridian users.
  - \$50 million of revenue per year.
  - 50% of revenue stemming from the sharing of private information.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 118-1

**STATUS** PASSED  
HOUSE ONLY





**HB 1113 would have improved pedestrian safety by introducing new requirements for crosswalk installation and implementing important changes to existing safety measures.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Would have prioritized pedestrian safety by ensuring ideal placement of mid-block crosswalks (MBC) and requiring a traffic engineering study to be conducted by a licensed professional engineer prior to installation of a new MBC.
- Would have established consistent pedestrian safety measures by ensuring the crosswalk is controlled by the necessary traffic control signal devices and pedestrian control signals.
- Would have encouraged drivers to stop when a pedestrian is crossing the road at an MBC by requiring the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to seek federal approval for the use of red rectangular rapid flashing beacons instead of yellow.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- HB 1113 is named in honor of Sophia Nelson, who was in sixth grade at Surfside Elementary in Satellite Beach when she was fatally struck by a vehicle.
- FDOT and local governments use various types of equipment or signals to indicate when pedestrians may safely cross at MBCs. One type of signal commonly used is a rectangular rapid flash beacon (RRFB). The RRFB consists of two rapidly and alternately flashing yellow rectangular LED lights that function as a warning beacon to drivers.

## BILL BASICS

- Would have enhanced pedestrian safety measures by requiring MBCs installed on public roads to conform to the latest Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and other applicable FDOT standards.
- Would have improved safety by requiring a pedestrian-facing sign to contain language stating pedestrian duties.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 91-25

**STATUS** PASSED  
HOUSE ONLY

# HB 1351

REPRESENTATIVE  
**ALOUPIS**

# MONEY SERVICES BUSINESSES



**HB 1351 would have provided regulatory clarity for virtual currency like Bitcoin.**



## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Would have protected virtual currency customers by regulating virtual currency transmission in the same way as other currency.
- Would have clarified the regulation of virtual currency in Florida.



## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- A recent case from the Third District Court of Appeal involving Bitcoin illustrates the need to expressly provide whether and how virtual currency falls within current law.
- Additionally, this case illustrates the need to clarify certain definitions, such as who is required to be licensed as a "money transmitter."



## BILL BASICS

- Would have made virtual currency expressly subject to money transmitter regulations.
- Would have clarified that a money transmitter license is only required for a person acting as an intermediary between two parties.
- Would have made conforming changes to the prohibition on unlicensed activity and added rulemaking authority for recordkeeping requirements related to virtual currency.
- Would have amended the permissible investment statute to require that, during the period of transmission, the money transmitter must hold virtual currency of the same type and amount owed or obligated to the other location or person on the receiving end of the transmission.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 115-0

**STATUS**

PASSED  
HOUSE ONLY

2021

# SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

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## EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT

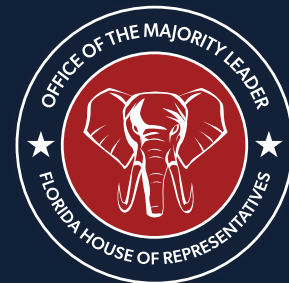
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# HB 3

REPRESENTATIVE  
**TRABULSY**

# HOME BOOK DELIVERY FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS



**HB 3 invests in our children by creating Florida’s first statewide, free book distribution program – the New Worlds Reading Initiative – and empowering parents to engage with their children’s reading activities.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Reading plays an irreplaceable role throughout a child’s development and is one of the cornerstones for a promising future.
- We can better educate our youth by encouraging literacy-rich environments at home.
- Delivers free books to struggling readers each month within the school year, giving children the option to choose book genres and topics they want to read most and providing parents with resources to help their child’s reading skills and instill a love of reading.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Results from the 2018-2019 Florida statewide, standardized English Language Arts (ELA) assessment results, show that 43% of grade 3 students are reading below grade level.
- The statewide, standardized grade 3 ELA assessment is a critical indicator of academic performance, as 88% of children who did not graduate from high school struggled with reading in 3rd grade.
- Based on the most recent statewide, standardized ELA assessment results, it is estimated that over 557,344 K-5 students at minimum would be eligible to participate in the initiative.

## BILL BASICS

- Encourages donations to fund the New Worlds Reading Initiative with tax credits for contributions – keeping the program free of charge to families.
- For nine months out of the year, eligible K-5 students will receive one book of their choice per month.
- To be eligible for the free book distribution, students must be in grades K-5, have a substantial reading deficiency, or have scored below a level 3 on the prior year’s statewide, standardized ELA assessment.
- Parents are provided with training materials, video and text resources, tips, and hyperlinks to video modules periodically to help them engage in their students’ reading and literacy skills.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 114-0  
SENATE 40-0

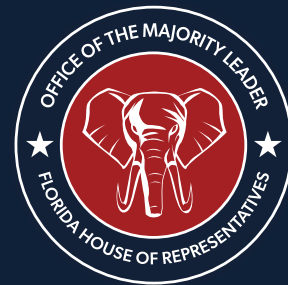
**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# HB 5

REPRESENTATIVE  
**ZIKA**

# CIVIC EDUCATION CURRICULUM



**HB 5 educates our students on respecting the institutions of our government – inspiring them to foster an environment where they can achieve the American dream.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- The U.S. is a melting pot filled with big dreams, diversity, and unique accomplishments.
- Florida’s students deserve to hear more about the stories behind the life-changing endeavors so many have undertaken to achieve the American dream.
- Requires comparative discussion of political ideologies that conflict with our nation’s founding principles, such as communism and totalitarianism.
- Builds a “Portraits in Patriotism” video library of personal stories of diverse individuals who exhibit civic-minded qualities.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Currently, civics education is built around textbooks and abstract discussion to teach students about their shared rights and responsibilities – HB 5 contextualizes the civics curriculum to give students a better understanding of what it means to be an American.

## BILL BASICS

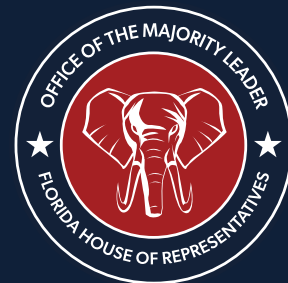
- Requires the Department of Education to develop or approve an integrated civics education curriculum for K-12 students that is part of regular schoolwork to help prepare students to be civically responsible and knowledgeable adults.
- Personalizes the civics curriculum by sharing first-hand experiences from victims of other nation’s governing ideologies and prompts comparisons to the United States’ governing ideologies.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 115-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS



# HB 131

REPRESENTATIVE  
**DUGGAN**

# EDUCATOR CONDUCT

**HB 131 protects Florida's children by improving the processes that hold school employees accountable for engaging in sexual misconduct with a student.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Too often, school employees can engage in sexual misconduct with a student and evade any consequences by moving amongst schools, districts, and employers.
- Prevents further victimization of children by creating employment screening tools, establishing processes for schools to use when hiring personnel, and prohibiting the employment of perpetrators.
- Prohibits public, charter, and private schools that participate in state scholarship programs from employing perpetrators for positions that have direct contact with students.
- Creates a duty on employers to report perpetrators for inclusion on the Department of Education's disqualification list – prohibiting them from further contact with students.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- There have been cases in Florida in which school personnel, substitute teachers, or contractors have committed sexual misconduct and continued serving in positions that require direct contact with students.
- Many times, these individuals resigned before the completion of an investigation and were subsequently employed because they were never formally charged.
- For example, in Hillsborough County, five teachers who resigned while under investigation for wrongdoing later returned to the classroom through a company that provides temporary workers for the school district. Of those five, two worked as substitute teachers after resigning.

## BILL BASICS

- Requires school districts to execute an affidavit of separation that captures the circumstances of a former employee's termination or resignation in lieu of termination.
- Requires the Commissioner of Education to determine probable cause within 90 days after receiving a legally sufficient complaint against the perpetrator.
- Requires that school districts complete their investigation and determination of sanctions related to misconduct related to the health, safety, and welfare of students within one year of receipt of a legally sufficient complaint.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 116-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS



**HB 233 supports our students and the First Amendment by providing answers as to whether Florida’s students feel silenced on campus and by exposing cancel culture.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- College students and faculty should feel free to express their opinions in a marketplace of free ideas.
- Helps expose suppression of diverse speech and beliefs, and encourages free speech in educational institutions through an intellectual freedom and viewpoint diversity survey.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Intellectual freedom and viewpoint diversity are essential to the education of Florida’s college and university students.
- Research shows that without support for the principles of intellectual freedom and viewpoint diversity, students at colleges and universities may self-censor or feel unable to express their opinions to faculty or their classmates.

## BILL BASICS

- Requires the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors to create or select a survey for colleges and universities to administer.
- The survey must be objective, nonpartisan, and statistically valid, and results must be compiled and published each September, beginning in 2022.
- The intellectual freedom and viewpoint diversity survey will give us more data to help evaluate whether our universities and colleges truly are a place where everyone can participate in a free exchange of ideas.
- Allows students to record lectures with the lecturer’s consent only for educational purposes, complaints against the university, and evidence in a criminal or civil proceeding.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 77-42  
SENATE 23-15

**STATUS** PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS

# HB 241

REPRESENTATIVE  
**GRALL**

# PARENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS



## HB 241 empowers parents and strengthens families by creating the "Parents' Bill of Rights."

### MAJOR MESSAGES

- Ensures and maintains parents' fundamental liberty in the upbringing of their child by creating the "Parents' Bill of Rights," which enumerates the rights of parents relating to their minor child's education, health care, and criminal justice procedures.
- Prohibits the state, its political subdivisions, or any government entity or institution from infringing upon the fundamental right of a parent to direct the upbringing, education, health care, and mental health of their minor child.
- Requires state action that infringes upon this parental right to be reviewed with strict scrutiny.

### CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Florida Supreme Court has recognized that parents have a fundamental liberty interest in determining the care and upbringing of their children and these rights may not be intruded upon absent a compelling state interest.
- It is widely acknowledged that parents have the fundamental liberty to offer guidance and weigh in on important decisions facing their child. Parents should be free to do this without state interference.

### BILL BASICS

- For education-related parental rights, HB 241 requires school districts to adopt notification procedures for specific parental rights and policies that outline their plans and procedures to promote parental involvement.
- Health care practitioners must obtain parental consent before performing health care services on a minor child or face disciplinary action for violating these parental consent requirements.
- Requires parental consent for the collection of certain identifying information for a minor child and requires parental notification when a state actor suspects a child is the victim of a criminal offense but provides exceptions.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 78-37  
SENATE 24-15

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS



# HB 419

REPRESENTATIVE  
**GRALL**

# EARLY LEARNING AND EARLY GRADE SUCCESS



**HB 419 transforms and revitalizes Florida's early education system by improving state accountability for VPK programs based on student outcomes, learning gains, and child-teacher interactions.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- A quality education at an early age is the catalyst for a bright future for every child.
- Aligns early learning with the K-20 system to ensure the state approaches education from a birth to 20 perspective, providing a comprehensive alignment of educational programs beginning from birth that support school readiness and future school success.
- Holds early learning coalitions accountable to parents and the communities they serve by providing more transparent information such as inspection reports and provider performance details.
- Enhances the quality and care of our child care providers by holding them more accountable and encouraging them to qualify for the Gold Seal Quality Care Program.
- Expands the State Board of Education's (SBE) current oversight of K-20 public education to include early learning programs and coalitions to raise their standards for the betterment of our early learners.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Florida's early learning system is underperforming due to a lack of accountability and fractured governance.
- Our child care facilities are not giving children the quality care and education they deserve because they lack the incentives to do so.

## BILL BASICS

- Repeals the Office of Early Learning (OEL) and establishes the Division of Early Learning within the Department of Education (DOE), which places statewide governance of early learning programs, including VPK and School Readiness, under the SBE to increase focus on making these programs the best they can be.
- Establishes a timeline for phasing in a new VPK accountability system based on a performance metric that includes student outcomes, learning gains, and child-teacher interactions.
- Transfers responsibility of the Gold Seal Quality Care Program from the Department of Children and Families to DOE to raise the standard of care at our facility and home-based child care providers.
- Allows certain child care providers on military bases to participate in early learning programs.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 118-0  
SENATE 40-0

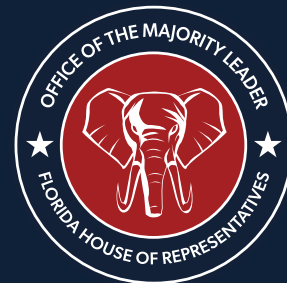
**STATUS**

SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR

# HB 429

REPRESENTATIVES  
**LEARNED &  
MANEY**

# PURPLE STAR CAMPUSES



**HB 429 helps transition students from military families by creating the Purple Star Campus Program that identifies schools that support military-connected children.**



## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Helps students from military families with relocation by requiring the Department of Education to establish a Purple Star Campus Program that identifies schools that support military-connected children, including public, charter, and private schools participating in Florida's scholarship programs.



## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Students from military families often experience academic and social-emotional challenges as they relocate to new schools and homes due to a parent's change in duty station.
- Approximately 38% of all active duty service members have children.
- Florida is home to 20 military installations, 65,267 military personnel, and over 52,000 children of military personnel.



## BILL BASICS

- To be recognized as Purple Star Campuses, schools must meet the following requirements:
  - Designate a staff member as a military liaison.
  - Maintain resources for military students and families on the school's website.
  - Make a student-led transition program available to help military students in transitioning into the school.
  - Offer training opportunities for school staff members on issues relating to military students.
  - Reserve at least 5% of open enrollment seats for military-connected students.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 117-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR

# MOMENTS OF SILENCE IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



**HB 529 gives Florida's K-12 public school students a moment of silence and reflection to get themselves ready for each day.**



## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Today's political climate and the rise of social media are burdensome and distracting for many students; a brief moment of silence gives them an opportunity to clear their heads and center themselves for the day ahead.
- Creates a mandatory one to two minutes moment of silence and reflection for all of our K-12 public school students in the state.



## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- 14 states require a moment of silence for the purpose of meditation, reflection, or prayer during each school day.
- 17 states authorize the school district, school, or teachers to allow students to observe a period of silence for meditation, reflection, or prayer during each school day.
- Florida law currently permits district school boards to set aside up to two minutes for silent prayer or meditation at the start of each school day or each school week in the public schools in the district.



## BILL BASICS

- Prevents teachers from getting involved or making suggestions as to how their students should take advantage of the moment of silence and reflection.
- Requires teachers to encourage parents to discuss and advise their children on how best to use the moment of silence.
- Allows students to use the moment of silence and reflection however they see fit, as long as they do not interfere with other students' participation.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 94-24  
SENATE 32-6

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# HB 545

REPRESENTATIVE  
**CHANEY**

# REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND DISEASE EDUCATION



**HB 545 empowers parents to make decisions that represent their child's best interest by letting them choose whether to exempt their child from a school district's reproductive health or disease education class.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Benefits Florida families by reinforcing the crucial role of a parent – making the best decisions on behalf of their children's education and wellbeing.
- Gives parents the opportunity to review content that would be discussed in a school district's reproductive health or disease education class.
- Requires school districts to notify parents of their right to exempt their child from the teaching of reproductive health or any disease, including HIV/AIDS, through the submission of a written request.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Parents of public school students are required by law to receive accurate and timely information regarding their child's academic progress and must be informed of ways they can help their child succeed in school.
- In the Florida Education Code, K-12 students and their parents are afforded numerous statutory rights pertaining to student education, including the right to opt out of reproductive health and disease education.

## BILL BASICS

- Makes this option easy for parents to navigate, by requiring school districts to post information about how to request the exemption on their website's homepage, which must also include a link for parents to access and view the instructional materials used in reproductive health and disease curriculum.
- Requires district school boards to annually approve all instructional materials used to teach reproductive health or any disease in an open, noticed public meeting.
- Enhances transparency by requiring school districts to provide a process for the public to review and comment on the adoption of such instructional materials.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 82-24  
SENATE 36-4

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS



## **SB 590 prioritizes student safety and mental health by keeping parents involved in school safety, security, and involuntary examinations.**

### **MAJOR MESSAGES**

- Keeps parents involved in their child’s safety by requiring timely parental notice of school safety and emergency incidents on school grounds, school transportation, or school-sponsored activities.
- Protects our students’ health and safety by requiring traditional public and charter school principals to make a reasonable effort to notify a student’s parent before the student is removed from school properties or activities and transported to a Baker Act facility.

### **CRUCIAL CONTEXT**

- Currently, Florida law requires a traditional public or charter school principal to immediately notify the parent of a student who is removed from school grounds, school transportation, or a school-sponsored activity and transported to a Baker Act receiving facility.
- In practice, this may result in a student’s removal from school before a parent is aware that the student has been transported to a Baker Act receiving facility.

### **BILL BASICS**

- Helps school safety officers better protect students by requiring them to complete mental health crisis intervention training.
- Strengthens transparency by requiring the Department of Children and Families to include the number of students removed from school and Baker Acted in its biannual report.
- School districts must collect this data and provide it to the Office of Safe Schools, which then must share it for inclusion in the biannual report.
- Allows parental notification for Baker Act removal to be delayed up to 24 hours if the principal believes such delay is necessary to avoid jeopardizing the health and safety of the student.
- Encourages the use of de-escalation techniques with a student in crisis before the student is removed from school for transport to a Baker Act receiving facility.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 116-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS



**SB 1028 creates the Fairness in Women’s Sports Act – ensuring that biological women and girls have the opportunity to play on a level playing field and enjoy the benefits that come with competing in sports.**

**MAJOR MESSAGES**

- Title IX has empowered girls and women to play sports since 1972 – protecting their right to succeed in sports and in life.
- Maintains opportunities for young female athletes to excel and receive recognition for their athletic accomplishments.
- SB 1028 – The Fairness in Women’s Sports Act – requires interscholastic, intercollegiate, intramural, and club athletics teams or sports at the public secondary and public postsecondary levels to be designated based on biological sex at birth and reserves female teams for biological women and girls.

