

The Florida House
of Representatives

2022
Session

Highlights





HOUSE MAJORITY OFFICE

FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

REPRESENTATIVE MICHAEL GRANT, MAJORITY LEADER

Members,

At the start of the 2022 Legislative Session, Speaker Sprowls asked “What are you willing to risk?” – challenging us to be bold in our ideas and actions. I am pleased to say that our Republican Conference rose to the challenge and passed meaningful, comprehensive legislation that will benefit all Floridians and shape this state for years to come.

Together, we fought for Florida’s families by tackling the crisis of fatherlessness and at-risk boys, protecting the right to life, ensuring every child in this state is born safe and healthy, and standing up with parents by defending their right to choose what is best for their child. From protecting Florida from future natural and man-made threats to uplifting and honoring our law enforcement heroes, we acted.

We have numerous achievements to highlight to our communities and to help you in doing so, we have compiled the 2022 Session Highlights. The information provided in this publication is intended to assist you in communicating the topline outcomes from this past session, rather than provide a technical description of policies.

The Florida House Majority Office compiled the contents of this book with information available before April 21, 2022. As always, please feel free to contact the Majority Office or committee staff if you have any additional questions about the included contents or specific legislation.

I hope you find this information helpful, and above all, I thank you for your unwavering dedication and service to this state.

Sincerely,

Michael Grant
Majority Leader

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Passed Both Chambers

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A year over innovations



NURSING HOME FINANCIAL REPORTING



You cannot manage what you do not measure. Transparency is vital to ensuring that taxpayer dollars are spent responsibly.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Strengthens nursing home transparency by requiring them to report audited financial information just like hospitals.
- Protects nursing home residents by increasing transparency.
- Positions the state to keep taxpayer dollars secure by improving the information nursing homes report.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Under current law, hospitals must submit their audited actual financial experience into the Florida Hospital Uniform Reporting System (FHURS).
- FHURS is a database designed by AHCA expressly reporting hospitals' audited actual financial experience. The Legislature enacted this requirement in 1992, and it has aided AHCA in making management decisions and the Legislature in making policy and budgetary decisions.
- Currently, nursing homes and their home offices must submit actual unaudited financial experience.



BILL BASICS

- Requires nursing homes and their home offices to report audited financial experience to the Nursing Home Uniform Reporting System.
- Deductive accounting will show where large amounts of money are going, and comparing that to other nursing homes across the state can help indicate areas needing further attention.
- Audited actual financial experience will provide data needed to perform various financial position analyses to better gauge the financial health of nursing homes and their home offices.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

114-0
37-0

STATUS

SIGNED BY
GOVERNOR

SB 2508

REPRESENTATIVE
TOMKOW

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES



SB 2508 enhances legislative oversight of certain state-funded restoration activities, provides greater certainty over how water shortages within the Lake Okeechobee Region will be managed, and preserves Florida's natural resources for future generations.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Maintains our state's agricultural land base, protects our rural communities, and provides another tool to preserve our natural systems and wildlife habitat.
- Preserves our natural resources and ensures sufficient water supply, including for the 6 million people served by Lake Okeechobee water resources.
- Ensures that Florida maintains control over its own water resources.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Rural and Family Lands Protection Program within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACs) is designed to protect agricultural lands while preserving natural systems and wildlife habitat through the acquisition of permanent conservation easements.
- The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) manages wetlands and activities that alter surface water flows through implementation of the federal Section 404 permitting program and the state Environmental Resource Permit program.
- There are five regional water management districts, which are publicly funded and governed by individual boards.



BILL BASICS

- Expands the Rural and Family Lands Protection Program by authorizing DACs to purchase full fee interests in land, as well as conservation easements.
- Authorizes DEP to enter into agreements with public entities to expedite evaluation of environmental resource permits and Section 404 permits related to a project or activity that serves a public purpose.
- Requires the South Florida Water Management District to annually certify before the release of state funds that its recommendations to the United States Army Corps of Engineers are consistent with its district programs and plans.
- Requires water shortages within the Lake Okeechobee Region to be managed under existing rules and provides the Legislature the option to ratify any changes to the rules.
- Reenacts a cost-share program for agricultural irrigation systems.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 99-8
SENATE 33-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

SB 2524

REPRESENTATIVES
**FINE &
PLASENCIA**

EDUCATION PART 1



SB 2524 enacts comprehensive changes in our PreK-12 and higher education systems to empower students and parents, promote new opportunities and tackle gaps in the healthcare workforce, and ensure effective and efficient investment of taxpayer dollars.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Improves outcomes for students and empowers parents in the PreK-12 system by expanding school choice, improving student literacy programs, enhancing teacher quality, reinforcing school and student performance outcomes, and promoting safe and effective learning environments.
- Increases access and attainment in higher education by expanding financial assistance programs, strengthening institutional performance metrics, and emphasizing the instruction and protection of individual freedom.
- Promotes new health care workforce opportunities by creating the Prepping Institutions, Programs, Employers, and Learners Through Incentives for Nursing Education (PIPELINE) Fund and the Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) Fund to incentivize investments and industry collaboration in nursing education programs.



BILL BASICS (PREK-12)

Expands public school choice by:

- Requiring schools to better monitor capacity, maintain a wait list, and enroll students during the school year.
- Increasing transportation scholarship amounts and establishing the Driving Choice Grant Program to provide transportation for school choice students.