**CRUCIAL CONTEXT**

- Biological differences between men and women result in categorically different strength, speed, and endurance.
- Elite male athletes perform 10-12% better than elite female athletes.
- From 2017-2019, two biological males competing against biological females won 15 female track & field state championships. In the preceding three years, those state championships were won by nine biological females – those are real lost opportunities.

**BILL BASICS**

- Without this bill, female athletes run the risk of being displaced and deprived of athletic scholarships and other benefits that would enhance their futures.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 79-37  
SENATE 23-16

**STATUS** SIGNED BY GOVERNOR



**SB 1028 expands charter schools to meet the growing demand for school choice, close opportunity gaps, and increase student achievement.**

 **MAJOR MESSAGES**

- Charter schools provide families the opportunity to choose a school that best meets their child’s individual needs.
- Expands access to school choice by allowing state universities and colleges to sponsor charter schools, in addition to school districts, to help meet Florida’s workforce and educational needs.
- Gives students from low-performing schools more access to enroll at schools of hope.

 **CRUCIAL CONTEXT**

- An application for a new charter school may be made by an individual, teachers, parents, a group of individuals, a municipality, or a legal entity organized under Florida law.
- While a charter school must be a public or nonprofit entity, it may be managed by a for-profit education management organization.
- A school of hope is defined as a charter school operated by a hope operator to serve students from one or more persistently low-performing schools; is located within the attendance zone of the persistently low-performing school or within a five mile radius of the school, whichever is greater; and is a Title I eligible school.

 **BILL BASICS**

- Creates opportunities for more students to enroll at high-performing charter schools.
- Gives families more options by allowing high-performing charter schools to submit two applications at a time, instead of two per year, to open new charter schools.
- Raises the standards for low-performing schools which allows more financially-disadvantaged students to qualify for a high-quality education at a school of hope.
- Allows certain schools of hope to report their students to the Department of Education directly, rather than through a school district; to provide for background screening for their employees and governing board members; and to be eligible to receive charter school capital outlay funding.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 79-37  
SENATE 23-16

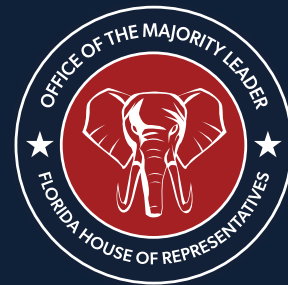
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SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR

# HB 1159

REPRESENTATIVE  
**BUSATTA  
CABRERA**

# EDUCATION



**HB 1159 improves the certification process for teachers by creating additional pathways to satisfy program requirements and enhancing the program's core curricula – ultimately giving our students the quality educators they deserve.**



## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Enhances the core curricula for teacher preparation programs to include components that will ultimately improve their skills and benefit their students' wellbeing.
- Benefits Florida's educators by streamlining the teacher certification process – giving teachers more ways to satisfy the current requirements to gain certification.



## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Teacher preparation programs are accountable for producing competent educators with the necessary skills to achieve the state's education goals and instruct our children.



## BILL BASICS

- Expands options for applicants by allowing them to substitute a Department of Education (DOE) approved master's degree or higher to satisfy the mastery of general knowledge requirement.
- Gives applicants an alternative to satisfy the professional education competence requirement by completing a DOE approved Educator Preparation Institute (EPI) and showing receipt of a highly effective rating on their performance evaluation.
- Improves educator skills by requiring that the core curricula for teacher preparation programs and EPI certification programs include instruction on the early identification of students in crisis, technology in education, and distance learning.
- Allows an organization of private schools or charter schools to develop an alternative teacher preparation program for certified teachers that must be submitted to the DOE for approval.
- Increases supports for school administrators and leaders by expanding the William Cecil Golden Professional Development Program for School Leaders while focusing on data and evidence-based training and supports.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 114-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS



# HB 1261

REPRESENTATIVE  
**TOLEDO**

# HIGHER EDUCATION



**HB 1261 protects and expands access to our higher education institutions to improve Florida's workforce and help meet Florida's economic needs.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Creates several new fee waivers, including a tuition deal that encourages state university students to enroll in programs linked to high-demand jobs and STEM (science, technology, engineering, or math) by giving students a BOGO (buy one upper-level course, get one upper-level course free) to help meet Florida's workforce needs.
- Creates the State University Free Seat Program that offers nontraditional students, veterans, and active members of the military one free online course and a tuition discount on online education courses when enrolled in one of our state online baccalaureate programs.
- Establishes an out-of-state fee waiver at state universities for top-performing students who have a grandparent who is a Florida resident to help attract talented young people who have a connection to our state in hopes they will graduate and begin their careers in Florida and contribute to our economy.
- Provides COVID-19 liability protections for postsecondary institutions that have taken reasonable necessary actions in compliance with government guidelines to diminish COVID-19's impact or spread.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The resident undergraduate tuition rate for the State University System is currently set in statute at \$105.07 per credit.

## BILL BASICS

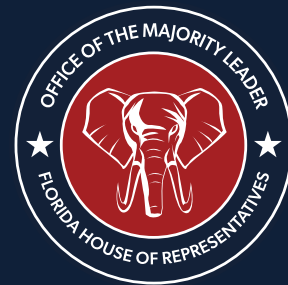
- To qualify for the BOGO deal, students must be an in-state resident, earn at least 60 semester credit hours towards a baccalaureate degree within two academic years of initial enrollment, and be enrolled in one of eight STEM programs of strategic emphasis selected by the Board of Governors.
- To qualify for the Free Seat fee waiver, students must be a veteran; active duty member of the U.S. Armed Forces; an active drilling member of the FL National Guard; or not enrolled in a postsecondary for more than five years. In addition, students may not have previously earned a bachelor's degree and must remain enrolled at least part-time in the program.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 102-11  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS



# WORKFORCE RELATED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

## HB 1507

REPRESENTATIVE  
YARBOROUGH

**HB 1507 improves our economy, redesigns our education and job training systems, and streamlines job training programs to make it easier for Floridians to find good jobs and maintain careers.**

### MAJOR MESSAGES

- 58% of Floridians have lost their job, had a pay cut, or have seen their hours reduced due to the pandemic. It is clear now more than ever that our workforce and education systems need redesigning to effectively serve Floridians.
- Our state can transform our job training system from being fragmented and inefficient into one that puts opportunities for long-term employment first.
- HB 1507 – the REACH Act – lays the foundation for a framework overhaul that integrates the pieces, establishes accountability, and breaks down barriers to employment and economic mobility for students, workers, and job seekers of today and tomorrow.
- Creates a single Workforce Information System to make it easier for consumers to access services and career planning, and register for job training.

### CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Since 2017, CareerSource has allocated \$792 million to assist just 477,126 job seekers.
- Florida's job training system is made up of several entities that work together to provide workforce services, including: CareerSource Florida, the Department of Economic Opportunity, and 24 local workforce development boards.
- Our current job training system struggles to coordinate service delivery due to fragmented case management systems and siloed data collection. HB 1507 fixes this issue.

### BILL BASICS

- Modernizes our workforce delivery system by building a statewide job training ecosystem that promotes lifelong learning to provide comprehensive support that effectively serves Floridians.
- Creates a consumer-first workforce system that meets Florida's students, workers, and job seekers where they are – from middle, high school, and college campuses to those looking to get back into the workforce after a lapse in employment.
- Improves career planning by providing resources to students as they progress along their educational experiences to ensure that students understand the different options available to them and can plan for the future.
- Gives the state more flexibility in overseeing workforce investment statewide and increases transparency and accountability for local workforce boards.
- Helps fill health care jobs by requiring the Talent Development Council to coordinate, facilitate, and communicate statewide efforts to meet supply and demand needs for Florida's health care workforce.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 117-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS



**HB 7011 aims to improve literacy rates and close achievement gaps by providing parents, teachers, and administrators with the knowledge, skills, and support necessary to effectively teach reading.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Provides teachers, parents, and administrators with the training and tools needed to close achievement gaps and overcome literacy obstacles.
- Empowers parents to help advance their child’s literacy skills at home and in the classroom.
- Creates a statewide VPK-8th grade progress monitoring system.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Research shows that implementation of science-based reading instruction – evidence-based practices supported by student outcomes – is the most effective way to teach children how to read, including children with learning difficulties, such as dyslexia.
- Parental involvement and a literacy-rich home environment have also been shown to improve student literacy skills.

## BILL BASICS

- Establishes the RAISE program, which identifies elementary schools with low reading performance and provides them with supports to improve through 20 regional literacy expert support teams.
- Outlines criteria to identify schools that need support – schools qualify if less than 50% of the school’s students score below a 3 on the statewide, standardized English Language Arts assessment or are not on track for promotion to 4th grade based on progress monitoring data.
- Under the RAISE program, HB 7011 establishes the New World Scholars Program where high school juniors and seniors may serve as tutors for students with a substantial reading deficiency in grades K-3.
  - Allows these hours spent tutoring to count towards community service hours to help participating high school students meet the requirements for graduation and the Bright Futures Scholarship.
- Provides supports for the transition from Pre-K to Kindergarten.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 117-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR

# HB 7033

REPRESENTATIVE  
**KOSTER**

# TASK FORCE ON CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP FOR BOYS



**HB 7033 creates a task force that will identify ways to help close the gender achievement gap for boys and prepare them for success in school and in life.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Boys generally have lower literacy rates than girls, and research shows that boys benefit from specialized instruction that supports their unique needs.
- Creates the Task Force on Closing the Achievement Gap for Boys to identify effective ways to help schools and educators better prepare boys.
- Benefits teachers, male students, schools, and all Floridians by closing the achievement gap for boys.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In Florida, data from the 2018-2019 statewide, standardized English Language Arts assessment shows that 44% of 3rd grade boys are reading below grade level, a 4% deficit as compared to 48% of girls.
- Girls generally outperform boys in reading and writing in most school districts in the United States, regardless of the district's demographics—girls are about half a grade ahead by 3rd grade and almost a full grade ahead by 8th grade.
- Boys outnumber girls in remedial math and English classes.
- Boys receive 70% of the Ds and Fs on report cards.
- Almost 74% of children diagnosed with learning disabilities are boys.

## BILL BASICS

- The Speaker of the Florida House and the Senate President will each appoint five members from their respective chambers to the Task Force.
- The Governor will appoint a parent of a boy enrolled in either the VPK or school readiness program and a parent of a boy enrolled in a public elementary school to the Task Force.
- Requires the Task Force to submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature detailing their recommendations on how to close the achievement gap.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 117-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS** PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# HB 7045

REPRESENTATIVE  
**FINE**

# SCHOOL CHOICE



**HB 7045 ensures Florida remains the national leader in school choice by improving and expanding our state's scholarship programs to benefit Florida families.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Florida is at the forefront of the school choice movement, championing opportunities that empower families to decide what type of education best meets their child's individual needs.
- Reduces the complexity of the school choice system to make it easier for Floridians to navigate.
- Creates an omnibus school choice program to serve Florida students. It combines the Gardiner and McKay Scholarships, and moves them under the Family Empowerment Scholarship (FES) to create one program with two distinct scholarship tracks: one to serve low-income students and one for students with disabilities.
- Provides sustainable funding through the FEFP so the program can meet the demand of students.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- For decades, Florida has been a national leader in providing high quality education options for thousands of parents and students.
- In addition to a myriad of public options, Florida offers scholarship programs that allow parents of eligible students to register and attend private schools that may better serve a student's particular needs.
- Research shows students participating in these scholarship programs were 15% more likely to enroll in a public college than their peers.
- Private schools must meet specific criteria in order to be eligible to participate in these programs, and the Department of Education and Commissioner of Education are tasked with oversight responsibilities.

## BILL BASICS

- Expands school choice by allowing the following students to enroll, regardless of program capacity: foster children, adopted children, children of active duty military families and students who attended a public school in the prior school year if they are low-income or a student with a disability.
- Allows scholarship students with disabilities to use funds in multiple ways through an Education Savings Account.
- Benefits families by eliminating the prior public attendance requirement for FES students and removing the need to annually renew their scholarship.
- Increases the scholarship amount for Florida Tax Credit, Hope, and FES students so they receive the full amount they generate in a public school.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 79-36  
SENATE 25-14

**STATUS**

SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR

# HB 997

REPRESENTATIVE  
**GARRISON**

# PUB.REC. AND MEETINGS/ POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION EXECUTIVE SEARCH



**HB 997 would have protected applicants for president of a Florida public university or state college – keeping their personal identifying information confidential and exempt during the initial stages of the applicant process.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Would have ensured that Florida’s sunshine laws allow our public universities and state colleges to attract the most qualified and diverse group of applicants to serve in the critical role of president.
- Would have created an exemption from Florida’s public record and open meetings laws for personal identifying information of applicants for president.
- Would have provided narrowly tailored exceptions that would cease to apply at least 21 days before a meeting where finalist interviews are conducted or board action is taken.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Florida’s 12 public state universities and 28 public state colleges are governed by boards of trustees who have the power to hire and fire university and college presidents.
- State universities and Florida College System institutions often establish search committees for filling a vacant president position and all information gathered must currently be made available to the public.
- A lack of confidentiality discourages and hinders qualified applicants because their personal information could be made public.

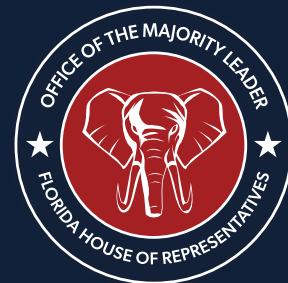
## BILL BASICS

- Would have maintained transparency by giving the public access to the personal identifying information associated with the final group of applicants for president.
- Would have required any portions of board meetings occurring in the shade to be on the record and recorded in their entirety, and would have required portions of meetings establishing applicant qualifications or salary range to take place in the sunshine.
- Included a sunset after five years unless legislative action is taken.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 101-16

**STATUS**

PASSED  
HOUSE ONLY



**HB 1027**  
REPRESENTATIVE  
**BARNABY**

# OPENING REMARKS AT HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC CONTESTS

**HB 1027 would have protected freedom of speech and promoted sportsmanship in our high schools by ensuring the ability to have opening remarks at high school sports' championship events.**



## MAJOR MESSAGES

- The Legislature has a duty to preserve and protect our First Amendment Rights.
- Would have protected freedom of speech by requiring Florida's athletic associations to allow opening remarks at Florida high school championship events.



## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Florida law does not codify the ability for schools to give opening remarks at sporting events.
- Opening remarks foster the ideals of competition and sportsmanship while allowing players and coaches a time to focus before a game.

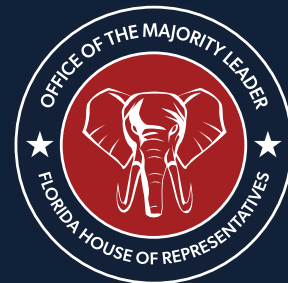


## BILL BASICS

- Would have required public high school athletic association policies to provide schools participating in a high school championship contest or series an opportunity to make remarks up to two minutes in length.
- Would have clarified that an association may not control the content of the speaker and must announce prior to the opening remarks that the content is not endorsed by or reflects the views and opinions of the association.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 78-37

**STATUS** PASSED  
HOUSE ONLY



# HB 1033

REPRESENTATIVE  
**BORRERO**

# CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

**HB 1033 would have encouraged students awarded a Florida high school certificate of completion to continue their education, further their career, and support our workforce by ensuring they are eligible to enroll at technical schools.**



## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Would have expanded eligibility requirements for enrollment at technical schools to include students with a certificate of completion.
- Would have given more students the opportunity to continue their education, refine their skills, and jump start their careers to ultimately contribute to our workforce.



## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Current law does not expressly state that students with certificates of completion are eligible to enroll in programs at a district career center or charter technical center.
- Students are awarded a certificate of completion when they have earned 24 high school credits and haven't passed the statewide assessments or met the 2.0 GPA requirement for a diploma.
- Florida currently has 48 career centers and 233 students received certificates of completion at the end of the 2019-2020 school year.



## BILL BASICS

- Would have included enrollment in programs offered by school district career centers and charter technical career centers.
- Would have allowed certificates of completion to be used to qualify for enrollment eligibility as an alternative to a high school diploma.
- Would have encouraged students with certificates of completion to enroll in technical programs by closing a loophole in current law that allows career centers to deny these students.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 114-0

**STATUS**

PASSED  
HOUSE ONLY



# HB 1505

REPRESENTATIVE  
**MELO**

# WORKFORCE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES



**HB 1505 improves our economy by streamlining job training programs to make it easier for Floridians to find good jobs.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

\*Provisions in HB 1505 were included in HB 1507, which passed both chambers.

- Floridians should not have to work so hard to get to work.
- Our state can transform our job training system from being fragmented and inefficient into one that puts opportunities for long-term employment first.
- Creates a single Workforce Information System to make it easier for consumers to access services, career plan, and register for job training.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Florida's job training system is made up of several entities that work together to provide workforce services, including: CareerSource Florida, the Department of Economic Opportunity, and 24 local workforce development boards.
- Our current job training system struggles to coordinate service delivery due to fragmented case management systems and siloed data collection. HB 1505 fixes this issue.
- A work-based learning opportunity connects classroom education with on-the-job experience – it aligns classroom and workplace learning, applies important skills in a work setting, and includes meaningful mentorship.

## BILL BASICS

- Creates a consumer-first workforce system that meets Florida's students, workers, and job seekers where they are – from middle, high school, and college campuses to those looking to get back into the workforce after a lapse in employment.
- Improves career planning by providing resources to students as they progress along their educational experiences to ensure that students understand the different options available to them and can plan for the future.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 116-0

**STATUS** PASSED HOUSE ONLY



**HB 7035 would have built on past legislation to further protect Florida’s students by improving transparency around school safety and security based on recommendations from the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission (MSD Commission).**



## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Florida’s parents should feel confident in their child’s safety at school.
- Would have taken additional steps to protect our children and make their schools safer by giving students, teachers, and law enforcement the additional resources to help prevent tragedies similar to that at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School (MSD).
- Would have prioritized families by requiring district school boards and charter school governing boards to adopt a family reunification plan.
- Would have strengthened school mental health services and required safe-school officers to complete mental health crisis intervention training.
- Would have held school districts accountable by withholding further payment of the superintendent’s salary if the district failed to comply with school safety and security requirements.



## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In response to the shooting at MSD on February 14, 2018, the Florida Legislature passed SB 7026, the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act (Act). HB 7035 would have built on the Act to keep our classrooms safe for Florida’s students.
- Currently, FortifyFL users may submit tips anonymously with their identity remaining confidential and exempt from public record disclosure requirements – leading to an increase in false reports. This bill would have helped curb false reporting by notifying users that individuals who knowingly report false tips will be turned over to law enforcement.



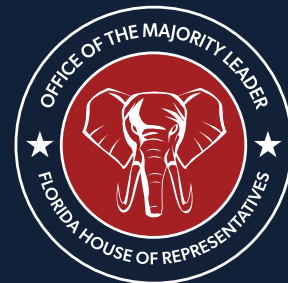
## BILL BASICS

- Would have kept parents involved in their child’s safety by requiring timely parental notice of school safety and emergency incidents on school grounds, school transportation, or at school-sponsored activities.
- Would have expanded the membership of the MSD Commission by three to a total of 19 members to ensure equal representation of school district, law enforcement, behavioral health care professionals, and parents.
- Would have dissuaded individuals from knowingly submitting false tips on FortifyFL by requiring the app to notify its users that false tips will be given to law enforcement for further investigation and may result in criminal penalties.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 117-0

**STATUS**

PASSED  
HOUSE ONLY



# HJR 1461

REPRESENTATIVE  
**GARRISON**

# LIMITATION ON TERMS OF OFFICE FOR MEMBERS OF A DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

**HJR 1461 would have given Florida voters the option to decide whether term limits for school board members is best to curb the growing politicization of this nonpartisan role.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- District school boards are politicizing a nonpartisan role that should serve the wellbeing of our students.
- Would have empowered voters by letting them decide whether school board members should serve with term limits.
- Would have benefitted all Floridians because district school boards would have better prioritized the students and communities they serve – the reason for their position in the first place.
- Would have proposed to prohibit school board members that have served for eight consecutive years from appearing on a ballot for reelection to that office.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Florida Constitution establishes term limits for other elected officials, including the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Cabinet, State Senators and Representatives.

## BILL BASICS

- There would have been exceptions to the proposed term limits – HJR 1461 would have exempted service in a term of office which commenced before November 8, 2022, from counting towards the proposed term limits.
- Would not have mandated term limits for district school board members, but rather proposed an amendment to the Florida Constitution, which Floridians would have voted on in the next general election.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 87-30

**STATUS** PASSED  
HOUSE ONLY

2021

# SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

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## HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

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# SB 80 (HB 1473)

REPRESENTATIVE  
**BUSATTA  
CABRERA**

# CHILD WELFARE



**Some foster children age out of care at 18 without a permanent family, which can make their transition to adulthood hard. We can do more to support them.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Improves placement stability and reduces placement trauma by minimizing placement moves.
- Requires thoughtful transitions when placement moves happen and supports sibling connections.
- Ensures child welfare professionals are informed of important information about a child's case.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- If a family's problems cannot be addressed so that a child can remain at home, the child welfare system finds safe out-of-home placements for these children.
- In State Fiscal Year 2019-20, 1,043 youth 17 years of age were in Florida's foster care system. Later, 866 (83%) of these youth aged out of care at the age of 18.
- 27% of a group of young adults who aged out of foster care reported in 2018 that they had experienced homelessness in the past year.

## BILL BASICS

- Supports older foster youth and former foster youth who have aged out of care by:
  - Preparing them for adulthood by helping them gain necessary life skills.
  - Requiring more intensive transition planning to begin at age 16, rather than 17, to allow more time for preparation.
  - Supporting older foster youth who age out of foster care by requiring community based care lead agencies to provide intensive transition supports if needed.
  - Creating an Office of Continuing Care in the Department of Children and Families to be a contact for help for young adults who age out of the child welfare system until age 26.
- Improves placement and transitions to help meet children's varying needs by requiring:
  - The use of multidisciplinary teams when an important decision about a child's life needs to be made.
  - An education transition plan when a decision about the child would impact a child's educational options.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 114-0  
SENATE 38-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# SB 96 (HB 7039)

REPRESENTATIVE  
**ALTMAN**

# CHILD WELFARE



**The community-based care (CBC) system has had positive results for Florida's children and families, but we can do more to protect children, promote self-sufficient families, and improve recovery and resiliency.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects children from abuse and neglect.
- Enhances reporting and handling of abuse and neglect reports.
- Improves the state's CBC system to expedite permanency and provide additional supports.
- Increases accountability and transparency of contracted service organizations in both the child welfare and mental health and substance abuse systems.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Florida's child welfare system identifies children and families in need of services through reports to the central abuse hotline and child protective investigations.
- The Department of Children and Families primarily uses private, contracted community providers to deliver services, including CBCs delivering child welfare services and managing entities delivering behavioral health services.
- There were 36,154 children in Florida's child welfare system as of Jan. 31, 2021. Of these, 22,288 (62%) were in out-of-home care.

## BILL BASICS

- Allows the establishment of multidisciplinary legal team representation programs to serve families in the dependency system so permanency can happen faster.
- Aligns state law to new requirements in the Family First Prevention Services Act so the state can maximize all available federal funding.
- Enhances supports for foster families and caregivers and makes family finding and kinship navigator programs mandatory.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 116-0  
SENATE 39-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# HB 485

REPRESENTATIVE  
**GARRISON**

# PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANTS



**HB 485 addresses Florida's shortage of nursing assistance by making a temporary COVID-19-related Personal Care Attendant (PCA) training program permanent.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Expands the long-term care workforce by creating a pathway for people to develop skills they need to become a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) while getting on-the-job experience.
- Codifies and improves the temporary PCA training program with modifications to align it with current practice for CNAs.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) recently implemented a temporary PCA training program in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Many PCAs become CNAs as their careers progress.
- CNAs provide care and assist individuals with tasks relating to the activities of daily living, such as those associated with personal care, nutrition and hydration, maintaining mobility, toileting, safety and cleaning, end-of-life care, cardiopulmonary resuscitation and emergency care.
- A CNA must work under the general supervision of a registered nurse or a licensed practical nurse. CNAs generally work in nursing homes, although some work in assisted living facilities, other community based settings, or hospitals.

## BILL BASICS

- Requires AHCA to develop a PCA training program, with 16 hours of training in the content areas specified by AHCA.
- The 16 hours must be completed prior to a PCA having direct contact with a resident. This is double the 8 hours of training required under AHCA's temporary PCA program.
- Traditional CNA training is tuition based training at the student's cost. The PCA program is a paid, on-the-job training opportunity. The PCA program allows up to four months of on-the-job training to prepare the participant to pass the CNA exam.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 106-11  
SENATE 32-7

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# HB 1157

REPRESENTATIVE  
**KOSTER**

# FREESTANDING EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS



**The average cost for primary care at an urgent care center is \$193, compared to over \$2,000 in an emergency room. People should be able to easily tell the difference between an urgent care center and a freestanding hospital emergency department so they can choose the right location for the level of care they need.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Stops surprise bills by helping consumers differentiate between a freestanding emergency department and an urgent care center and by making prices transparent.
- Empowers people to choose for themselves where they want to go.
- Creates price transparency by requiring freestanding emergency departments to post their average facility fee on signs outside the building and in patient waiting areas.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Consumers sometimes mistake freestanding emergency departments for urgent care centers because these facilities can often look and feel like urgent care centers.
- Emergency departments and freestanding emergency departments charge higher prices for the same, non-emergency care than urgent care centers.
- Unlike an urgent care center, freestanding emergency departments charge a facility fee in addition to the physician fee.

## BILL BASICS

- Requires freestanding emergency departments to identify themselves and distinguish emergency functions from urgent care functions.
- Requires freestanding emergency departments to post prices and facility fees on-site.
- Requires the Agency for Health Care Administration (ACHA) to publish comparisons of freestanding emergency departments and urgent care centers online, including cost comparisons of non-emergency care, and publish an interactive urgent care center locator.
- Requires hospitals to post a link to the AHCA information in a prominent location on the hospital's website.
- Requires insurers to publish an online cost comparison of non-emergency care at an ER and at an urgent care center, and a tool to find local in-network urgent care centers.

## FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 118-0  
SENATE 39-1

## STATUS

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

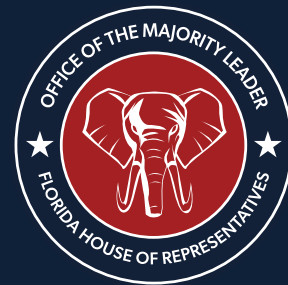


# HB 1231

REPRESENTATIVE

**MELO**

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



**HB 1231 helps domestic violence survivors by improving services and reducing unnecessary requirements.**



## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Improves services by requiring certified domestic violence centers to provide nonresidential outreach services.
- Cuts red tape by providing more flexibility for how domestic violence centers fund their services.
- Improves the quality of court-ordered Batterers' Intervention Programs by reinstating program certification requirements.



## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Domestic Violence Program protects adults and their children from domestic violence and helps survivors develop ways to avoid further harm.
- The Department of Children and Families is statutorily responsible for the statewide domestic violence program and certifies domestic violence centers.
- Florida has 41 certified domestic violence centers, which provide crisis counseling and support services to survivors of domestic violence and their children.



## BILL BASICS

- Requires certified domestic violence centers to provide nonresidential outreach services.
- Increases flexibility for how domestic violence centers fund their services.
- Reinstates Batterers' Intervention Program certification requirements.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 118-0  
SENATE 37-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS



**HB 247 would have expanded access to care while maintaining patient safety by allowing practitioners to prescribe some controlled substances via telehealth.**

 **MAJOR  
MESSAGES**

- Would have lowered costs by allowing practitioners to prescribe some controlled substances via telehealth instead of requiring in-person visits.

 **CRUCIAL  
CONTEXT**

- Telehealth is a technological mechanism to deliver health care services remotely.
- Federal law requires a practitioner to conduct at least one in-person medical evaluation prior to dispensing a controlled substance to a patient via telehealth.
- Controlled substances are ranked by potential for abuse and lack of medical use from Schedule I (highest potential for abuse and no medical use) to Schedule V (least potential for abuse and accepted medical uses).
- Schedule III substances include stimulants and anabolic steroids; Schedule IV includes benzodiazepines and barbiturates; Schedule V includes medications with small quantities of opiates, narcotics, or stimulants.

 **BILL  
BASICS**

- Would have allowed practitioners to prescribe Schedule III, IV, and V controlled substances via telehealth.



**Adoption is a great way to achieve permanency for children who have suffered abuse, abandonment, or neglect and are unable to be reunified with their parents. Expediting the process would enable more of our state's children to be in safe and loving homes.**



## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Would have expedited permanency for abused and neglected children by streamlining the process for judges to review adoption denials.
- Would have prioritized the health and safety of children by requiring a preliminary home study for all families seeking adoption through an adoption intervention.



## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In state Fiscal Year 2019-2020, 4,609 children were adopted from the child welfare system.
- Currently, 37% of children in Florida's child welfare system achieve permanency within 12 months of entering care, which is below the federal target of 40.5%.
- Florida's current process allows different judges to simultaneously hear cases appealing adoption decisions about the same child.
- Between 2018 and 2019, the current process added, on average, over six months to the time it took to complete adoptions where multiple families sought to adopt the same child.



## BILL BASICS

- Would have routed all appeals through the dependency court, rather than both the dependency court and the Division of Administrative Appeal Hearings.

# HB 1067

REPRESENTATIVE  
**ROMMEL**

# HEALTH CARE EXPENSES



**HB 1067 would have increased transparency in the health care market and encouraged consumerism to help patients find cost-effective care.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Would have stopped surprise bills by requiring hospitals and ambulatory surgical centers (health care facilities) to automatically provide binding estimates for nonemergency scheduled services.
- Would have encouraged consumerism and increased transparency in the health care market by requiring health care facilities to post standard prices for a wide range of services on their website.
- Would have protected consumers by providing a health care billing grievance process, preventing collections during that process, and increasing consumer asset protections from medical debt.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Health care costs have the potential to result in significant medical debt for patients, and even bankruptcy.
- 65% of Americans say they have trouble paying for doctor visits, and 49% say they have trouble paying for hospitalization charges.
- High deductible health plans and high out-of-pocket costs mean consumers need price transparency to avoid unnecessary costs.
- Federal law will require many of these changes starting in 2022, but enforcement will be weak without state engagement.

## BILL BASICS

- Would have required facilities to provide patients with an estimated cost of care, regardless of whether it was requested, and made the estimate binding.
- Would have enhanced the free market by making health care services more shoppable for patients by requiring health care facilities to post a consumer-friendly list of standard charges for at least 300 health care services on their website.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 119-0

**STATUS** PASSED  
HOUSE ONLY

# HB 1155

REPRESENTATIVE  
**TOLEDO**

# PHARMACIES AND PHARMACY BENEFIT MANAGERS



**HB 1155 would have held Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs) more accountable by giving the Office of Insurance Regulation (OIR) authority over pharmacy audits by insurers and the ability to respond to potential violations.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Would have protected licensed pharmacies from audit abuses.
- Would have empowered pharmacies by expressly authorizing them to appeal audit findings made by health plans and PBMs.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- PBMs represent health insurers and health plan sponsors, which include self-insured employers, union health plans, and government purchasers, in the selection, purchase, and distribution of pharmaceuticals. They also organize and service pharmacy networks.
- PBMs operate largely in the absence of federal or state regulation and function under contracts with insurers. In the past five years, a plurality of state legislatures have passed laws to prohibit specific practices by PBMs.
- In 2018, the Legislature created a registration program for PBMs. Since January 1, 2019, PBMs operating in the state must register with OIR by submitting a completed application form and fee for registration.
- Effective July 1, 2018, the Legislature also prohibited the use of “gag clauses” by PBMs or others that prevent pharmacies from providing drugs to patients at the lowest applicable prices.

## BILL BASICS

- Would have enhanced transparency by ensuring OIR has the authority to enforce registration requirements for PBMs and establishing a \$10,000 fine for any PBM that fails to register with OIR.
- Would have expressly made a health insurer or HMO responsible for violations of the pharmacy audit provisions, even if a PBM is contracted to manage pharmacy benefits on behalf of the insurer or HMO.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 114-0

**STATUS** PASSED  
HOUSE ONLY

# HB 1221

REPRESENTATIVE  
**GRALL**

# DISABILITY ABORTIONS



**The Florida House won't shy away from protecting life. HB 1221 would have prevented abortion from becoming a tool of modern-day eugenics.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Would have protected unborn children with disabilities.
- Would have reinforced Florida's unwavering commitment to safeguard all life.
- Would have included an exception to save the life of the mother.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- While the number of disability abortions performed annually based on genetic abnormalities is unknown, there are estimates on the percentage of disability abortions performed in Europe and the United States based upon the prenatal diagnosis of Down syndrome.
- From 1995 to 2011, it was estimated that 67% to 85% of women who received a prenatal diagnosis of Down syndrome in the United States elected to abort the fetus.
- From 2011 to 2015, Europe's Down syndrome population was estimated to have reduced by 54% due to abortions.

## BILL BASICS

- Would have prohibited a physician from performing an abortion if the physician knows, or should know, that the woman is seeking the abortion solely on the basis of the fetus' disability.
- Would not have criminalized women seeking abortions.
- Would not have required a patient to disclose their reason for seeking an abortion or required a physician to inquire.
- Would have required the Department of Health to include educational information on prenatal genetic disorders, including resources and support services for families, in its genetic disorders clearinghouse.
- Would have required a health care practitioner who orders or administers a prenatal test to provide a patient with the educational information from the genetic disorder clearinghouse if the test results indicate a genetic disorder.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 74-44

**STATUS**

PASSED  
HOUSE ONLY

2021

# SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

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## JUDICIARY

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# HB 1

REPRESENTATIVE  
**FERNANDEZ-  
BARQUIN**

# COMBATING PUBLIC DISORDER



**HB 1 protects our communities, our neighborhoods, and the police officers who risk their lives for us, by providing law enforcement and prosecutors more tools to prevent violence and property destruction caused by riots.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Free speech and the right to peaceably assemble are the foundation of America – HB 1 protects these rights for all people, regardless of reason or viewpoint.
- Prevents mob violence and rioting by creating criminal penalties for aggravated rioting and increasing penalties for other unlawful acts – giving the justice system additional tools to keep peaceful protestors safe from bad actors trying to abuse a movement.
- Protects property, including memorials dedicated to preserving U.S. and Florida history and makes no distinction based on the type or viewpoint of the memorial.
- Holds local governments accountable - if local governments want to defund the police, they will have to defend their decision and bear the costs associated with the budget appeal process for reductions to municipal police budgets.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In the summer of 2020, protests relating to policing practices and racism occurred around the nation – beginning a movement to “defund the police.”
- Some protestors and counter-protestors engaged in rioting and violent acts, including battery on police officers, damage to cars and businesses, arson, and looting.
- On January 6, 2021, protestors marched to the U.S. Capitol from a nearby rally to protest Congress certifying the 2020 General Election results. Officials estimate that roughly 800 people surged into the Capitol building, resulting in the death of a Capitol Police officer.