Improves student literacy programs by:

- Incentivizing teachers to provide evidence-based reading interventions by creating a New Worlds literacy micro-credential.
- Expanding eligibility and uses for school district funding from the Reading Instruction Allocation.

Enhances teacher quality by:

- Modifying school district personnel procedures by providing flexibility for salary adjustments for veteran teachers and clarifying that teacher evaluation procedures are not subject to collective bargaining.
- Revising performance metrics for teacher preparation programs.

Reinforces school and student performance outcomes by:

- Ensuring efficient use of taxpayer dollars in virtual education by expanding program access statewide, standardizing state funding, and strengthening contract standards and quality metrics.
- Expanding school readiness programs for child care services and early childhood education for children of low-income families by establishing a funding formula for early learning coalitions based on quality and care level.
- Requiring the State Board of Education to annually review, and make any necessary adjustments to, the school grading scale.
- Directing the Department of Education to collect data from school districts on the amount of instructional time spent on district- and state-required assessments.

Promotes safe and effective learning environments by:

- Protecting parental rights by requiring documentation and annual redetermination for a decision to withhold information from a parent about their child's wellbeing.
- Creating the Safer, Smarter Schools program to support students in learning protective principles to keep them safe within the health education curriculum.
- Requiring all PreK-12 educational entities that receive state funding to conduct employee background checks using the more comprehensive Agency for Health Care Administration's Care Provider Background Screening Clearinghouse.
- Establishing criminal penalties for individuals who knowingly fail to report sexual misconduct by a school authority figure.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 83-24
SENATE 31-2

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

**BILL
BASICS (HIGHER EDUCATION)****Expands financial assistance programs by:**

- Establishing the Student Open Access Resources (SOAR) Grant Repository and SOAR Program to expand open access to course materials and improve textbook affordability.
- Creating the Inclusive Transition and Employment Management (ITEM) Program to support young adults with disabilities in gaining and retaining employment.
- Providing instructional materials for private school students in the Dual Enrollment Scholarship Program free of charge – as is the case for public school students.
- Modifying the Open Door Grant Program – which promotes attainment in high-demand occupations – to expand the list of grant-eligible institutions and authorize an increase in the reward amount for students.

Strengthens institutional performance by:

- Requiring private colleges and universities eligible for Effective Access to Student Education (EASE) to post their performances on educational metrics prominently on their websites.
- Updating the graduation rate metric for Florida College System (FCS) institutions for certain transfer students from a 2-year rate to a 3-year rate.
- Authorizing FCS institutions to increase dormitory capacity, provide on-site dwelling for staff and first responders, and increasing authorized building heights.

Emphasizes the instruction and protection of individual freedoms by:

- Establishing the Hamilton Center for Classical and Civic Education at the University of Florida to support teaching and research concerning the ideas, traditions, and texts that form the foundations of western and American civilization.
- Prohibiting any university from receiving performance funding when there is substantiated discrimination based on a violation of individual freedom.

**BILL
BASICS (WORKFORCE)**

- Creates the PIPELINE Fund to provide performance-based incentive funding to school districts, FCS institutions, and state universities to award and incentivize continuous improvement of nursing program completion and licensure rates.
- Establishes the LINE Fund to incentivize collaboration between nursing education programs and healthcare partners to expand nursing education and faculty recruitment at school district career centers, charter technical career centers, Florida College System institutions, state universities, and independent nonprofit colleges and universities (ICUF).
- Requires more research and analysis on workforce gaps in healthcare and expands Program of Strategic Emphasis tuition and fee waivers to students in healthcare programs.

FLOOR VOTESHOUSE 83-24
SENATE 31-2**STATUS**PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS



Floridians are facing the highest inflation in 40 years, and we must act to mitigate soaring consumer prices.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Helps to offset the impact of inflation on the state's budget.
- Creates the Inflation Fund to ensure that the state can continue to provide critical services even during times of skyrocketing inflation.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- From December 2020 to December 2021, consumer prices for all items rose 7% – the largest December to December percent change since 1981.



BILL BASICS

- Recognizes that federal economic policies have resulted in an unprecedented increase in inflation.
- Establishes the Inflation Fund as the primary funding source to allow for budget amendments when inflation-driven costs exceed appropriations to agencies or the judicial branch in the General Appropriations Act.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 82-26
SENATE 33-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

HM 523

REPRESENTATIVES

**SIROIS &
GREGORY**

BALANCING THE FEDERAL BUDGET



One of the most basic financial principles is not to spend more than you have, yet the federal government continues a trend of doing just that, sending us spiraling further and further into debt.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Would have urged Congress to take immediate action to begin reducing the federal debt.
- Would have requested legislation requiring a federal balanced budget like we have for Florida.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The debt limit is the total amount of money that the United States government is authorized to borrow to meet its existing legal obligations, including Social Security and Medicare benefits, military salaries, interest on the national debt, tax refunds, and other payments.
- The federal government is continuing to go further in debt rather than acting to reduce the national debt.