## BILL BASICS

- Clarifies the prohibited crimes of rioting and inciting a riot by providing a statutory definition for each offense and establishes the new crimes of aggravated rioting and aggravated inciting a riot to enhance penalties when a person causes heightened property damage or personal injury related to rioting.
- Prohibits destroying, demolishing, damaging, or pulling down a memorial or historic property and requires a person convicted to pay restitution.
- Increases penalties for assault or battery when committed in furtherance of a riot and requires a court to sentence a person convicted of battery on a law enforcement officer in furtherance of a riot to six months in jail.
- Creates the crime of cyberintimidation by publication, prohibiting a person from electronically publishing another person’s personal identification information with the intent to incite violence or the commission of a crime against the person or to threaten or harass the person.
- Creates a duty for a municipality to allow law enforcement to respond appropriately during a riot. If it doesn’t, the municipality is civilly liable for personal injury, wrongful death, or property damages caused by the breach.
- Authorizes the State Attorney of the judicial circuit or a member of the municipality’s governing body to appeal a proposed funding reduction to the municipal law enforcement agency’s operating budget.
- Allows law enforcement officers to issue civil violations for people who block the road without a permit.
- Requires a person arrested for specified offenses related to rioting and unlawful assembly to be held in jail until he or she appears for a first appearance hearing and a court determines bond.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 76-39  
SENATE 23-17

**STATUS**

SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR





**Floridians deserve free, 21st century access to information at the click of a button. Yet, local governments are forced to purchase costly print ads in newspapers to provide public notices.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Modernizes public notice requirements to give Floridians simple and easy access to such notices.
- Potentially saves taxpayer dollars by authorizing local governments to publish legal notices on the website of a qualified newspaper rather than in print ads.
- Expands the publishing options for public notices to reflect how most Floridians get their information – online.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- All meetings of a county, municipality, school board, or special district at which official acts are to be taken or at which public business is to be discussed or transacted must be open to the public, and notice must be given.
- Judicial sales and tax impacts of value adjustment board decisions on petitions to adjust property taxes also must be noticed.
- Under current law, legal notices must be published in a newspaper that:
  - Is published at least once a week;
  - Has at least 25 percent of its words in English;
  - Is considered a periodical by a post office in its county of publication;
  - Is for sale to the general public; and
  - Contains information of interest or value to the general public in the affected area.
- Legal notices must also be published on the statewide legal notices website.

## BILL BASICS

- Requires all legal notices, whether published in print or online, to also be posted on the statewide legal notices website.
- Increases the number of publications eligible to publish legal notices.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 105-9  
SENATE 39-0

**STATUS** SIGNED BY GOVERNOR

# SB 44 (HB 1049)

REPRESENTATIVE  
**GIALLOMBARDO**

# USE OF DRONES BY GOVERNMENT AGENCIES



**SB 44 secures the safety of Floridians by expanding use of drones by law enforcement agencies and public entities while protecting civil liberties.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Modernizes public safety and disaster response by authorizing the use of drones in specific situations such as crowd surveillance, traffic management and safety, fire rescue, and natural disaster assessment.
- Improves environmental protection by allowing agencies to use drones for managing natural resources on publicly owned land or water.
- Strengthens security and accountability of this technology by requiring the Department of Management Services (DMS) to establish an approved drone list and by protecting the civil liberties of civilians surveilled by a drone.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Drones provide agencies access to an immediate aerial perspective which is currently performed by manned aircrafts.
- By authorizing the state to consult federal guidance on drone cybersecurity, the bill will help the state develop security policy that ensures that the data collected, transmitted, or stored by a drone is not intercepted by any unauthorized entity.
- As with any surveillance activity, governmental actors are bound by Fourth Amendment protections.

## BILL BASICS

- Specifically allows law enforcement to use drones for surveillance of crowds of 50 or more after written authorization from leadership, assisting real-time traffic management, and facilitating evidence collection at a crime scene or traffic crash scene.
- Requires law enforcement to establish strict policies that protect the images captured and ensure personal safety and constitutional protections.
- Other authorized uses:
  - Assess damage after a flood, wildfire, or other natural disaster.
  - Assist fire departments in the performance of their duties such as locating victims in a fire or determining fire spread.
  - Manage vegetation and wildlife on public lands and waters.
- Requires DMS to create a list of approved drone vendors whose products have appropriate cybersecurity protections.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 88-24  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# SB 54 (HB 719)

REPRESENTATIVE  
**GRALL**

# MOTOR VEHICLE INSURANCE



## SB 54 supports Florida's drivers and passengers by repealing and replacing our state's broken motor vehicle insurance system.

### MAJOR MESSAGES

- Reforms Florida's antiquated and inadequate "No-Fault" insurance system (Personal Injury Protection – PIP) to combat fraud and ensure drivers that are not at fault for an accident are not penalized.
- Repeals and replaces PIP by requiring bodily injury (BI) coverage to protect the insured against loss and creating standards for settling claims.
- Ensures adequate coverage by updating antiquated BI minimums and providing for medical payments and a death benefit.
- Tackles the problem of uninsured motorists by expanding insurance verification and limiting payouts to those drivers under specified circumstances.

### CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Florida is one of only two states left that does not require mandatory BI coverage.
- Florida has consistently ranked near the top five states for highest average motor vehicle insurance cost per vehicle.
- Over the last 20 years or so, 25 jurisdictions have repealed their No-Fault laws or made them noncompulsory.
- Before Colorado repealed its PIP insurance system in 2003, it had the 9th-highest premium per insured motor vehicle in the nation. For 2014 (the most current year available), Colorado had the 21st-highest motor vehicle insurance premium in the nation.

### BILL BASICS

- Repeals PIP and requires BI coverage to protect the insured against loss if the insured is at fault in an accident resulting in the bodily injury of another person.
- Outlines good faith requirements for insurers to combat fraudulent or excessive claims while maintaining the ability to hold them accountable.
- Increases the minimum coverage that drivers must maintain from \$10,000 for injury to one, \$20,000 for injury to two or more, and \$10,000 in property damage (10-20-10) to 25-50-10.
- Requires motor vehicle insurance policies to include a \$5,000 death benefit.
- Requires motor vehicle insurers to provide an opt-out offer of at least \$5,000 in medical payments coverage and deems anyone who fails to opt out to have \$10,000 in such coverage.
- Requires a driver to show proof of coverage when registering a vehicle and creates a \$10,000 setoff for a defendant from a judgment for noneconomic damages in a claim brought by an uninsured motorist.
- Allows a motor vehicle liability insurance policy to exclude a named driver so that an unsafe driver does not affect the insurance rates of an entire family.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 100-16  
SENATE 37-3

**STATUS** PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# SB 70 (HB 689)

REPRESENTATIVE  
**BORRERO**

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CENTERS



**SB 70 protects domestic violence victims and holds bad actors accountable by creating heightened penalties for any person who maliciously publishes, disseminates, or discloses any information that may identify the location of a domestic violence center.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects domestic violence victims by ensuring they feel safe seeking help at domestic violence centers.
- Dissuades bad actors from revealing any information that may indicate the whereabouts of a domestic violence center by establishing new penalties.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Department of Children and Families and domestic violence center employees and volunteers must not disclose the location of the centers or any information received by the center about clients, because such information is deemed confidential and exempt.

## BILL BASICS

- Makes it a first degree misdemeanor, punishable by up to one year imprisonment and a \$1,000 fine, for any person who maliciously publishes, disseminates, or discloses any information that may identify the location of a domestic violence center.
- Creates a third degree felony for a second or subsequent violation.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 117-0  
SENATE 39-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# SB 72 (HB 7005/HB 7)

REPRESENTATIVES  
**BURTON &  
MCCLURE**

# CIVIL LIABILITY FOR DAMAGES RELATING TO COVID-19



**SB 72 protects responsible businesses, health care providers, and long-term care facilities from unnecessary lawsuits that could threaten their livelihood – providing certainty and reducing the fear of overreaching litigation to keep businesses healthy and create jobs.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Florida businesses, schools, nonprofits, religious institutions, health care providers, and long-term care facilities risked their own health to stay open and serve us.
- Creates COVID-19 liability protections for businesses and achieves the difficult balance of providing liability protections to health care providers while retaining necessary safeguards for patients and long-term care facility residents.
- Ensures that Florida continues to be a national leader in emergency response by helping the economy recover from the damage done by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Does not excuse reckless parties – it encourages responsible business owners and health care providers who have made good faith efforts and followed government guidelines.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Health care providers deserve protection from overreaching lawsuits. They are on the front line – they must not only care for themselves but also for potentially vulnerable patients and residents.
- They have done so, often without adequate PPE and staff, even as the guidance on treatment and disease prevention has constantly evolved.
- This bill isn't about an overwhelmed court system; it's about our business owners and their courageous efforts to serve us during these unprecedented times.

## BILL BASICS

- Maintains necessary safeguards so patients and residents may still recover against bad actors who, through intentional or grossly negligent behavior, harm them.
- Establishes a statute of limitations for COVID-19-related claims – which include actions relating to the transmission, diagnosis, or treatment of COVID-19 – at one year after the date of death, hospitalization, or diagnosis.
- Provides liability protections for business claims and non-patient claims against health care providers and long-term care facilities by:
  - Requiring COVID-19 claims to contain a physician's affidavit.
  - Providing civil immunity for defendants that make a good faith effort to comply with applicable government guidance.
  - Raising the burden of proof to clear and convincing evidence that the defendant's actions were at least grossly negligent for cases that make it to trial.
- Provides heightened liability protections for health care entities for civil claims brought by patients or facility residents related to:
  - Diagnosis or treatment of, or failure to diagnose or treat COVID-19; transmission of COVID-19; or delay or cancellation of a surgery, procedure, test, or appointment.
  - Provision of a novel or experimental COVID-19 treatment and treatment of a COVID-19 patient whose injuries were directly related to exacerbation of their pre-existing conditions.
  - Acts or omissions related to an emergency medical condition which were the result of a lack of resources directly caused by the pandemic.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 83-31  
SENATE 24-15

**STATUS**

SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR

# SB 88 (HB 1601)

REPRESENTATIVE  
**WILLIAMSON**

# FARMING OPERATIONS



**SB 88 protects Florida's farmers by strengthening the Florida Right to Farm Act's liability protections and expanding it to cover modern agricultural activities.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Florida's farmers must be protected so that they can focus on what they do best – putting food on people's tables.
- Shields farmers from excessive and unfounded nuisance litigation by increasing liability standards.
- Protects farming activities by updating Right to Farm Act protections for more farming-related operations, like agritourism.
- Ensures farmers do not lose their livelihoods from unreasonable court judgments by providing fairer standards for lawsuit payouts.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Agriculture is one of the largest industries in Florida, second only to tourism.
- Enacted in 1979, the Florida Right to Farm Act ensures that farms are able to operate and serve the state without worry of unfounded nuisance lawsuits from the expansion of urban sprawl into rural areas.
- As of 2018, Florida had 47,590 farm operations covering 9.7 million acres of farmland.

## BILL BASICS

- Limits nuisance claims to those involving real property within half a mile of the nuisance source while ensuring farmers operate according to regulations and best practice standards.
- Expands activities protected by the Right to Farm Act to those involving agritourism and particle emissions.
- Limits compensatory damages for nuisance claims to the reduction in a plaintiff's fair market property value and places limits on the ability to collect punitive damages.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 110-7  
SENATE 37-1

**STATUS**

SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR

# HB 141

REPRESENTATIVE  
**LEEK**

# PARENTING AND TIME-SHARING OF A MINOR CHILD FOR A CONVICTED PARENT



**HB 141 ensures the safety of children and families by restricting the ability of a court to grant time-sharing or parental responsibility to a parent convicted of sexual offenses.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects the parent-child relationship during divorce proceedings without unnecessarily risking the safety of children.
- Protects children by creating a presumption that unless proven otherwise, time-sharing and parental responsibility for a parent convicted of a sexual offense on a minor is not allowed.
- Strengthens fairness during divorce proceedings by holding convicted parents accountable and ensuring that they are the ones responsible for proving that they do not risk the child's safety.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Currently, there is no blanket provision in Florida law prohibiting a person who has committed a sexual crime from exercising time-sharing with his or her minor child.
- Moreover, current law presumes that parental responsibility should be shared by both parents, unless the court finds that "shared parental responsibility would be detrimental to the child."
- Judges have wide discretion to decide parental responsibility and time-sharing matters relating to a minor child.

## BILL BASICS

- Creates a rebuttable presumption against parental responsibility and time-sharing for parents that have committed a sexual offense against someone under the age of 18.
- The presumption against time-sharing may be rebutted if it is specifically proven to the court that the parent poses no significant risk of harm to the child and that time-sharing is in the best interest of the child.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 116-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS** PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# SJR 204 (HJR 1179)

REPRESENTATIVE  
**BELTRAN**

# ABOLISHING THE CONSTITUTION REVISION COMMISSION



**SJR 204 preserves and protects the Florida Constitution from frivolous amendments brought by an unaccountable entity by proposing to dissolve the Constitution Revision Commission (CRC).**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Changing the state's founding document should not be taken lightly – amendments to the Florida Constitution are, by nature, intended to be abiding.
- Strengthens accountability and transparency for constitutional amendments by abolishing the CRC.
- Preserves our state constitution by aiming to stop the superfluous and “bundled” amendments proposed by the CRC.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Florida Constitution is the charter of the liberties of Floridians, laying out our structure of government.
- It may be amended only if the voters approve an amendment by a 60% vote originating from the Legislature, the CRC, the Taxation and Budget Reform Commission, a citizen initiative, or a constitutional convention.
- The CRC is a 37-member body that convenes every 20 years to propose constitutional revisions to the voters – but it has strayed from its intended purpose resulting in an almost legislative-like body.
- The most recent CRC convened in 2017-2018 and proposed eight “bundled” amendments, containing multiple unrelated subjects which potentially required voters to decide whether to vote for an amendment that combined changes they liked with unrelated changes they did not like. One proposal, for example, combined a proposal to ban drilling for oil with a ban on vaping in indoor workplaces.

## BILL BASICS

- Proposes a constitutional amendment to the voters in the next election on November 8, 2022, to abolish the CRC.
- The proposal will only repeal the CRC, preserving the other authorized methods to change the Florida Constitution.
- If approved by more than 60% of the electorate, the amendment will be adopted and take effect on January 3, 2023.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 86-28  
SENATE 27-12

**STATUS**

FILED WITH  
SECRETARY OF STATE



# HB 259

REPRESENTATIVE

## WILLIAMSON

# SAFETY OF RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS



**HB 259 protects religious institutions and their congregations by reinforcing private property rights – ultimately giving the property owner the right to choose whether to allow or prohibit firearms on their property.**



### MAJOR MESSAGES

- Safeguards the Second Amendment by allowing a licensee to carry a concealed firearm for any lawful purpose on any property owned, rented, leased, borrowed, or lawfully used by a religious institution, even if a school is located on the premises.
- Empowers religious institutions by reinforcing private property rights – solidifying the property owner’s right to choose whether to allow or prohibit firearms on their property.



### CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Unless exempted, a person may not carry a concealed firearm or weapon in public without a license. However, licensees may not carry a concealed firearm in certain locations, including schools and colleges.
- Florida law does not generally prohibit a licensee from carrying a concealed firearm or weapon in a church, synagogue, or other religious institution.
- However, because many places of worship are located on the same property or attached to a school, often a preschool or college, carrying a firearm or weapon on the premises is a crime.



### BILL BASICS

- Removes restrictions that prevent religious institutions and congregations from exercising their Second Amendment right by placing that decision in the hands of the property owner.
- Does not limit the private property rights of a religious institution to exercise control over property that the church, synagogue, or other religious institution owns, rents, leases, borrows, or lawfully uses.
- Religious institutions and owners of property borrowed or used by a religious institution may continue to prohibit firearms as they choose.

## FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 76-37  
SENATE 24-16

## STATUS

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# HB 371

REPRESENTATIVE  
**BRANNAN**

# FALSE REPORTS OF CRIMES



**HB 371 protects the public and first responders by enhancing penalties for false reports of crimes that endanger our communities.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Deters individuals from knowingly reporting false crimes which, when responded to, can cause serious injury to the innocent.
- Combats this by enhancing criminal penalties for offenders when a lawful response leads to injury or death of any person involved.
- Ensures full justice for victims by mandating payment of restitution and costs involved.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- “Swatting” is the false report of an emergency to a public safety agency that is made with the intent of prompting a massive response by law enforcement and other first responders.
- In 2017, a California man made a 911 call to Wichita, Kansas falsely claiming he was inside a Wichita residence with hostages and a gun. Police responded to the residence and ultimately ended up shooting the innocent homeowner who was completely unaware of the 911 call.
- Current law defines false reporting of crimes, a first degree misdemeanor, as willfully imparting, conveying, or causing to be imparted or conveyed to any law enforcement officer, false information or reports concerning the commission of any crime when the person knows the report is false and that no such crime has been committed.

## BILL BASICS

- Expands false reporting of crimes to include reports not just to law enforcement officers, but to personnel of any public safety agency that dispatches responders, such as fire departments and emergency medical services.
- Reclassifies offenses to a third degree felony if the agency response results in great bodily injury, permanent disfigurement, or permanent disability and to a second degree felony if resulting in death.
- Requires an offender to pay restitution for the full cost of the public safety agency response.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 116-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS** PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# HB 421 & HB 1101

REPRESENTATIVES  
**TUCK & PERSONS-  
MULICKA**

# RELIEF FROM BURDENS ON REAL PROPERTY RIGHTS



**HB 421/HB 1101 strengthens the ability for property owners to hold governments accountable by expanding and modernizing remedies against unfair government regulation that burdens private property.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Updates growth management laws to adapt to the specific needs of communities and property owners when unforeseen property rights issues arise from local government land use regulation.
- Ensures more property owners can seek judicial relief from restrictive government regulations by expanding and modernizing the Bert Harris, Jr., Private Property Rights Protection Act (Bert Harris Act).
- Potentially saves individuals' and taxpayers' money by allowing certain property disputes to be resolved more efficiently.
- Strengthens other means for private property owners to seek relief by increasing eligibility for dispute resolution proceedings.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Takings Clause of the U.S. Constitution prohibits the government from depriving a person of his or her private property for public use "without just compensation."
- The Bert Harris Act was landmark legislation passed in 1995 that created a new cause of action for a private property owner whose real property is inordinately burdened by a government action not rising to the level of a taking.
- A cause of action also exists against a "prohibited exaction," which is a condition imposed by a government on a property owner's proposed use of real property that lacks an essential nexus to a legitimate public purpose.
- Additionally, the Florida Land Use and Environmental Dispute Resolution Act (FLUEDRA) provides an informal mechanism for a property owner to challenge a government action without having to file a lawsuit.