BILL BASICS

- Would have signaled the Florida Legislature's support for Congress to take immediate action to begin reducing the federal debt and to enact legislation requiring a balanced budget.
- Would have enhanced U.S. sovereignty and national security by not having us indebted to other countries and interests.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
VOICE VOTE

STATUS

PASSED
HOUSE ONLY

Summer



HB 273

REPRESENTATIVE
ALOUPIS

MONEY SERVICES BUSINESSES



HB 273 clarifies when and how virtual currency, such as bitcoin, is regulated.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Regulates the transmission of virtual currency in the same way as other currency.
- Protects consumers transacting in virtual currency through third-party intermediaries.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Office of Financial Regulation's (OFR) Division of Consumer Finance licenses and regulates money services businesses (MSBs), such as money transmitters and payment instrument sellers.
- Virtual currency is not expressly included in current laws regulating MSBs, though in the last 7 years OFR has received over 70 petitions seeking clarity for how virtual currency is regulated.
- In 2019, the Third District Court of Appeal held that the definition of "money transmitter" requires licensure not only for third-party intermediaries but also individuals in a two-party transaction. Additionally, the court held that bitcoin is both "monetary value" and a "payment instrument" under the laws regulating MSBs.



BILL BASICS

- Makes virtual currency expressly subject to money transmitter regulations.
- Clarifies that a money transmitter license is only required for a person acting as an intermediary between two parties.
- Requires 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 112-0
SENATE 35-1

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

HB 423 reduces construction costs and time by simplifying the building inspection process and expanding opportunities for building professionals.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Modernizes the building regulation process by creating additional paths to become a certified building inspector or plans examiner.
- Reduces building inspection delays by allowing qualified staff of private entities to obtain provisional certificates and enacting stricter timeframe requirements on local governments for the approval of permits.
- Eases the cost of construction by expanding the field of potential building inspectors and plans examiners.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Any construction work that requires a building permit also requires plans and inspections to ensure work complies with the Building Code to protect workers and future occupants.
- Local governments enforce the Building Code and issue building permits.
- Currently, people can become building inspectors or plans examiners if they sit for the required exam and meet certain eligibility requirements or complete a 4-year internship while employed full-time by a local government.



BILL BASICS

- Expands pathways to become a certified building inspector or plans examiner by:
 - Allowing private provider internships to qualify.
 - Allowing transfer of partial completion of internship programs.
 - Prohibiting the licensing board from requiring an applicant work at a specific agency.
- Combats unnecessary bureaucracy by:
 - Providing that local building departments may only make 3 requests for additional information from an applicant applying for certain types of building permits.
- Simplifies the relationship between private entities and local governments by:
 - Requiring local governments to provide equal access to all permitting and inspection documents.
 - Allowing qualified staff of private entities to obtain provisional licenses.
 - Authorizing a cause of action to enforce the requirement that local governments must use excess funds generated by Building Code enforcement for lawful purposes.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 113-0
SENATE 38-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

HB 453

REPRESENTATIVES

**DUGGAN
& BYRD**

OFFICER AND FIREFIGHTER PHYSICAL EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS AND RECORDS



First responders are often unsung heroes of our communities, perilously serving without proper acknowledgment of the risks they are taking. This often takes a physical and mental toll on them, and we should do our part to help them.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Supports law enforcement and firefighters by eliminating unnecessary and burdensome requirements for obtaining workers' compensation benefits.
- Ensures that a first responder cannot be denied benefits because of inadequate record keeping or hiring processes performed by their employing agency.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In Florida, a law enforcement officer, correctional officer, correctional probation officer, or firefighter who becomes disabled by tuberculosis, heart disease, or hypertension is entitled to a presumption that the disease was contracted in the line of duty, and is therefore compensable under workers' compensation law.
- To be eligible for the presumption, the officer or firefighter must have taken a pre-employment physical exam that failed to reveal any evidence of tuberculosis, heart disease, or hypertension.



BILL BASICS

- Authorizes the medical examination required for firefighter certification to satisfy the pre-employment physical examination required if the firefighter's employer did not require one.
- Requires the employing agency of a law enforcement officer, correctional officer, correctional probation officer, or firefighter to maintain records of an employee's pre-employment physical examination for at least 5 years after he or she separates from the employing agency or fire service provider.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 115-0
SENATE 38-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

HB 741

REPRESENTATIVE
MCCLURE

NET METERING



As customer-owned renewable energy systems become more common, regulators and electric utilities must adjust the terms of programs, such as net metering, that establish rates and credits applied to customers that use such systems. HB 741 strikes a balance between providing fair cost sharing among consumers and promoting renewable energy systems like rooftop solar.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Ensures that utility customers who do not own or lease renewable energy generation systems are not subsidizing the energy costs of customers who do own or lease renewable energy generation.
- Maintains affordability for energy customers who install renewable energy systems, like solar panels, while mitigating the financial impacts of such systems on other customers.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Net metering is an arrangement by which utility customers who own renewable energy generation systems may transfer excess electricity to their electric utility and receive credits for such electricity on future bills.
- Customer-owned renewable energy generation sources usually encompass solar panel use; however, they can also include the use of natural gas micro-turbines, methane digesters, and small wind power generators.
- In 2008, the Legislature required all electric utilities to develop standardized interconnection agreements and develop net metering programs to provide credits that equate to the value of the excess energy to the utility's retail rate.
- Although net metering helps encourage new energy production, it can lead to increased costs for utilities and other customers of the utility because of the costs involved due to increased energy production.



BILL BASICS

- Revises investor-owned utility net metering programs by shifting from a flat-rate compensation model to a graduated schedule.
- Creates a transparent process for investor-owned utilities to petition the Public Service Commission to recover lost revenue resulting from the addition of customer-owned solar panels within a certain time period.
- Allows current and future net metering customers to receive, for 20 years, the benefit of the rate design in place at the time their interconnection agreement is approved, as long as the approval is given before January 1, 2029.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 83-31
SENATE 24-15

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

HB 749 combats insurance fraud and addresses aggravating business practices by service contract and service agreement providers.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Combats insurance fraud by enhancing penalties, ensuring cooperation with investigations, and promoting insurer reporting of fraud to the state.
- Improves consumers' ability to cancel service contracts and increases the information that service warranty companies must provide in advertisements.
- Addresses the issue of uninsured motorists by authorizing the DHSMV electronic registration system to notify drivers of any lapses in motor vehicle insurance coverage and allow them to update policy information online.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Consumers can often enter into service contracts easily but may have difficulty ending the contracts because termination requires cancellation by a different method from how they signed up.
- DHSMV operates a secure and uniform electronic credentialing system for displaying driver licenses and identification cards, but not for motor vehicle insurance.
- Current law requires insurers to report to the State Fire Marshal if they have reason to suspect that a fire or explosion loss was caused by intentional means. However, there are no consequences for an insurer's failure to report this knowledge.



BILL BASICS

- Combats insurance related-fraud by:
 - Raising the fine from \$10,000 to \$20,000 for certain public adjuster violations and imposing a new fine on insurers who fail or refuse to comply with the investigation of a fire or explosion.
 - Clarifying certain insurance fraud crimes are separate crimes and requiring an insurer, when it has been damaged due to a false or fraudulent insurance claim, to have reported the false or fraudulent claim in order to recover reasonable investigation and litigation expenses.
- Informs drivers by requiring that DHSMV's electronic credentialing system displays vehicle registration and insurance information, provides a driver with notification of any lapse in motor vehicle insurance coverage, and allows a driver to update policy information in the system.
- Protects consumers by:
 - Ensuring service contracts that include automatic renewal provisions allow consumers to cancel in the same manner they accepted the contracts.
 - Requiring vehicle warranty companies and salespersons to state their name, license number, and telephone number when making solicitation calls and disclose their name and information in radio and television advertisements.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 115-0
SENATE 39-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

**SB 838
(HB 557)**

REPRESENTATIVE
SALZMAN

FIRE INVESTIGATORS



SB 838 ensures that our state's fire investigators, who regularly put their health at risk to serve our communities, have access to lifesaving cancer treatment.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Expands the state's commitment to supporting first responders.
- Recognizes the significant role fire investigators play in our state to determine the origin and cause of fires.
- Protects fire investigators by giving them access to the same benefit package that firefighters have.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Since 2019, Florida has had a special benefit package for firefighters suffering from certain types of cancer because studies have shown a link between firefighting and cancer.
- This benefit package includes a one-time payment of \$25,000 and employer-sponsored health insurance, including reimbursement for any deductible, co-payment, or co-insurance costs the firefighter incurs during cancer treatment.
- Like firefighters, fire investigators are exposed to hazardous vapors, gases, and particles that contribute to chronic health conditions, including certain kinds of cancer.



BILL BASICS

- Expands the definition of "firefighter" to include full-time, Florida-certified fire investigators.
- Makes fire investigators eligible for the existing special benefit package for firefighters suffering from cancer.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 112-0
SENATE 37-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

**SB 898
(HB 577)**

REPRESENTATIVES
**BARTLEMAN
& PLAKON**

LODGING STANDARDS



We have a duty to protect Floridians from those who wish to do harm to them. SB 898 strengthens security in apartment buildings and public lodging to protect residents and help prevent violent crimes such as murder and human trafficking.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- SB 898 is titled “Miya’s Law” after Miya Marcano, a Central Florida resident who was tragically found dead after going missing from her apartment.
- Protects residents of apartment buildings by requiring employee backgrounds checks and a log accounting for the issuance and return of keys for dwelling units.
- Combats human trafficking by prohibiting lodging establishments, like hotels and motels, from charging hourly rates for rooms.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- On September 24, 2021, Miya Marcano went missing from her apartment in Orlando and was later found dead several miles away. Police determined that she was taken from her apartment by a maintenance worker at the apartment complex after he allegedly entered her residence by using a master key.
- According to research, human trafficking for commercial sexual activity and prostitution commonly takes place in hotels or motels.



BILL BASICS

- Requires apartment landlords to conduct background screenings on all employees by January 1, 2023, which must include criminal history and sexual offender registries.
- Updates operational standards by:
 - Requiring apartments to maintain a log of and establish procedures for the issuance and return of all dwelling keys.
 - Lengthening the required notice that a landlord must give to a tenant prior to entering their unit for repairs from 12 hours to 24 hours.
- Prohibits an operator of a public lodging establishment from offering an hourly rate for an accommodation, with an exception for late fees.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 120-0
SENATE 34-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

HB 1411

REPRESENTATIVE
AVILA

FLOATING SOLAR FACILITIES



Government is often slow in keeping up with innovative technologies. HB 1411 promotes the use of floating solar – a relatively new source of energy production in Florida.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Encourages the construction of floating solar facilities while ensuring certain environmental protections.
- Promotes the use of floating solar facilities by requiring local governments to consider the facilities in their land development regulations.
- Maximizes utility of bodies of water, such as agricultural reservoirs and retention ponds.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Floating solar (floatovoltaics) is a relatively new concept that refers to any type of solar array that floats on top of a body of water including lakes, ponds, and reservoirs.
- Under current Florida law, there is not much regulatory clarity as to where floating solar facilities may be used.
- Floating solar facilities may provide the dual benefits of maximizing utility of certain bodies of water and producing renewable energy.