## BILL BASICS

- Clarifies that local government actions against a property owner that are actionable under the Bert Harris Act include adopting or enforcing ordinances.
- Defines "real property" under the Bert Harris Act to include surface, subsurface, and mineral rights.
- Streamlines Bert Harris Act claims in the courts by:
  - Limiting the timeframe under which a claimant must notify the government before filing an action,
  - Allowing the court, rather than a jury, to determine damages, and
  - Extending the point from which a prevailing claimant may recover attorney fees and costs.
- Allows a property owner's Bert Harris Act claim to continue even if the owner relinquishes title to the property before the suit is fully resolved.
- Allows a property owner to challenge an unlawful government exaction without waiting for a written notice of the action if the action is imminent.
- Expands eligibility under FLUEDRA by redefining "land" and real property to align with the updated Bert Harris Act definition.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 79-37  
SENATE 34-6

**STATUS** PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# HB 833

REPRESENTATIVE  
**TOMKOW**

# UNLAWFUL USE OF DNA



**HB 833 strengthens DNA privacy to protect Floridians from bad actors looking to steal, analyze, or distribute another person's DNA without consent.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- DNA gives access to personal and private information that is at risk of being stolen and used against you.
- Puts bad actors on notice by protecting that information with enhanced authorization requirements and heightened criminal penalties.
- Ensures that the crime of unlawful gathering of another person's DNA must be done with the intent to later perform a DNA analysis without consent.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Currently, an individual may voluntarily submit to genetic testing in an effort to gain insights into his or her own genetic history; however, third parties may seek to obtain this same information for their own purposes.
- Although existing federal and state laws may protect a person's DNA from being misused by insurance providers or for discriminatory purposes, no current law specifically protects a person's DNA from being collected or analyzed without his or her consent.

## BILL BASICS

- Prohibits a person from willfully, and without express consent:
  - Collecting or retaining another person's DNA with the intent to perform DNA analysis.
  - Submitting another person's DNA sample for analysis or conducting or procuring another person's DNA analysis.
  - Disclosing another person's DNA analysis results to a third party unless the person has previously disclosed their DNA results.
  - Selling/transferring another person's DNA sample or analysis results to a third party.
- Provides exceptions when used for specific purposes, including:
  - Criminal investigations or prosecution.
  - Complying with a subpoena, summons, or other lawful court order.
  - Complying with Federal law.
  - Medical diagnosis, quality assessment, improvement activity, and treatment of a patient when:
    - The health care practitioner who collected the DNA sample obtained express consent for clinical laboratory analysis of the DNA sample; or
    - Performed by a certified clinical laboratory.
  - The newborn screening program.
  - Determining paternity.
  - Performing any activity related to the DNA database for criminal offenders.
  - Research activities conducted in compliance with specified applicable Federal laws and regulations.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 85-28  
SENATE 22-18

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# HB 921

REPRESENTATIVE  
**SNYDER**

# ELECTRONIC CRIMES



**HB 921 enhances online safety by modernizing the written threats crime and cyberstalking offenses to reflect how people actually communicate in 2021 – online.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- With technology changing the way we communicate, it's crucial that our criminal laws stay up to date.
- Expands current law to criminalize publicly posting a threat online, even if it is not specifically sent to or received by the person who is the subject of the threat.
- Benefits law enforcement and prosecutors by helping them pursue cases against people who threaten violence online.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- With the rise of social media, online communication has shifted from being primarily an exclusive interaction from one person to another, to a communication that is available for viewing by the entire online community.
- This has made it more difficult for prosecutors to pursue cases involving written threats or cyberstalking where communications were not sent directly to the victim.

## BILL BASICS

- Prohibits a person from sending, posting, or transmitting (or getting someone else to) a threat to kill or do bodily harm to another person, or conduct a mass shooting/act of terrorism.
- Leaves the current criminal penalty for making a threat unchanged as a second degree felony.
- Provides that a person commits cyberstalking if they engage in conduct that indirectly or directly, electronically communicates words, images, or language directed at or pertaining to a specific person that causes that person substantial emotional distress and serves no legitimate purpose.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 116-0  
SENATE 38-2

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# HB 1041

REPRESENTATIVE  
**BURTON**

# PROTECTION OF ELDERLY PERSONS AND DISABLED ADULTS



**HB 1041 protects Florida's seniors and disabled adults by preventing bad actors from taking advantage of them.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Keeps our seniors safe by properly vetting their caretakers and disqualifying those seeking to take advantage of them.
- Prevents a person convicted of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of an elderly or disabled adult from qualifying to act as a personal representative.
- Prohibits a person convicted of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or aggravated manslaughter of an elderly or disabled adult from inheriting from the victim's estate, trust, or other beneficiary assets.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Florida has the highest percentage of senior residents in the nation, which is projected to increase to 25% of the state population – 5.9 million seniors – by 2030.
- Elderly populations are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation due to risk factors associated with aging, such as physical and mental infirmities and social isolation.
- At the national level, approximately 1 in 10 seniors is abused each year, and incidents of elder abuse are reported to local authorities in 1 out of every 23 cases.

## BILL BASICS

- Prohibits:
  - Unreasonably isolating an elderly or disabled adult from their family members.
  - Seeking out appointment as a guardian, trustee, or agent under power of attorney to obtain control over the victim or their assets for the perpetrator's or a third party's benefit.
  - Intentionally modifying an elderly or disabled victim's estate plan to financially benefit either the perpetrator or a third party in a manner inconsistent with the victim's intent.
- Authorizes the Florida Attorney General's Office of Statewide Prosecution to investigate and prosecute offenses of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of elderly or disabled adults

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 117-0  
SENATE 39-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# VICTIMS OF SEXUAL OFFENSES



**HB 1189 supports victims of sexual assault by establishing sexual assault response teams and updating law enforcement procedures to prevent re-traumatizing victims.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Ensures a more positive first response for victims of sexual assault by enhancing law enforcements' capability to respond to and work with sexual assault victims.
- Prevents loss of evidence by establishing storage, site of storage, and chain of custody requirements for preservation and destruction of evidence from a sexual assault evidence kit.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

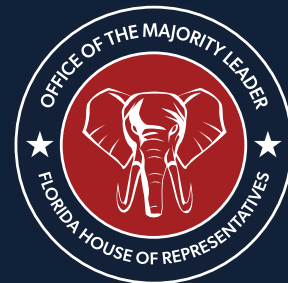
- Any licensed facility that provides emergency room services is required to arrange for appropriate medical attention and treatment of victims of sexual assault.
- The Office of the Attorney General (OAG) reimburses medical providers for an initial forensic examination.
- The OAG provides relocation assistance for victims of sexual battery.
- Services in the aftermath of a sexual battery are generally provided locally by certified rape crisis centers and volunteers.

## BILL BASICS

- Prevents re-traumatizing victims by ensuring law enforcement provide relevant and accessible services.
- Improves Florida's sexual assault response efforts by requiring the Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission to establish minimum standards for basic skills and continued education training for law enforcement officers.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 114-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS** PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS



# HB 1523

REPRESENTATIVE  
**BELTRAN**

# CORPORATE ESPIONAGE

**HB 1523 protects American innovation and intellectual property by modernizing trade secret crime laws.**



## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Updates criminal laws to combat the newer, 21st-century methods foreign entities and others are using to steal American ingenuity in order to unfairly gain the upper hand.
- Safeguards technology, information, and intellectual property by modernizing the crime of trade secret theft, creating the crime of trafficking in trade secrets, and authorizing enhanced remedies for victims.
- Combats malicious foreign entities by enhancing penalties for trafficking in and theft of trade secrets if the crime benefits a foreign entity.



## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Within the last decade, there have been multiple instances of individuals or businesses stealing American-produced innovation and technology – specifically to benefit China.
- For example, in February of 2020, an Illinois jury awarded an American telecom company \$764 million in damages after a Chinese rival misappropriated its trade secrets.
- Additionally, the expansion of remote work has increased reliance on cloud-based data systems which have become widely targeted by both domestic and international cybercriminals.



## BILL BASICS

- Modernizes the crime of trade secret theft to include the use of modern technology and creates the crime of trafficking in trade secrets to hold traffickers accountable if they knew or should've known the trade secret was stolen.
- Requires courts to order restitution for the crimes and allows a court to take action to protect a trade secret or require royalties for the use of a stolen trade secret.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 115-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS



# SB 1786 (HB 1165)

REPRESENTATIVE  
**KOSTER**

# FLORIDA BIRTH-RELATED NEUROLOGICAL INJURY COMPENSATION PLAN



**SB 1786 ensures children, and their families, born with certain neurological injuries have access to the care they need by reforming the Florida Birth-Related Neurological Injury Compensation (Plan) and increasing accountability for its administration.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Makes certain that eligible families are fairly compensated for birth-related neurological injury while safeguarding medical providers from high malpractice costs.
- Promotes and protects the health and best interests of children with birth-related neurological injuries by expanding covered health care and living-related services under the Plan.
- Ensures the Florida Birth-Related Neurological Injury Compensation Association (NICA) fulfills its mission in administering the Plan by strengthening accountability and transparency.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- During the 1970s and '80s, medical liability insurance in Florida had become so expensive that, although technically available, it was functionally unavailable.
- The Florida Legislature found that obstetrician-gynecologists disproportionately accounted for medical liability claims, both in number and payout amounts.
- The Legislature created the Plan as a hybrid no-fault and tort medical liability system to pay for the care of infants born with certain neurological injuries without the need for litigation – administered by NICA and funded by standardized physician and facility fees.
- Recent court filings allege that NICA may have strayed from its mission and shifted some costs that the Association is statutorily required to pay onto Medicaid.

## BILL BASICS

- Improves Plan administration for families by:
  - Requiring NICA to administer the Plan in a manner that promotes and protects the health and best interests of birth-injured children.
  - Raising the maximum one-time reward for families from \$100,000 to \$250,000 as well as the death benefit from \$10,000 to \$50,000 – mandating retroactive payments by July 1, 2021.
  - Adding specific expenses that NICA must pay, such as housing and transportation assistance, and allowing beneficiaries to dispute reimbursements.
- Expands accountability and transparency within NICA by:
  - Establishing public notice requirements and term limits for the board of directors as well as ethics and conflict of interest standards for directors and employees.
  - Increasing the number of directors to include a parent who is a beneficiary and a representative of an advocacy organization for disabled children.
  - Mandating publication of materials such as authorized Plan expenses, administrative expenses, and summaries of reimbursement disputes and resolutions.
  - Requiring a review by the Agency for Health Care Administration of related Medicaid expenses and NICA liabilities; an annual performance report to the Legislature, Governor, and CFO; and an operational audit every three years.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 117-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS



# SB 1826 (HB 523)

REPRESENTATIVE  
**TOLEDO**

# HUMAN TRAFFICKING

**SB 1826 strengthens Florida’s mission to combat human trafficking by addressing weaknesses in our current law that create opportunities for victims to be re-victimized.**

## ★ MAJOR MESSAGES

- Creates a human trafficking victim advocate privilege similar in design to current privileges for domestic violence and sexual assault victims, where communication between the victim and the advocate may be protected as confidential under law.
- Empowers victims to seek help by keeping communications between the victim and human trafficking victim advocate confidential – allowing the victim to build trust with the advocate as they recover from their trauma.
- Gives law enforcement additional tools to tackle human trafficking through “sting operations” and by expanding the scope of specified human trafficking offenses to include an adult believed to be under 18 years old.
- Breaks down barriers for victims who are seeking to move on with their lives by eliminating the fees for a human trafficking victim to expunge a criminal history record for a crime committed by the victim while he or she was being trafficked.

## ✓ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Florida is ranked the third highest state in reported human trafficking cases in the United States.
- In 2018, Florida received 767 reports of human trafficking cases, of which 149 were minors.
- The bill enhances services for human trafficking victims by standardizing training and education requirements for human trafficking victim advocates and volunteers.

## 💡 BILL BASICS

- Protects victims by giving them the authority to refuse to disclose or to prevent any other person from disclosing a confidential communication or record made to a human trafficking victim advocate or volunteer.
- Requires human trafficking victim advocates to complete a 24-hour training developed by the Florida Attorney General’s office and an eight-hour training update within three years of the initial training.
  - These trained advocates will be employees of an anti-human trafficking organization.
- Encourages each state attorney to adopt a pro-prosecution policy for human trafficking offenses to ensure the perpetrators that commit these crimes are incarcerated to the fullest extent of the law.

## FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 114-0  
SENATE 40-0

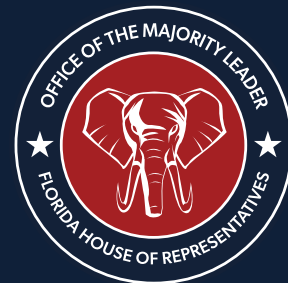
## STATUS

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# SB 1884 (HB 1409)

REPRESENTATIVE  
**BYRD**

# PREEMPTION OF FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION REGULATION



**Safeguards citizens' fundamental right to keep and bear arms by prohibiting regulation of firearms and ammunition by a local jurisdiction.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Defends 2nd Amendment rights by ensuring that even unwritten local government policies cannot regulate firearms and ammunition.
- Prohibits exorbitant regulation and protects taxpayer dollars by clarifying the firearms and ammunition preemption statutory provisions.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Firearms and ammunition regulations have been preempted to the state since 1987, which means that local governments generally cannot regulate firearms and ammunition.
- Despite that preemption and a Florida appellate court opinion, local governments enacted or considered enacting ordinances that:
  - Require trigger locks,
  - Prohibit concealed carry permit holders from lawfully carrying their firearms on municipal or county property,
  - Require special use permits for certain sporting goods stores, and
  - Ban recreational shooting.
- Courts have continuously struck down these local regulations as violations of the express state preemption in the field of firearms.

## BILL BASICS

- Ensures that unwritten local government policies are subject to the statutory provisions allowing for recovery of damages if they violate firearms preemption provisions.
- Allows plaintiffs to recover damages and attorney fees when a local government changes its policy during the pendency of litigation.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 78-39  
SENATE 24-16

**STATUS**

SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR

# HB 7023

REPRESENTATIVE  
**BYRD**

# VETERANS TREATMENT COURT PROGRAMS



**Our military service members and veterans sacrifice everything to protect our liberties. HB 7023 protects those who protect us by standardizing Veterans Treatment Courts Programs (VTCs).**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Military members and veterans can suffer from service and combat-related trauma that other civilians may not understand – our judicial system should factor in these difficult, unique experiences to provide specific rehabilitative treatment for crimes committed by veterans.
- Honors the sacrifices of those who serve by expanding access to VTCs to help solve the root causes of criminal behavior.
- Ensures greater uniformity for VTCs by creating statewide standards for eligibility, operation, and treatment.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- VTCs are modeled after drug court treatment programs and address the root causes of criminal behavior by diverting eligible veterans and service members into treatment programs for military-related conditions and disorders.
- As of 2020, Florida had 31 VTCs which may have policies and procedures that differ from program to program.
- Adopting statewide standards for VTCs to follow ensures fair uniformity and solutions.

## BILL BASICS

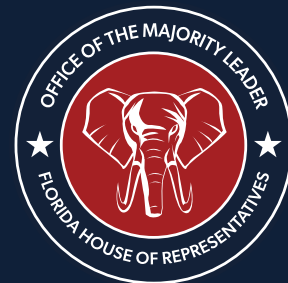
- Authorizes criminal courts to establish a VTC program, in consultation with community partners and veteran services, for diverting adjudication for misdemeanor and felony offenses.
- Defines eligibility for active and former U.S. and allied service members who have a service-related mental health condition, traumatic brain injury, substance use disorder, or psychological problem, or who have suffered military sexual trauma.
- Creates program acceptance standards that factor in things such as the nature of the offense, criminal history, previous VTC participation, and defendant and victim circumstances.
- Standardizes rehabilitation to implement mental health and substance abuse treatment, ongoing judicial interaction, alcohol and drug use monitoring, and evaluation of defendants' treatment goals.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 117-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS



# HB 7051

REPRESENTATIVE  
**BYRD**

# LAW ENFORCEMENT AND CORRECTIONAL OFFICER PRACTICES

**HB 7051 keeps our communities safe and ensures trust in our law enforcement by standardizing statewide best practices in policing.**



## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Trust in our public institutions is vital, and none more so than trust in law enforcement and correctional officers.
- Affirms confidence in our law enforcement heroes and correctional officers and builds trust in the communities they serve.
- Promotes the best law enforcement practices by standardizing training and requiring agencies to adopt policies on the use of force.
- Protects our law enforcement heroes while ensuring accountability by increasing vetting of law enforcement and correctional agency applicants and expanding reporting and review for use of force incidents.



## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- 9 in 10 Americans want the same or more police presence in their communities.
- 10 in 10 Americans support requirements that police have good community relations.
- 1 in 10 officers say the public understands the challenges they face on the job.



## BILL BASICS

- Directs the Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission to develop basic skills training and requires all law enforcement and correctional agencies to develop standardized policies on the use of force.
- Ensures law enforcement agencies report certain use of force incidents to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and have another agency or the state attorney conduct an independent review of the incident.
- Requires agency applicants to disclose if they are under investigation or previously resigned under investigation and instructs agencies to maintain employment records for at least five years.
- Ensures children younger than seven cannot be arrested unless the violation of law is a forcible felony.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 113-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# HR 145

REPRESENTATIVE  
**FABRICIO**

# INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY, PRIVATE PROPERTY, AND DEMOCRACY



**HR 145 sends a message that the Florida House of Representatives will protect our inalienable and constitutional rights by denouncing democratic socialism in favor of true American values.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Combats ideals that stem from communism, like democratic socialism, which have been on the rise throughout the world and within the United States.
- Ensures that our rights identified by our Founding Fathers are secured through individual liberty, private property, and constitutional democracy – and not degraded by the idea of democratic socialism.
- Makes it clear that the Florida House denounces democratic socialism in favor of the true American values of individual liberty, private property, and constitutional democracy.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- A resolution expresses an opinion of the Florida House of Representatives and does not enact policy.
- The Declaration of Independence declared that all individuals are created equal and endowed with inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.
- Under the U.S. Constitution, our institutions are constructed and operate on the principle that individual liberty, private property, and constitutional democracy further these rights and ensure a prosperous society and economy.
- Additionally, the United States continues to be a bastion for oppressed peoples fleeing countries that have fallen into chaos under the failed promises of communism and democratic socialism.

## BILL BASICS

- Establishes that all of the citizens of this great nation benefit from limiting the imposition of regulation on industry and supporting capitalism as a means of increasing the strength of our economy.
- Finds that in contrast to the foundational American values of individual liberty, private property, and constitutional democracy, democratic socialism is a political and economic theory of social organization which advocates the ownership or regulation of production, distribution, and exchange by the community as a whole.
- Identifies that in many nations that have relied upon democratic socialism to improve the lives of their citizens, the result has been economic and social chaos, an extraordinarily low standard of living for the vast majority, and the absence of individual liberty for all.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 79-36

**STATUS**

ADOPTED BY  
THE HOUSE

# HM 1301

REPRESENTATIVE  
**SHOAF**

# SECOND AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES



**HM 1301 makes it clear that this Florida House will fight any federal gun-control measure that violates our constitutional right to keep and bear arms.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Our Constitution clearly states the right of citizens to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.
- Would have informed all Floridians that the Florida Legislature intends to use all of its lawful authority and power to resist or overturn any federal gun-control measure that violates the right of Florida residents to keep and bear arms.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Florida House will not stand for the recent statements of President Biden declaring his intent to push legislation that would restrict the lawful acquisition and possession of firearms and ban many firearms commonly used for self-defense, hunting, competition, and target shooting.
- “We the people are the rightful masters of both Congress and the courts, not to overthrow the Constitution but to overthrow those that seek to pervert the Constitution.” - Abraham Lincoln

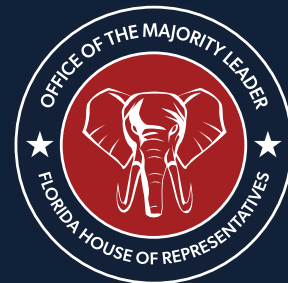
## BILL BASICS

- Would have communicated that the United States Supreme Court (Court) has held the Second Amendment protects an individual’s right to keep and bear arms commonly used for lawful purposes.
- Would have declared the Court’s recognition that the Tenth Amendment prohibits the Federal Government from requiring Florida to take part in any federal gun-control scheme.
- Would have declared the Legislature’s intent to combat any illegal federal gun-control measure.
- Would have required the memorial to be sent to the President, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, the President of the U.S. Senate, and Florida’s Congressional Delegation.

**VOICE VOTE**

**STATUS**

PASSED  
HOUSE ONLY



**HB 1559**  
REPRESENTATIVE  
**RODRIGUEZ**

# DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE

**HB 1559 would have reformed Florida's alimony system to provide fairer guidelines for divorce proceedings while also furthering the best interests of children.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Would have ensured that courts provide swift, equitable resolution of divorce cases.
- Would have updated divorce proceeding guidelines for judges to follow when determining alimony awards.
- Would have ensured the financial security of divorcees by prohibiting alimony under certain conditions and giving courts more flexibility to modify alimony upon retirement.
- Would have protected the relationships between parents and children by prioritizing equal time-sharing between parents.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

Types of Alimony:

- Bridge-the-gap: temporarily assists a spouse to ensure a proper transition to single life.
- Rehabilitative: provides alimony to execute and sustain a rehabilitative plan that typically includes the costs of obtaining skill or education necessary to become financially independent.
- Durational: a term-restricted award not to exceed the length of marriage.
- Permanent: an alimony award that continues in perpetuity, unless later modified or terminated.

## BILL BASICS

- Would have updated alimony guidelines by prohibiting permanent alimony, instead requiring courts to prioritize bridge-the-gap alimony first, followed by rehabilitative and durational alimony.
- Would have set equitable standards for a court to follow when determining the alimony amount and duration, while still granting discretion for other relevant factors specific to the situation.
- Would have prohibited an alimony award if the recipient has an equal or greater net income than the payer and would have allowed an alimony payer to seek termination or modification upon retirement.
- Would have protected parent-child relationships by prioritizing 50-50 time-sharing of children as the default method for determining custody.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 74-38

**STATUS** PASSED HOUSE ONLY



2021

# SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

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## PANDEMICS & PUBLIC EMERGENCIES

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# HB 9

REPRESENTATIVE  
**ZIKA**

# PROTECTING CONSUMERS AGAINST PANDEMIC-RELATED FRAUD



**HB 9 protects Floridians from fraudsters seeking to capitalize on the uncertainty of COVID-19 by shielding our consumers from deceptive PPE and vaccination schemes.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Scammers have tried to take advantage of our state's most vulnerable population.
- Creates criminal penalties and authorizes civil remedies to protect Floridians from fraud as they seek PPE and vaccines during a pandemic.
- No one should have to worry about being scammed while navigating these uncertain times.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Scammers are using fake websites to lure unsuspecting Floridians into paying for PPE that is never delivered or is not authentic, or COVID-19 vaccine appointments that never materialize.
- The Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Federal Trade Commission, and local and state officials have warned Floridians to be wary of any offers to gain special access to COVID-19 vaccines in exchange for money or personal identification information; this bill takes action to address these warnings.
- The Department of Homeland Security seized roughly \$33 million in illicit proceeds from these websites, and analyzed close to 80,000 false vaccine websites during the early stages of vaccine rollout.

## BILL BASICS

- Makes the intentional spreading of false information about the availability of or access to the COVID-19 vaccine and PPE a third degree felony.
- Authorizes the Attorney General to seek an injunction to shut down websites and media platforms that attempt to defraud the public with false vaccine and PPE information.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 113-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR

# EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



**Florida needs to be prepared for threats posed by pandemics and other public health emergencies while defending individual liberties and minimizing the negative effects of extended emergencies.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Ensures Florida is prepared for emergencies by requiring the Surgeon General to develop a public health plan to prepare the state for every foreseeable public health emergency.
- Bans vaccine passports.
- Defends individual liberties by requiring political subdivisions to limit any emergency order that limits the rights or liberties of individuals or businesses to 42 days, and allows the Governor to invalidate such orders if the Governor deems they unnecessarily restrict individual rights or liberties.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically affected our state. The toll on individuals, businesses, and the economy has been catastrophic.
- Florida's current State Emergency Management Act (Act) does not specifically address public health emergencies, such as COVID-19.
- However, the Florida Supreme Court concluded in *Abramson v. DeSantis* that the COVID-19 pandemic is a "natural emergency" within the meaning of the Act.
- This bill expands on the current Act to further address and improve Florida's preparation and response to public health emergencies – taking our state's management of COVID-19 into account.

## BILL BASICS

- Creates a presumption that schools and businesses should remain open during an extended public health emergency, if possible.
- Requires the Division of Emergency Management to maintain an inventory of PPE.
- Increases emergency order transparency by requiring orders to include an expiration date and be posted online in a searchable format for public viewing.
- Related to SB 2006, SB 1892 creates the Emergency Preparedness Response Fund for the Governor to use during emergencies, which will be exclusively for emergencies.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 78-36  
SENATE 23-15

**STATUS** SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR

2021

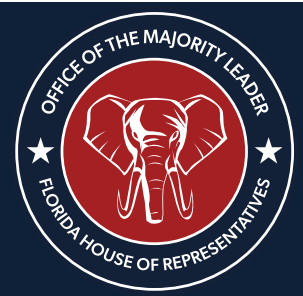
# SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

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## PUBLIC INTEGRITY & ELECTIONS

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**SB 90 takes proactive measures to ensure Florida's ballots remain secure, the election process remains transparent, and that access is maintained for all eligible voters who want to vote.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Improves our election system – the bedrock of our democracy.
- Ensures Florida is a national leader in election integrity by securing voter registration changes and the request and return process for vote by mail (VBM) ballots and by improving monitoring of drop boxes.
- Expands transparency in elections administration by restricting the use of private funds for elections, ensuring access to election processes and records, and updating candidate rules.
- Improves accessibility by requiring proper announcement and equitable placement of drop boxes and by increasing online reporting by Supervisors of Elections (SOE).

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Florida has come a long way from the 2000 election cycle, most recently setting the example of a well-run election for the rest of the nation in 2020.
- Florida has 67 SOEs that are tasked with administering elections within their county in accordance with state and federal laws and in conjunction with the Department of State Division of Elections.
- Florida allows voters to vote via a VBM ballot without needing any excuse or reason for doing so. Some states require a reason for requesting a mailed ballot which is commonly referred to as an absentee ballot.
- In 2019, Florida codified the use of drop boxes into law, as some SOEs were already using them in the absence of state laws or rules.

## BILL BASICS

### Registration and VBMs

- Requires two-factor identity verification for voter registration changes and VBM requests and requires a voter's name to appear on a return envelope.
- Prohibits an individual from possessing more than two ballots except for their own and immediate family members'.
- Requires a VBM request for each general election cycle starting after 2022.

### Drop Boxes

- Requires drop box locations to be geographically located throughout a county to provide equal opportunity to cast a ballot 30 days before an election.
- Requires drop boxes to be physically monitored by an employee of the SOE, and used only during a polling location's early voting hours. Allows drop boxes at the office of the supervisor to be open outside early voting hours provided they are physically manned.
- Requires all drop boxes to be emptied at the end of early voting hours.

### Election Reporting

- Ensures SOEs post the names of Canvassing Board Members on their websites and provide live, online reporting of VBM turnout and Election Day turnout.

### Elections Administration

- Ends private funds being gifted to election officials to conduct election activities.
- Clarifies that designated personnel must have meaningful access to observe and review ballot duplication and signature matching materials.
- Prohibits solicitation with the intent or effect of influencing votes within the no solicitation zone at a polling location.
- Ensures election records include greater detail and be retained for 22 months.

### Candidates

- Updates the process for filling party nomination vacancies.
- Limits candidates for partisan office to be a member of the party whose nomination is sought for at least one year.

# SB 1890 (HB 699)

REPRESENTATIVE  
**PAYNE**

# CAMPAIGN FINANCING



## SB 1890 increases candidate and ballot initiative transparency in our elections by updating campaign finance laws.

### MAJOR MESSAGES

- Campaign finance laws should be applied equally at the state and local level and should have accountability measures to ensure that out-of-state interests do not unfairly influence initiatives seeking to change Florida's Constitution.
- Creates uniformity by ensuring equal application of campaign finance laws at the local level.
- Expands transparency and accountability by applying the same contribution limit for statewide candidates to political committees seeking or opposing a ballot initiative and by updating excess campaign fund restrictions.

### CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Currently, an individual or political committee may not contribute more than:
  - \$3,000 to a candidate for statewide office or for retention as a Supreme Court Justice.
  - \$1,000 to a candidate for retention as a judge of a district court of appeal, a candidate for legislative office, a candidate for countywide office or in any election conducted on less than a countywide basis, or a candidate for county judge or circuit judge.
- The Florida Constitution provides for proposed constitutional amendments through an initiative petition process, but the political committees pushing these initiatives don't play by the same rules and have been increasingly funded by a handful of out-of-state interests.

### BILL BASICS

- Prohibits local governments from enacting restrictions differing from state law on campaign contribution and expenditures limits.
- Sets an individual contribution limit of \$3,000 for political committees sponsoring or opposing ballot initiatives seeking to amend the State Constitution until the ballot measure is certified – this is the same limit on contributions to candidates for statewide office such as for Governor.
- Allows disposal of leftover campaign funds after an election into general government revenues while also prohibiting a candidate from donating such funds to a charitable organization that they work for.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 75-40  
SENATE 23-17

**STATUS** SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR

# HB 7017

REPRESENTATIVE  
**GRALL**

# FOREIGN INFLUENCE



**HB 7017 safeguards American ingenuity by protecting our academic, research, and public institutions from foreign influence and exploitation.**



## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects our institutions from countries like China that wish to exploit our openness in order to accelerate their technological advancement at the expense of the U.S. taxpayer.
- Expands accountability through transparency in Florida's academic, research, and public entities by requiring disclosure of foreign relationships and incentivizing whistle blowers.
- Protects these institutions by prohibiting inappropriate cultural agreements and increasing scrutiny and monitoring of contractors and personnel.



## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In 2020, the House Select Committee on the Integrity of Research Institutions was formed to investigate foreign influence after revelations that high-ranking employees of H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute failed to disclose financial relationships with China's talent and research programs.
- We learned that federal officials were investigating about 200 cases across the U.S. involving federal grant recipients of research funds who had failed to disclose professional, academic, and business relationships in violation of various grant requirements.



## BILL BASICS

- Requires state entities and higher education institutions to report all foreign gifts and grants valued at over \$50,000.
- Expands, protects, and incentivizes whistle blower reporting of undisclosed foreign gifts within academia.
- Ensures thorough vetting of foreign research applicants and monitoring of faculty international travel.
- Expands vetting of state vendors and requires state grant recipients to disclose relationships with any of the seven foreign countries of concern: China, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Russia, Syria, and Venezuela.
- Prohibits public entities from entering into cultural agreements with any of the seven foreign countries of concern that restrict freedom of contract or promote detrimental values or agendas.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 117-0  
SENATE 39-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# HB 573

REPRESENTATIVE  
**BELTRAN**

# FIDUCIARY DUTY OF CARE FOR APPOINTED PUBLIC OFFICIALS AND EXECUTIVE OFFICERS



**HB 573 would have improved government accountability by creating a fiduciary duty of care for appointed public officials and executive officers.**



## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Would have promoted good government by clearly stating the duty of care applicable to appointed public officials and executive officers.
- Would have encouraged responsible appointments by making the appointment of an executive officer or general counsel subject to approval by a two-thirds vote of the governing body.
- Would have reduced conflicts of interest by requiring all legal counsel and lobbyists employed by a governmental entity to represent the legal interest of the governing board rather than any individual or employee.



## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Florida Business Corporation Act imposes a duty on members and officers of corporate boards to act in good faith and in a manner reasonably believed to be in the best interest of the corporation.
- In discharging their duties, corporate board members are required to exercise the care that an ordinary prudent person in a like position would reasonably believe appropriate under similar circumstances.
- Florida's Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees is intended to promote the public interest and to maintain the respect of the people for their government.



## BILL BASICS

- Would have imposed the following six fiduciary duties:
  - Acting in accordance with the laws, ordinances, rules, policies, and terms governing his or her office or employment;
  - Acting with the care, competence, and diligence normally exercised by private business professionals in similar corporate and proprietary circumstances;
  - Acting only within the scope of his or her authority;
  - Refraining from conduct that is likely to damage the financial or economic interests of the governmental entity;
  - Using reasonable efforts to maintain public records in accordance with applicable laws;
  - Maintaining reasonable oversight of any delegated authority and discharging his or her duties with care;
  - Obtaining sufficient information about decision-making functions, affairs, and performance of the governmental entity's officers, agents, and employees.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 116-0

**STATUS**

PASSED  
HOUSE ONLY



# HB 853

REPRESENTATIVE  
**SIROIS**

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT ETHICS REFORM



**HB 853 would have strengthened transparency and accountability in local governments by increasing ethics standards and training.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Would have reinforced the right of Floridians to know whether their tax dollars are being managed responsibly, ethically, and without conflicts of interest.
- Would have increased transparency in local government by requiring local elected officials to file a more detailed disclosure of their financial interests.
- Would have strengthened accountability by expanding ethics training to more officials and updating guidelines on conflicts of interest.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Current law requires all elected constitutional officers, statewide elected officials, or candidates for those positions to file a Form 6 to show a complete listing and valuation of their assets and liabilities.
- Most elected city and county officials only have to file a Form 1, which requires much less detail on specific assets and liabilities.
- A Form 6 allows citizens to more easily identify and prevent conflicts of interest.

## BILL BASICS

- Would have required elected officials of a municipality with over \$10 million in total revenue to file a full public financial disclosure (Form 6) in place of the less-detailed Form 1.
- Would have expanded mandatory ethics training to special district and water management district governing board members.
- Would have clarified that material interest in a business falls under prohibited conflicting employment within the Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 116-0

**STATUS**

PASSED  
HOUSE ONLY



**HB 1585 would have strengthened our ability to ensure taxpayer dollars are used effectively, efficiently, and ethically by creating the Florida Integrity Office (FIO) and increasing accountability measures.**

**MAJOR  
MESSAGES**

- Would have ensured that taxpayer funds benefit the citizens of Florida – and are not wasted or abused.
- Would have enhanced our ability to investigate and hold entities that receive state funds accountable by creating the FIO and incentivizing state whistle blowers.
- Would have strengthened accountability by prohibiting inappropriate spending authority for state agency lobbyists and eliminating a statutory monopoly on public service announcements.

**CRUCIAL  
CONTEXT**

- Over the past five years, the Florida House Public Integrity & Elections Committee and its predecessors have been able to bring to light abuse of taxpayer funds by public and private entities.
- Last year, the Committee helped uncover millions in misused state funds by the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence which were supposed to be supporting survivors of domestic violence – the FIO would have improved this function to make it easier to protect taxpayer funds.

**BILL  
BASICS**

- Would have established the FIO to create a full-time office dedicated to assisting the Legislature in investigating and eliminating waste, fraud, and abuse.
- Would have created a reward system for state employees whose Whistle-blower’s Act reports result in savings or recovery of public funds in excess of \$1,000.
- Would have prevented state agency lobbyists from participating in spending of appropriations they helped acquire.
- Would have eliminated statutes that inhibit proper competitive procurement for public service announcements.