BILL BASICS

- Requires local governments to allow floating solar facilities as a permitted use under certain conditions and amend land development regulations to promote the use of floating solar.
- Prohibits construction of a floating solar facility in an Everglades Agricultural Area reservoir project if the local governments involved with the project determine that the facility will have a negative impact on the project.
- Requires the Office of Energy to develop and submit recommendations for policies on the implementation of floating solar facilities to the Legislature.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 112-0
SENATE 39-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

**SB 1764
(HB 1419)**

REPRESENTATIVE
MARIANO

MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE-TO-ENERGY PROGRAM



Municipal solid waste-to-energy facilities provide an alternative method to discard waste that does not require additional landfill space while also generating energy that can be used by electric utilities. The bill creates a financial assistance program to promote this method of waste disposal.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Creates the Municipal Solid Waste-to-Energy Program to provide grants incentivizing the continued production and sale of energy from municipal solid waste-to-energy facilities.
- Incentivizing this alternative method of waste disposal will reduce the amount of waste bound for landfills by reusing it to create energy.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Energy recovery from waste is the conversion of non-recyclable waste materials into usable heat, electricity, or fuel through processes such as combustion, gasification, pyrolyzation, anaerobic digestion, and landfill gas recovery.
- Of the waste that is processed by a municipal solid waste-to-energy facility, roughly 87% will not have to be placed in a landfill.
- Energy recovery from waste is important in the development of sustainable energy policies and is encouraged by the United States Environmental Protection Agency.



BILL BASICS

- Creates the Municipal Solid Waste-to-Energy Program to provide matching grants for the planning and design of municipal solid waste-to-energy facilities and provide financial assistance grants for their operation based on energy output.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 110-8
SENATE 38-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS



This legislation drew the line at the point a person's personal information stops being used to provide them with a good or service and turns into the product itself.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Would have required businesses to treat your information, and your child's information, with the care and respect it deserves. It would have required businesses to maintain an accurate and up-to-date record of personal information to give Floridians more control over how it is used.
- Would have generally applied to businesses that sell or share personal information of Florida consumers.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- 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 created the:
 - Right to Know – to give consumers the right to know what information a business has collected about them.
 - Right to Delete – to allow consumers to request to delete or correct certain personal information unless the information was crucial to maintaining the person's account.
 - Right to Opt-Out – to require businesses to allow consumers to "opt-out" of the sale or sharing of personal information to third parties, giving consumers more control over their personal information. It also would have required businesses to obtain parental consent for children before a business sells or shares the child's personal information.
- Would have helped consumers make informed decisions by requiring businesses to tell consumers what information is collected and disseminated.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 103-8

STATUS PASSED
HOUSE ONLY

Educational & Environment



HB 7

REPRESENTATIVE
AVILA

INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM



The Florida House is committed to the belief that every Floridian, regardless of race, sex, religion, or any other quality, is entitled to his or her dignity as an individual.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Upholds the American principle that all people are created equal by identifying principles of individual freedom to guide instruction and curriculum:
 - No individual is inherently racist, sexist, or oppressive, whether consciously or unconsciously, solely by virtue of his or her race or sex.
 - No race is inherently superior to another race.
 - No individual should be discriminated against or receive adverse treatment solely or partly on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, disability, or sex.
- Protects students and workers by ensuring that school instruction and workplace training are consistent with the individual freedoms that everyone deserves.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

There are numerous examples of school instruction and workplace trainings that are not consistent with the individual freedoms that everyone deserves.

Here are a few:

- Broward County's Equity and Diversity Department website previously contained links to videos, movies, articles, and books that included "America's Racial Contract is Killing Us", "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack", and "Me and White Supremacy."
- American Express launched a training program that taught employees that capitalism is fundamentally racist and asked them to deconstruct their racial and sexual identities and then rank themselves on a hierarchy of privilege.
- Coca-Cola employees were urged to be "less white" as part of the company's diversity training; some of the tips for being less white included being less oppressive and arrogant.