2021

# SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

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## STATE AFFAIRS

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# HB 59

REPRESENTATIVE  
**MCCLAIN**

# GROWTH MANAGEMENT



## HB 59 strengthens private property rights by expanding safeguards within growth management regulations.

### MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects private property rights – one of the fundamental principles that this country was founded on.
- Reinforces private property rights by promoting fair growth management and uniform standards for all local governments to follow.
- Protects property owners from abrupt, arbitrary local government actions by ensuring fair and consistent application of development regulations.

### CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Local governments must adopt local comprehensive plans to manage the future growth of their communities, but this can sometimes lead to arbitrary and sweeping regulations that ignore private property rights.
- Laws protecting private property rights are balanced against the state's need to effectively and efficiently plan, coordinate, and deliver government services amid the state's continued growth and development.

### BILL BASICS

- Creates a standard property rights model statement and requires local governments to include a private property rights element in their comprehensive plans.
- Requires comprehensive plans for newly- and recently-created municipalities to honor the density regulations existing before the plan.
- Clarifies that changes to development agreements unique to an individual property only need the consent of that property owner – instead of unreasonably seeking permission from all owners in the original development agreement.
- Requires the Department of Transportation, when selling certain property, to give the prior owner right of first refusal.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 82-32  
SENATE 38-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# HB 231

REPRESENTATIVE  
**ZIKA**

# SERVICES FOR VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES



**HB 231 prioritizes the mental health and wellbeing of our veterans by authorizing the establishment of the Florida Veterans' Care Coordination Program to connect them with fellow veterans dedicated to providing support.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Our veterans risked their lives to defend our freedoms. As a result, many of them face mental health and substance abuse issues unique to their experience that can be difficult for civilian resource providers to understand.
- Empowers veterans and improves access to services by authorizing the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) to create the Florida Veterans' Care Coordination Program (Program) to expand telephone-based veteran support services connecting callers with fellow veterans ready to provide behavioral health care referral services.
- Attracts veterans and families who may have a stigma or hesitancy about seeking help by providing them with veteran-staffed service providers who can more personally relate with those calling.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Florida has the nation's third-largest veteran population with roughly 1.5 million veterans calling Florida home.
- The Florida 211 Network operates as the single point of coordination for information and referral of health and human services.
- In 2014, the Legislature approved a pilot program expanding the existing Florida 211 network services to veterans in Hillsborough, Pinellas, Polk, and Manatee Counties. The Florida Veterans' Care Coordinated Program is modeled after this pilot program.

## BILL BASICS

- Authorizes FDVA to establish the Program as a statewide system within Florida's 211 Network dedicated to immediately connecting veterans with other veterans and providing a multitude of services including: peer support and crisis intervention, treatment coordination, suicide risk assessment and support, and provision of information on other community-based services.
- Promotes the staffing of veterans so that those calling can immediately have access to someone who can better identify with and relate to their situation.
- Ensures follow-up with callers and their families to determine if they have pursued services or if they need extra help.
- Requires the program to track the number and types of requests and calls to ensure programs work effectively and meet the needs of our veterans.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 117-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# VETERANS EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING



**HB 435 provides veterans with additional training and employment opportunities for transition to civilian life.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Our veterans serve to protect our liberties, but the transition from service can sometimes be hard to manage.
- Promotes Florida as the most veteran-friendly state by encouraging and assisting retired and recently separated military personnel to keep or make Florida their permanent residence.
- Directs Veterans Florida, through its Veterans Employment and Training Services Program, to serve as the state's principal assistance organization under the SkillBridge program.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Each year, about 200,000 service members end military service as veterans and either reenter the civilian workforce or enroll in higher education.
- Florida is home to 20 military installations and 65,267 military personnel.
- Florida has the nation's third-largest veteran population with roughly 1.5 million veterans.

## BILL BASICS

- Requires Veterans Florida to:
  - Establish and maintain its certification for the SkillBridge program or any other similar workforce training and transition programs established by the Department of Defense.
  - Educate businesses, business associations, and transitioning service members on the SkillBridge program and its benefits.
  - Assist businesses in obtaining approval for skilled workforce training curricula under the SkillBridge program through apprenticeships and internships.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 118-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR

# HB 873

REPRESENTATIVE

**GIALLOMBARDO**

# MILITARY AFFAIRS



## **HB 873 supports Florida's service members and national military readiness by modernizing the Florida Code of Military Justice.**

### MAJOR MESSAGES

- The Florida National Guard (FLNG) and Department of Military Affairs (DMA) are vital to ensuring the protection, safety, and wellbeing of every Floridian and service member in this state.
- Ensures that the FLNG and DMA can fulfill their missions and services more effectively by modernizing authorities and aligning the state's military judicial code with national standards.
- Enhances the FLNG's disaster response by allowing out-of-state medical officers to practice medicine during an emergency.

### CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The FLNG is tasked with providing protection of life and property and preserving peace, order, and public safety.
- The FLNG is comprised of the Florida Army National Guard and the Florida Air National Guard with over 11,900 personnel.

### BILL BASICS

- Expands authority and flexibility to the FLNG and DMA for personnel and salary decisions while revising service requirements for leadership positions.
- Aligns the Florida Code of Military Justice with the updated federal Uniform Code of Military Justice.
- Authorizes a medical officer licensed as physician in another state to practice medicine on service members or civilians during an emergency, declared disaster, or federal military training.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 118-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# SB 922 (HB 541)

REPRESENTATIVE  
**BUCHANAN**

# VETERANS' PREFERENCE IN EMPLOYMENT



**SB 922 strengthens employment opportunities for active service members and veterans by expanding state employment preference guidelines and developing recruitment plans.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Helps service members and their families prepare for life after the military by making it easier for them to find jobs.
- Strengthens public employment opportunities by expanding veterans' preference and authorizing waiving postsecondary education requirements.
- Increases opportunities at the local level by requiring local governments and special districts to develop veteran recruitment plans.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Florida has the nation's third-largest veteran population with roughly 1.5 million veterans.
- Current law requires the state, and allows its political subdivisions, to give employment preference in hiring and retention to all veterans, Florida National Guard members, reserve components of the United States Armed Forces, Gold Star Mothers and Fathers, widows or widowers, legal guardians, and certain spouses who meet specified criteria.

## BILL BASICS

- Authorizes state agencies and political subdivisions to waive a postsecondary education requirement for a qualified current member of the United States Armed Forces or the Florida National Guard or a veteran who was honorably discharged.
- Increases point preferences given to veterans and their family members when a numerically based selection process is used for hiring.
- Requires, rather than authorizes, political subdivisions to develop and implement a veterans' recruitment plan that establishes annual goals for ensuring the full use of veterans in their workforce.

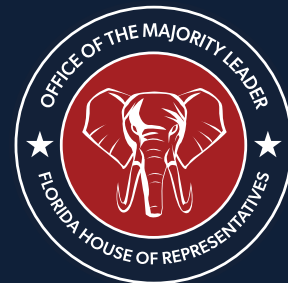
**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 118-0  
SENATE 38-0

**STATUS**

SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR





**HB 1055**  
REPRESENTATIVE  
**GREGORY**

# PUB.REC./ TRADE SECRETS

**HB 1055 protects intellectual property by creating a public records exemption for trade secrets held by state agencies.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Although Florida is a leader in government transparency, we must make sure our broad public records laws don't negatively impact businesses.
- Ensures that the ingenuity of our agencies' trade secrets stays secret.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Wrongful disclosure of trade secrets that took time and resources to develop can erode a businesses' competitive advantage and create an unfair market.
- Exemptions need to be standardized because current law contains a patchwork of provisions that may protect trade secrets handled by some agencies, but not others.

## BILL BASICS

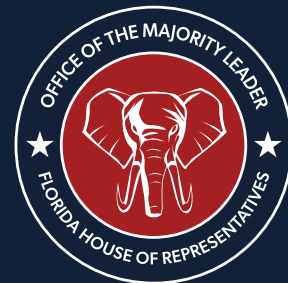
- Adopts the same definition for "trade secrets" as the Uniform Trade Secrets Act to include information such as formulas, patterns, compilations, programs, devices, methods, techniques, or processes.
- Allows for the disclosure of a trade secret if an agency is disclosing the trade secret to another governmental agency whose use of it is within the agency's lawful duties and responsibilities.
- Protects public employees from civil and criminal liability if an employee releases records in accordance with their duties.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 112-2  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS



**HB 1079**  
REPRESENTATIVE  
**MARIANO**

# AGENCY CONTRACTS FOR COMMODITIES AND CONTRACTUAL SERVICES

**HB 1079 strengthens our state contracting policies by increasing oversight, ensuring transparency, providing greater clarity in the roles of our contract professionals, and holding vendors accountable.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Ensures effective and efficient use of state funds by creating continuing oversight teams to ensure state contracts are closely monitored and the appropriate entities are notified if problems arise.
- Increases accountability by strengthening bidding and contract requirements and disqualifying vendors from further state contracting if they fail to fulfill their contracts.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Depending on the type of contract and scope of work or goods sought, an agency may use one of three procurement methods: invitation to bid, request for proposals, or invitation to negotiate.
- Invitation to bid is used when an agency is capable of defining the scope of work or specific commodity sought.
- Request for proposals is used when the agency can define the purposes and uses for the services or commodity sought and the agency can identify deliverables.
- Invitation to negotiate is intended to determine the best method for achieving a specific goal or solving a particular problem.

## BILL BASICS

- Requires state contracts of \$5 million or greater be monitored by an experienced continuing oversight team to monitor project status and contractor performance as well as report any deficiency to the Executive and Legislative Branch.
- Ensures governmental agencies bid contracts to more vendors for proper lengths of time
- Adds contract requirements to authorize examination of vendor finances and prohibit nondisclosure clauses.
- Requires agency inspectors general to complete a risk-based compliance audit of all contracts executed by the agency for the prior three fiscal years.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 118-0  
SENATE 39-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS



**The state has a vast network of public entities with the power to tax, spend, and regulate private behavior, including special districts. HB 1103 improves the transparency and accountability of these entities.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Improves special district transparency by expanding information these entities are required to include in their annual financial reports.
- Increases accountability by requiring independent performance reviews every five years for special fire control districts and hospitals governed by special districts.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Special districts are used to provide a variety of local services and are funded by ad valorem taxes, fees, or charges on the users of those services as authorized by law.
- There are two types of special districts: independent and dependent.
- Special districts are governed generally by the Uniform Special District Accountability Act, which centralizes provisions governing special districts and applies to the formation, governance, administration, supervision, merger, and dissolution of special districts, unless otherwise expressly provided in law.

## BILL BASICS

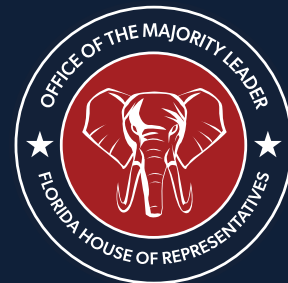
- Requires all independent special fire control districts and each hospital governed by the governing body of a special district or the board of trustees of a public health trust to undergo a performance review every five years.
- Requires the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability to conduct performance reviews of all independent mosquito control districts and soil and water conservation districts by September 30, 2023, and September 30, 2024.
- Requires annual financial reports to specify the total number of employees and independent contractors compensated by the special district, the amount of compensation earned or awarded, and each construction project with a total cost of \$65,000 or more approved by the district.
- When applicable, the annual financial report must include the rates imposed and total amounts collected for ad valorem taxes or special assessments together with information on outstanding bond debt.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 118-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS



# HB 1137

REPRESENTATIVE  
**FABRICIO**

# INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROCUREMENT

**HB 1137 provides greater involvement by the Florida Digital Service (FDS) in state agency IT procurement projects to ensure interoperability across state agency IT systems.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Enhances IT procurement and contract standards.
- Ensures greater reliability of IT projects by requiring independent verification and validation of the project.
- Improves state IT system effectiveness by increasing cybersecurity standards and ensuring compatibility with other state systems.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- FDS was created in 2020 to propose innovative solutions that securely modernize state government, including technology and information services, to achieve value through digital transformation and interoperability, and to fully support the cloud-first policy.
- The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) is part of the U.S. Department of Commerce and its cybersecurity programs seek to enable greater development and application of practical, innovative security technologies and methodologies.

## BILL BASICS

- Increases oversight of management of state agency IT procurement.
- Increases FDS involvement for state agency IT procurements of \$10 million or more, including participation in the development of the procurement specifications and post-award contract monitoring of the project.
- Creates greater vendor access and competition by allowing certain IT vendors to be pre-approved on an annual basis.
- Requires IT policies established by FDS to include a requirement that any contract for IT commodities and services meet the NIST Cybersecurity Framework.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 107-10  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS



## HB 1177 restores and preserves South Florida's precious Biscayne Bay by creating the Biscayne Bay Commission.

### MAJOR MESSAGES

- Tackles the threats of sewage contamination, excess nutrients, and pollution to preserve Florida's unique natural treasure of Biscayne Bay.
- Focuses and expands efforts to restore this ecosystem by establishing the Biscayne Bay Commission (Commission) and protecting its waters from harmful sewage discharges.

### CRUCIAL CONTEXT

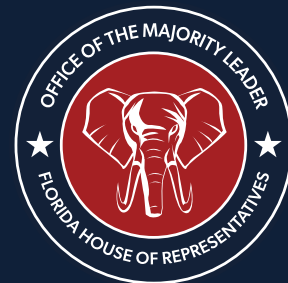
- Biscayne Bay is the largest estuary in Florida. The unique waterbody serves as the only large subtropical, protected bay within the continental U.S.
- In 2019, a grand jury convened by the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office issued a report that Biscayne Bay was at a "precarious balance" due to:
  - Sewage contamination, which results in excessive amounts of harmful bacteria;
  - The presence of excess nutrients, which results in destructive algal blooms; and
  - Pollution and littering, which result in massive amounts of trash being discharged into the bay via the storm drainage system.

### BILL BASICS

- Establishes the Commission as a nine-member advisory council within Department of Environmental Protection to serve as the official coordinating clearinghouse for Biscayne Bay-related projects and policy.
- Requires the Commission to issue semiannual reports to update the public on the efforts and accomplishments of all stakeholders.
- Prohibits sanitary sewage facilities from disposing of waste into Biscayne Bay without providing advanced waste treatment.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 117-0  
SENATE 38-0

**STATUS** SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR



# HB 1297

# CYBERSECURITY

REPRESENTATIVE

## GIALLOMBARDO

**It's no secret that cyber-attacks are on the rise. Improving cybersecurity is vital to ensuring the availability, confidentiality, and integrity of agency data and IT resources.**



### MAJOR MESSAGES

- Centralizes state cybersecurity by designating the Florida Digital Service (FDS) within the Department of Management Services (DMS) as the lead authority on assessing risk and developing security measures.
- Strengthens our continued resilience to threats by expanding state agency IT standards and training and establishing the Florida Cybersecurity Advisory Council to enhance security and risk assessment.
- Supports active coordination and response to cybersecurity incidents by creating a Cybersecurity Operations Center and requiring notification and information sharing of attacks.



### CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Cybercrime is expected to inflict \$6 trillion worth of damage globally in 2021.
- The United States is often a frequent target, receiving more cyber-attacks over the last 14 years than any other country.
- Below are a few examples of recent cybersecurity incidents that involved the U.S.
  - May 2021: A hacking group known as "Darkside" shut down Colonial Pipeline service on the east coast of the U.S. with a ransomware attack.
  - October 2020: Iranian hackers targeted state election websites in order to download voter registration information and conduct voter intimidation campaigns.
  - October 2020: A Russian hacking group breached the U.S. state and local government networks, as well as aviation networks, and exfiltrated data.
  - October 2020: The National Security Agency announced that Chinese government hackers were targeting the U.S. defense industrial base as part of a wide-ranging espionage campaign.



### BILL BASICS

- Requires notification and information-sharing of confirmed or suspected cyber threats.
- Upgrades standards for purchasing IT resources to meet the National Institute for Standards and Technology Cybersecurity Framework.
- Creates a Cybersecurity Operations Center to serve as a clearinghouse for threat information and to support responses to cybersecurity incidents.
- Sets the groundwork for cutting-edge training for state technology professionals.
- Creates an advisory council to assist state agencies in protecting their IT resources from cyber threats and incidents.

## FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 118-0  
SENATE 40-0

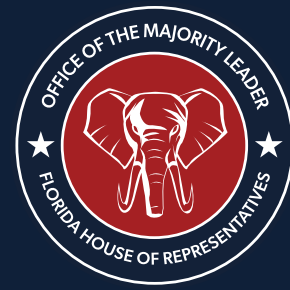
## STATUS

PASSED BOTH  
CHAMBERS

# HJR 1377 & HB 1379

REPRESENTATIVE  
**CHANEY**

## LIMITATION ON ASSESSMENT OF REAL PROPERTY USED FOR RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES & PROPERTY ASSESMENTS FOR ELEVATED PROPERTIES



**Floridians should have more tools at their disposal to mitigate the effects of flooding and sea level rise and the costs that come with them.**



### MAJOR MESSAGES

- Proposes a constitutional amendment to encourage homeowners to take steps to protect their homes and their families from the disastrous impacts of flooding.
- Property owners are best positioned to prepare their own homes to mitigate the effects of flooding and sea level rise.



### CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Floridians have suffered through 79 tropical or subtropical hurricanes in the last 20 years, resulting in over \$123 billion in damage.
- The joint resolution will be considered by the electorate at the next general election in November 2022. If adopted during the 2022 general election, the resolution would take effect January 1, 2023.