BILL BASICS

- Upholds the American value that all people are created equal by identifying principles of individual freedom to guide instruction and curriculum.
- Prohibits employers from requiring workplace trainings that compel workers to believe concepts contradictory to principles of individual freedom.
- Creates a new "Stories of Inspiration" curriculum to give students the opportunity to learn about and be inspired by influential Americans whose grit, resilience, and perseverance enabled them to rise above difficult circumstances to make invaluable contributions to our country.
- Includes the study of contributions of Americans of the African diaspora to society in the required instruction curriculum on the history of African Americans.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 74-41
SENATE 24-15

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

HB 225

REPRESENTATIVE
HAWKINS

CHARTER SCHOOL CHARTERS



Florida has been improving its public education system drastically over the last few years, and charter schools are responsible for part of that by offering students a uniquely-catered approach to learning. This bill continues to improve educational options so all students can excel in Florida.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Improves charter school flexibility.
- Provides charter schools with more certainty by ensuring that consolidation is approved or denied within a set timeframe and that charter schools receive notice of renewal or termination at least 90 days before the end of the school year.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Charter schools are public schools created through an agreement, or "charter," with a sponsor. The charter provides the school flexibility relative to regulations created for traditional public schools in return for a commitment to higher standards of accountability.
- The term of a charter is five years, excluding two planning years, and a charter may be renewed for another five-year term or a 15-year term if certain conditions are met. The law allows for a charter to be modified, including consolidating two or more charter schools, and provides procedures for terminating or nonrenewing a charter.



BILL BASICS

- Allows a charter to be modified at any time, during any term.
- Requires that a request for the consolidation of multiple charters be approved or denied within 60 days after submission of the request.
- Requires that any sponsor who denies a request for consolidation to provide the charter school's governing board with the specific reasons for the denial within 10 days.
- Provides stability for families by requiring a sponsor to provide ample notice before the end of the school year of a decision to renew, terminate, or not renew a charter school.
- Provides for the automatic renewal of a charter if notification does not occur at least 90 days before the end of the school year.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

105-0
24-13

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

HB 395

REPRESENTATIVES
**BORRERO
& RIZO**

VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM DAY



Communism robs people of their individuality, creativity, and the ability to pursue their dreams.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Officially designates November 7 as “Victims of Communism Day” to honor the 100 million people who have fallen victim to communist regimes across the world.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Communism is a political and economic doctrine that aims to replace private property and a profit-based economy with public ownership and communal control of at least the major means of production and the natural resources of a society. Following the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia on November 7, 1917, the first communist state was formed under Vladimir Lenin.
- The first national day recognizing victims of communism was November 7, 2017.
- Currently, five states have officially recognized November 7 as “Victims of Communism Memorial Day.”



BILL BASICS

- Directs the Governor to annually issue a proclamation designating November 7 as “Victims of Communism Day” and calls for its observance in public schools that day as well as in the State Capitol and elsewhere as designated by the Governor.
- Beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, requires high school students enrolled in the U.S. Government course to receive at least 45 minutes of instruction on “Victims of Communism Day” on topics of communist dictators and how the victims of communism suffered under these regimes.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 115-0
SENATE 38-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

HB 461

REPRESENTATIVES

**MELO &
VALDES**

FLORIDA BRIGHT FUTURES SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM STUDENT SERVICE REQUIREMENTS



Florida's Bright Futures Scholarship Program improves access to education and rewards high-achieving students who meet academic eligibility and volunteer service hour requirements. Students who meet the academic requirements but cannot meet the volunteer service requirements because they work should not be deemed ineligible for the program.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Removes barriers and makes it easier for more students to qualify for Bright Futures.
- Creates a path for high-achieving students who work to earn Bright Futures scholarships.
- Maintains program integrity by requiring approval for work that meets Bright Futures volunteer service requirements.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program rewards Florida high school graduates who earn high academic achievement and enroll in postsecondary education at an eligible Florida public or private postsecondary institution.
- Each of the four awards under the Bright Futures Program requires a student to perform a specified number of hours of volunteer service work to meet eligibility requirements.
- The volunteer service requirement has made it difficult to earn a Bright Futures scholarship for students who must work.



BILL BASICS

- Authorizes a student to meet the volunteer service requirements in the Bright Futures Program through 100 hours of paid work.
- Supports lower income students by allowing them to be compensated for work that counts towards meeting the program requirements.
- Requires a student meeting an award requirement through paid work to have approval from the district school board, the administrators of a nonpublic school, or DOE for a homeschooled student.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 113-0
SENATE 35-3

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

SB 520 (HB 703)

REPRESENTATIVE
GARRISON

PUBLIC RECORDS AND PUBLIC MEETINGS



SB 520 encourages more applications for president of a Florida public university or state college by keeping applicants' personal identifying information confidential and exempt during the initial stages of the application process.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Ensures 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.
- Limits the exemption to the earlier of 21 days before a meeting where finalist interviews are conducted or board action is taken, or until a finalist list is established.



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

- Creates a public record and public meeting requirements exemption for information associated with the applicant recruitment process and discussions related to the applicant search process for president of a State University System or Florida College System institution.
- Requires any portions of board meetings occurring "in the shade" to be on the record and recorded in their entirety, and that portions of meetings establishing applicant qualifications or salary range take place in the sunshine.
- Maintains transparency by ensuring public access to the personal identifying information associated with applicants once a final group of applicants is established or 21 days before the date of a meeting for a finalist interview or final action/vote on employment of a finalist, whichever occurs first.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

86-26
28-11

STATUS

SIGNED BY
GOVERNOR

SB 758 (HB 865)

REPRESENTATIVES
**RIZO &
HAWKINS**

EDUCATION



Florida is committed to increasing school choice to provide more opportunities for families to ensure their students have every opportunity to succeed.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Improves efficiency in the charter school approval process by creating the Charter School Review Commission (CSRC) within the Florida Department of Education to assist in review and approval of charter school applications.
- Increases school choice by giving charter schools more flexibility to succeed.
- Helps increase the quality of charter schools by creating the Florida Institute for Charter School Innovation to improve charter authorizing practices.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Charter schools are public schools that operate under a performance contract, or a “charter”, which frees them from many regulations created for traditional public schools while holding them accountable for academic and financial results.
- During the 2020-2021 school year, 341,926 students were enrolled in 687 charter schools in Florida.