### BILL BASICS

- The substance of HB 1379, which implements HJR 1377, passed in this year's tax package (HB 7061). If the voters approve the constitutional amendment, HB 1379 would:
  - Offer tax breaks to property owners who voluntarily elevate their property.
  - Exempt the added value to the property from the elevation from property tax assessments.
- Rental property and multi-family units with up to nine units would qualify.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 118-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

HJR FILED WITH  
SECRETARY OF STATE

# SB 1954 & SB 2514

REPRESENTATIVE  
**BUSATTA  
CABRERA**

# STATEWIDE FLOODING AND SEA LEVEL RISE RESILIENCE & RESILIENT FLORIDA TRUST FUND



**Floridians know better than most about the devastating impacts that flooding and sea level rise have on our state. From storm surge to groundwater and flash flooding, the effects are felt across our state. SB 1954 addresses these threats with a coordinated, statewide approach to ensure that Florida is always ready.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Sea level rise and flooding do not care who you are or which zip code you live in - it's time to protect our homes, our communities, and our state as a whole.
- Improves state-coordinated planning and resilience by requiring a comprehensive statewide flood vulnerability and sea level rise assessment and development of a Statewide Flooding and Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan.
- Aids local governments in planning and creating resilient infrastructure by establishing the Resilient Florida Grant Program.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Nearly one million residential properties are at substantial flood risk in Florida.
- \$9,000 in average expected annual loss per property.
- Seven of the ten cities with the largest property losses at risk from flooding are in Florida.

## BILL BASICS

- Dedicates \$100 million each year to mitigate the impacts of flooding and sea level rise that would damage our homes, disrupt businesses, and displace families and employees.
- Creates a statewide resiliency grant program to provide funding to local governments to cover the costs of community resilience planning.
- Establishes Florida's first-ever three-year Statewide Flooding and Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 118-0  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR



# RECOGNIZING VETERAN SUICIDE



**HM 71 would have called on Congress to recognize the veteran suicide crisis and fully fund suicide prevention efforts by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Some veterans have a difficult time transitioning back to civilian life, which, along with increased prevalence of trauma-related disorders and lack of care, has led to high suicide rates.
- While the state funds resources for veterans, the federal government is largely in charge of veteran care and programs – it needs to do more.
- HM 71 makes it clear that the Florida House of Representatives publicly urges Congress to exercise its authority to recognize veteran suicide and fully fund prevention efforts undertaken by the VA.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Since 2008, the number of veteran suicides has exceeded 6,300 each year.
- Many risk factors may affect veteran suicide rates including economic disparities, homelessness, and health issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder and substance abuse disorder.
- Although the VA emphasizes mental health care for veterans, many veterans do not reach out to the VA for help.
- Veterans who die by suicide are more likely than civilians to have debilitating nervous system and mental health disorders.

## BILL BASICS

- Would have urged the United States Congress to fully fund suicide prevention efforts undertaken by the VA.
- Would have required delivery of this Memorial to the President, Speaker of the U.S. House, President of the Senate, and each member of Florida's congressional delegation.

**COSPONSORSHIP** HOUSE 118-0

**STATUS** PASSED  
HOUSE ONLY

# FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY FOR NONGOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES



**Organizations that receive the majority of their funds from government need to be accountable to taxpayers. Increasing oversight and transparency will ensure public funds are used responsibly.**

## ★ MAJOR MESSAGES

- Would have improved transparency for nonprofits receiving state funds by requiring disclosure of executive salaries.
- Would have held these organizations accountable by requiring certain audits be conducted depending on the amount of public funds received and establishing restrictions on the use of state funds, such as a cap on administrative expenses.

## ✓ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The state often contracts with organizations to help implement numerous programs and projects.
- Although there are measures in place to protect state funds, we can always do more to expand transparency and strengthen accountability.
- The Florida Has a Right to Know website is a searchable database that provides certain information relating to state employees and officers like their salaries and positions.

## 💡 BILL BASICS

- Would have increased transparency by requiring nonprofits funded mostly by government to post the total annual compensation of their executives on the Florida Has a Right to Know website.
- Would have prohibited a nongovernmental entity from expending more than 15% of state-appropriated funds, including state-appropriated federal funds, on administrative expenses.
- Would have required agency grant agreements with nonprofit or for-profit organizations to include a provision that prohibits the public funds from being used for lobbying or employee bonuses.
- Would have required certain nonprofits and for-profit organizations to submit to certain audits.

# HB 1083

REPRESENTATIVE  
**SHOAF**

# QUASI-PUBLIC ENTITIES



**HB 1083 would have brought transparency and accountability to a portion of government that desperately needs it – quasi-public entities (QPEs).**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Would have increased transparency of these entities by requiring executive salaries be posted to the Florida Has a Right to Know website.
- Would have ensured QPEs are doing their job by requiring a cost-benefit analysis to determine if they are efficient and cost-effective.
- Would have promoted good government by establishing a seven-year sunset for all newly created QPEs.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

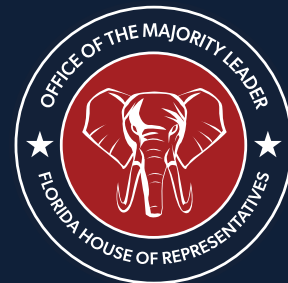
- QPEs have traits of both the public and private sectors.
- QPEs have a variety of purposes – some advance specific policy goals, such as Enterprise Florida, Inc., whose goal is to increase private investment in Florida, while others are administrators of government programs, such as Florida Healthy Kids Corporation.
- QPE structure also varies from entity to entity. Some are structured as nonprofit corporations, while others more closely resemble for-profit corporations.
- Many statutes that create and govern QPEs contain accountability measures, but there exist no uniform or consistent standards in Florida law applicable to all QPEs.

## BILL BASICS

- Would have required QPEs to have an affiliated department or state university advise them and review their activities annually.
- Would have ensured posting of executive salary information on the Florida Has a Right to Know website and a publicly available list of all QPEs throughout the state.
- Would have required QPEs to undergo a cost-benefit analysis every 10 years with the goal of determining whether it would be more efficient or cost-effective to maintain the QPE or transfer its duties and functions to a state agency.
- Would have required QPEs to provide an accessible website that provides information like their annual operating budget, state audits, administered programs, and board meeting records.
- Would have required all QPEs created in law on or after July 1, 2021, to dissolve after seven years unless reviewed and reauthorized by the Legislature.
- Would have established accountability, oversight, and transparency provisions applicable to all QPEs, which are defined as an entity of statewide application, created or established in statute, regardless of form, for a public purpose or to effectuate a government program, and that is not under the direct control of a governmental entity.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 114-0

**STATUS** PASSED HOUSE ONLY



# HB 1347

REPRESENTATIVE  
**MORALES**

# EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR DISABLED VETERANS

**HB 1347 would have supported Florida's disabled veterans by allowing those receiving federal educational assistance benefits to receive a waiver that covers remaining costs of tuition and fees they owe at certain institutions.**



## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Would have helped Florida's disabled veterans pay off remaining educational costs by increasing what is provided from the Post 9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 (GI Bill) for educational benefits to cover 100% of tuition and fees.



## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The GI Bill provides up to 36 months of educational benefits to veterans and service members and their dependent children provided certain requirements are met.
- The percentage of maximum benefits payable under the GI Bill varies and is primarily based on an individual's aggregate length of active duty service.



## BILL BASICS

- Veterans would have qualified for the waiver by:
  - Providing confirmation by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to have a service-connected 100% total and permanent disability rating for compensation;
  - Having a service-connected total and permanent disability rating of 100% and receiving disability retirement pay from a branch of the U.S. Armed Services; or
  - Showing a valid identification card by the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs, proving one of the two previous qualifications.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 118-0

**STATUS**

PASSED  
HOUSE ONLY

# HB 1429

REPRESENTATIVE  
**AVILA**

# TOURIST AND CONVENTION DEVELOPMENT TAXES



**Floridians know better than most about the devastating impacts that flooding has on our state - they should have a say in how to deal with flooding in their communities.**



## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Would have empowered voters to decide whether they want to pay tourist development taxes (TDTs) or convention development taxes (CDTs) in the first place.
- Would have allowed local governments to use TDT and CDT revenues to fund flood mitigation projects and improvements.



## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- These taxes are levied on transient rental transactions, like paying to stay in a hotel, motel, or AirBnB.
- Florida is expected to see more than 2.5 feet of sea level rise in the next 30 years, which could impact over 300,000 homes across the state and result in \$145 billion in losses to property value.



## BILL BASICS

- Would have required all new or increased TDTs and CDTs to be approved by referendum.
- TDTs and CDTs are currently decided by county commissions; going forward, new taxes or increases in existing taxes would have required approval by voter referendum.
- If residents of these counties chose to pay TDTs or CDTs, local governments would have been authorized to use the revenue to fund flood mitigation projects or improvement initiatives.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 114-2

**STATUS**

PASSED  
HOUSE ONLY

2021

# SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

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## WAYS & MEANS

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**Florida should be in the business of supporting small business. SB 50 rescues Florida businesses from a massive tax hike, creates a fair playing field for small businesses to compete with out-of-state retailers, and cuts the business rent tax by more than half.**

## MAJOR MESSAGES

- Levels the playing field for Florida's small businesses.
- Prevents a massive increase in unemployment (reemployment) taxes over the next four years for Florida businesses and replenishes the Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund.
- Cuts the business rent tax from 5.5% to 2% after the trust fund is replenished.

## CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund has been significantly exhausted as a result of the pandemic.
- Florida is the only state to charge sales tax on commercial rentals of real property.

## BILL BASICS

- Requires marketplaces (like eBay) to collect sales taxes for sellers.
- Exempts Florida customers, out-of-state dealers, and marketplaces from liability for tax, penalties, and interest for remote sales that occurred before the bill's effective date.
- Prevents an automatic increase in unemployment (reemployment) taxes and replenishes the trust fund ensuring that the fund remains solvent for employees when they need to claim benefits.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 93-24  
SENATE 27-12

**STATUS** SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR



## HB 7061 strengthens Florida's economic prosperity by providing over \$150 million in tax relief to Floridians.

### MAJOR MESSAGES

- People – not the government – should have the most control over their hard-earned money.
- As we continue forward recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, we can emerge stronger and more prosperous than before by cutting taxes to empower Florida's businesses, workers, and consumers.
- The 2021 Tax Package offers much needed relief to Floridians by establishing three sales tax holidays, creating new tax credit programs and exemptions, and streamlining tax laws.

### BILL BASICS

- Strong Families Tax Credit Program: tax credits for businesses that make donations to eligible nonprofit charitable organizations aimed at promoting child welfare.
- Internship Tax Credit Program: tax credit of up to \$10,000 for qualified businesses employing student interns to enhance workforce opportunities.
- Sales tax exemption on independent living items like bed rails and shower seats to help our seniors.
- Increases funding for the Brownfields Tax Credit Program to fund a backlog of tax credits.
- Repeals the Professional Sports Development Program which has never been used.
- Provides property tax relief for elevation of certain properties vulnerable to flooding.

### BILL BASICS (HOLIDAYS)

- 7-day Freedom Week Sales Tax Holiday: July 1-July 7.
  - Tax exemptions on things like admissions to live events, museums, festivals, and fitness facilities as well as on products for water sports, camping supplies, fishing supplies, and other outdoor activities.
- 10-day Back-To-School Sales Tax Holiday: July 31-August 9.
  - This familiar holiday has been extended to 10 days to exempt sales tax on products such as school supplies, personal computers, and clothing.
- 10-day Disaster Preparedness Sales Tax Holiday: May 28-June 6.
  - This holiday has also been extended to 10 days and includes exemptions on products like flashlights, batteries, coolers, and generators.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 117-1  
SENATE 40-0

**STATUS**

SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR



2021

# SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

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## SPECIAL SESSION

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# SB 2-A (HB 1A)

REPRESENTATIVES

**PAYNE &  
GARRISON**

# IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2021 GAMING COMPACT BETWEEN THE SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA AND THE STATE OF FLORIDA



## SB 2-A enhances Florida's economy while limiting the footprint of gaming by ratifying the 2021 Gaming Compact between the Seminole Tribe of Florida and the State of Florida.

### MAJOR MESSAGES

- Enhances our state revenue by giving the Seminole Tribe the exclusive rights for certain gaming activities in Florida; in return, the state will receive substantial payments from the Seminole Tribe totaling \$2.5 billion in the first five years, which will provide enormous opportunities for all Floridians.
- Continues to limit the footprint of gaming in Florida by allowing only certain types of games to be conducted by the Seminole Tribe.

### CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In 1988, the federal Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, allowed federally recognized tribes to enter into gaming compacts with states to allowing gaming activities on their lands and share revenues from the gaming operations in exchange for meaningful and substantial gaming rights.
- Florida originally entered into a 20-year compact with the Seminole Tribe in 2010 which allowed slot machines and banked card games (blackjack, baccarat, and chemin de fer) at tribal facilities, and in exchange, the Seminole Tribe would share and remit a percentage of its revenues with the state.
- Ultimately, the Compact fell apart after an issue arose related to designated player card games which resulted in a federal court ruling that allowed the Seminole Tribe to continue offering banked games beyond the time limitations authorized in the Compact – the Seminole Tribe ceased revenue sharing payments in 2019.

### BILL BASICS

- The Compact provides the Seminole Tribe with new exclusivity for craps, roulette, and sports betting (at Casinos and on mobile apps) in Florida – and includes exclusivity for the games included in the 2010 Compact.
- In return, the Seminole Tribe will make payments based on a percentage of net win, ranging from 12% to 25% (guaranteed payments totaling \$1.5 billion in the first three years and \$2.5 billion in the first five years).
- The Tribe may stop or reduce revenue sharing payments if the state authorizes gaming in violation of the Seminole Tribe's exclusivity rights.
- Exceptions to the Seminole Tribe's exclusive rights include:
  - Slot machine gaming in Broward and Miami-Dade counties.
  - Bingo games and instant bingo; electronic bingo card minders and historic racing machines.
  - Pari-mutuel wagering activities at licensed facilities.
  - Poker at licensed cardrooms, including designated player poker games.
  - Lottery games and vending machines by the Florida Lottery.
  - Amusement games (arcades).
  - Fantasy sports contests.
  - Mobile sports betting via written contract with any qualified pari-mutuel permitholder.

**FLOOR VOTES** HOUSE 97-17  
SENATE 38-1

**STATUS**

SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR

# SB 4-A (HB 3A)

REPRESENTATIVE  
**ROMMEL**

# GAMING ENFORCEMENT



## SB 4-A improves enforcement and helps stop illegal gaming by establishing the statewide Florida Gaming Control Commission (Commission).

### MAJOR MESSAGES

- Creates the Commission to enforce Florida’s gaming laws statewide and creates the Division of Gaming Enforcement (DGE) within the Commission to function as a law enforcement agency.
- The Commission will be charged with ensuring gaming compact compliance and regulating pari-mutuel wagering, cardrooms, slot machine facilities, and any new forms of gaming authorized by law.
- Creates a strong, transparent, and accountable Commission by providing specific appointee qualifications and experience requirements and adopting conflicts of interest and ethics requirements.

### CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In April 2019, the Seminole Tribe stopped revenue sharing payments to the State due to lack of agreed-upon enforcement by the state – a statewide regulator will help make sure that this does not happen again.
- Currently, law enforcement officers and local prosecutors, rather than statewide regulators, investigate and prosecute illegal gaming.
- Establishing an overarching state gaming regulator, with sworn law enforcement, will improve statewide uniform enforcement and help stop illegal gaming regardless of the county where it occurs.

### BILL BASICS

- Requires that the Commission consist of five Governor-appointed members, three of which must have at least 10 years of experience in law enforcement, accounting, or law practice, respectively.
- Grants authority to the Commission to recertify pari-mutuel licenses, enforce lawful gaming, review the Seminole Tribe’s sports betting regulations, and evaluate sports betting integrity.
- Creates the DGE to act as the law enforcement arm of the Commission and work in conjunction with the Attorney General’s office to investigate and prosecute violations.
- Authorizes the DGE to search and inspect gaming facilities to ensure compliance and lawful activity.
- Enacts Commission member and employee ethics requirements and prohibitions promoting transparency and restricting improper or conflicting relationships with gaming facilities – enforced by the Commission on Ethics.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 108-7  
SENATE 26-13

**STATUS**

SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR

# SB 8-A (HB 7A)

REPRESENTATIVES

**LATVALA &  
ROBINSON, W.**

# GAMING



## SB 8-A ensures consistent regulation of pari-mutuels while limiting gaming expansion statewide by updating racing requirements and stopping future gaming expansion.

### MAJOR MESSAGES

- Eliminates the live racing and games requirements for jai alai, harness horse, and quarter horse pari-mutuel permitholders with cardroom and slot machine licenses.
- Stops future gaming expansion by ending new pari-mutuel operating licensure and by allowing municipalities to prohibit future cardrooms and pari-mutuel facilities.

### CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- A pari-mutuel facility is a racetrack or fronton that has been permitted to conduct pari-mutuel wagering or proportional betting on live races or games.
- Currently, 38 pari-mutuel permitholders are licensed to operate in the state: 19 Greyhound Racing permits, 5 Thoroughbred Horse Racing permits, 1 Harness Horse Racing permit, 5 Quarter Horse Racing permits, and 8 Jai-Alai permits.
- Of these permitholders, 27 are currently licensed cardrooms and 8 facilities specifically in Broward and Miami-Dade County are authorized to operate slot machines.
- In 2018, voters approved a constitutional amendment that prohibits racing of and wagering on greyhounds or other dogs and eliminates the requirement for permitholders to conduct a minimum number of live races in order to maintain their other gaming activities.

### BILL BASICS

- Decouples the live racing and games requirements for cardroom and slot machine facilities for greyhound, quarter horse, harness horse, and jai alai permitholders.
- Aligns statute with the 2018 constitutional amendment banning dog racing and decoupling greyhound permitholders.
- Maintains racing requirements for thoroughbred permitholders, limited thoroughbred permitholders, and limited intertrack wagering license holders.
- Revokes the permits of and prohibits cardroom licenses for pari-mutuel permitholders that were not licensed in Fiscal Year 2020-2021 – except for limited thoroughbred permitholders meeting certain requirements.
- Allows municipalities to prohibit the establishment of new pari-mutuel facilities or cardrooms.
- Increases the penalty for illegal wagering on a contest of skill from a second degree misdemeanor to a third degree felony and incorporates influencing of results into the definition.

**FLOOR VOTES**

HOUSE 73-43  
SENATE 39-0

**STATUS**

SIGNED BY  
GOVERNOR