BILL BASICS

- Creates the CSRC, which will consist of seven members, selected by the Commissioner of Education, and subject to confirmation by the Senate and provides the CSRC the same powers as a sponsor in regard to reviewing and approving charter schools.
- If a charter school is approved, the district school board of the school district where the proposed charter school will be located must be the sponsor and supervisor of the proposed charter school.
- Removes barriers by eliminating the requirement that any facility used as a charter school obtain a special exemption from existing zoning and land use designations.
- Authorizes Members of the Legislature to visit any public school in their district.
- Improves school choice by creating the Florida Institute for Charter School Innovation at Miami Dade College.
- Ensures that charter schools receive their portion of the Teacher Salary Increase Allocation by prohibiting a school district from withholding it due to the failure of the school district to submit an approved plan.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 86-28
SENATE 27-11

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

SB 896 (HB 573)

REPRESENTATIVE
SNYDER

EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION PATHWAYS FOR VETERANS



SB 896 supports our veterans by expanding their opportunity to qualify for educator certification.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Empowers the brave men and women who served our country by creating an additional pathway for them to become teachers.
- Alleviates a teacher shortage by increasing the number of individuals authorized to teach.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Florida has been experiencing a critical teacher shortage due to the difficulty of retaining teachers.
- For an applicant to receive a temporary certificate, they must demonstrate mastery of general knowledge (if serving as a classroom teacher), subject area knowledge, and professional preparation and education competence.



BILL BASICS

- Creates an additional pathway for military servicemembers to enter the classroom by authorizing a temporary educator certificate, which otherwise requires a bachelor's degree, for those that meet the following requirements:
 - Document 48 months of active-duty military service with an honorable discharge or a medical separation.
 - Meet minimum eligibility criteria for educator certification with the exception of receipt of a bachelor's degree.
 - Complete the subject area content requirements specified in state board rule or demonstrate mastery of subject area knowledge.
 - Complete 60 college credits with a minimum grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale, as provided by an eligible institution of higher learning.
- Temporary certification is valid for five school fiscal years and is limited to one-time issuance.
- The candidate for a permanent certificate must complete current requirements, including completing a bachelor's degree, to earn a renewable, professional certificate.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 111-0
SENATE 39-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

**SB 1048
(HB 1193)**

REPRESENTATIVE
PLASENCIA

STUDENT ASSESSMENTS



Florida students deserve more than a one-size-fits-all test – this legislation supports the unique needs of each student.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Replaces the outdated statewide end-of-year Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) with a progress monitoring system in English and mathematics.
- Supports the unique needs and goals of each student.
- Empowers teachers and parents to support student performance through timely feedback during the school year.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Currently, Florida schools administer the end-of-year FSA in English Language Arts and Math to measure student academic achievement and learning gains and provide data to parents and teachers.
- Progress monitoring tools are a type of formative assessment that allow teachers to evaluate student learning throughout the year and monitor the effectiveness of their instruction.



BILL BASICS

- Requires progress monitoring results to provide teachers and parents with actionable feedback to tailor instruction and develop programs and supports.
- Empowers parents by providing them with progress monitoring results and individual student reports that will contain resources to support informed parent involvement.
- Allows a one-year transition period to the new progress monitoring system and holds schools harmless for 2022-2023 school grades and school improvement ratings.
- Requires a third-party study to evaluate the progress monitoring system and identify ways to further reduce student testing.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

83-31
38-0

STATUS

SIGNED BY
GOVERNOR

**SB 1054
(HB 1115)**

REPRESENTATIVE
**BUSATTA
CABRERA**

FINANCIAL LITERACY INSTRUCTION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Good financial habits are important, and learning these skills should begin in high school to better prepare our students for success.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Provides our students with financial skills early to set them up for success.
- Prepares our high school graduates for adulthood by teaching them basic financial skills.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Many young people in this state graduate from high school without having basic financial literacy or money management skills.
- Prior to 2019, financial literacy instruction was required within the one-half credit in economics to receive a high school diploma.
- All schools are currently required to offer a financial literacy course consisting of at least one-half credit as an elective, but it is not a graduation requirement.



BILL BASICS

- Creates financial literacy standards, ensuring that high school students learn about personal financial literacy and money management.
- Requires students to earn one-half credit in personal financial literacy and money management to earn a high school diploma, beginning with students entering grade 9 in the 2023-24 school year.
- Designs course instruction to include basic financial skills, such as building credit, computing federal income taxes, writing simple contracts, and contesting bill statements.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 117-0
SENATE 38-0

STATUS PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

HB 1421

REPRESENTATIVES
**HAWKINS &
HUNSCHOFSKY**

SCHOOL SAFETY



In 2018, the Legislature enacted the “Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act” to address school safety and security and establish the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission. HB 1421 continues our mission to ensure students are safe at school.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Improves school safety and security transparency by refining the requirements related to emergency drills, plans to reunite families, and law enforcement participation in assailant emergency drills.
- Addresses student mental health by requiring more training for officers and school personnel.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In response to the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas (MSD) High School in 2018, Florida passed the MSD High School Public Safety Act, which addressed school safety and security by creating the Office of Safe Schools within the Florida Department of Education.
- The Act created the MSD Commission to investigate system failures in the MSD High School shooting and prior mass violence incidents and develop recommendations for system-wide improvements. The MSD Commission is authorized to issue annual reports and is currently scheduled to sunset on July 1, 2023.



BILL BASICS

- Extends the MSD Commission until July 1, 2026, for the purpose of monitoring implementation of school safety legislation.
- Improves transparency around school safety and security by:
 - Requiring district school boards and charter school governing boards to adopt a plan that guides family reunification when K-12 public schools are closed or unexpectedly evacuated due to natural or manmade disasters.
 - Requiring the State Board of Education to adopt rules setting requirements for emergency drills, including timing, frequency, participation, training, notification, and accommodations.
 - Providing that law enforcement responsible for responding to schools in the event of an assailant emergency be physically present and participate in active assailant drills.
 - Ensuring that school safety and environmental incident reporting data be published annually in a uniform, statewide format that is easy to read and understand.
- Addresses student mental health with:
 - Mental health crisis intervention training for sworn safe-school officers.
 - Training on incident response and de-escalation for non-sworn safe-school officers.
 - Use of a common suicide prevention screening tool approved by the Department of Education for district and local mobile response teams.
 - Annual certifications by school districts that at least 80% of school personnel received the mandatory youth mental health awareness training.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 115-0
SENATE 39-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

HB 1467

REPRESENTATIVE
GARRISON

K-12 EDUCATION



As elected officials, school board members need to be kept accountable to their communities, and public input and term limits are vital to do so.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Empowers parents by improving transparency around selecting and using public school instructional and library materials.
- Establishes twelve-year term limits for school board members to ensure new, fresh ideas from new board members.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Each district school board has the constitutional duty and responsibility to select and provide adequate instructional materials to each student for core courses in mathematics, language arts, science, social studies, reading, and literature for kindergarten through grade 12. However, it is often unclear how school districts fulfill that duty.
- Florida has term limits for the following elected officials: Florida Governor, Florida representatives, Florida senators, Florida Lieutenant Governor, and Florida Cabinet members.



BILL BASICS

- Increases school district transparency and accountability by requiring them to adopt and post procedures for developing library media collections and to post online searchable lists of all instructional materials available to students.
- Requires elementary schools to post on their websites a list of all materials maintained in the school library.
- Promotes public participation by ensuring that any district school board meeting held to rank, eliminate, or select instructional materials is advertised and open to the public.
- Requires training for individuals involved in selecting library materials.
- Creates twelve-year term limits for school board members.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 79-41
SENATE 24-15

STATUS

SIGNED BY
GOVERNOR

HB 1557

REPRESENTATIVES
**HARDING
& GRALL**

PARENTAL RIGHTS IN EDUCATION



Parents have a fundamental right to make decisions regarding the upbringing of their children.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Reinforces the right of parents to make education and health care decisions regarding their child.
- Increases transparency between a parent and their child's school district by ensuring parents have access to their child's education and health records.



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.



BILL BASICS

- Makes it clear that classroom instruction on sexual orientation or gender identity is not appropriate in kindergarten through grade 3 and specifies that instruction in other grades must be age and developmentally appropriate and consistent with state standards.
- Empowers parents by requiring school boards to notify parents if there is a change in:
 - Their child's services or monitoring related to the student's mental, emotional, or physical health and wellbeing.
 - The school's ability to provide a safe and supportive learning environment.
- Strengthens the parent and child relationship by:
 - Requiring school district employees to encourage a student to discuss issues with his or her parent.
 - Requiring school districts to notify parents of all health care services offered at their student's school and provide the parent the opportunity to individually consent to or decline each service.
- Provides a process for parents to seek resolution of concerns at their child's school through the school principal and the school district, and then the Department of Education or the courts if the issue remains unresolved.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 69-47
SENATE 22-17

STATUS

SIGNED BY
GOVERNOR

**SB 7044
(HB 7051)**

REPRESENTATIVE
MARIANO

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION



Colleges and universities should set students on a track for success, and to do so, they need to be transparent, accountable, and affordable.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Increases transparency on course offerings and fees, allowing students to make more informed decisions.
- Modernizes the accreditation process for state universities and colleges.
- Provides universities with the opportunity to review, recognize, and enhance the performance of tenured faculty.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In order for students to receive federal aid from the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) for postsecondary study, the institution must be accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency, be authorized by the state in which the institution is located, and receive approval from the USDOE through a program participation agreement.
- In 2020, USDOE revised federal regulations to remove geographical boundaries on institutions seeking accreditation. USDOE noted the distinctions between regional and national accreditors are artificial and all accreditors are held to the same standards.



BILL BASICS

- Increases accountability in accreditation by not allowing public state colleges and universities to be accredited by the same accrediting agency or association for consecutive cycles and protecting state colleges and universities from retaliation by accrediting agencies.
- Improves affordability by requiring state colleges and universities to clearly communicate tuition and fees, any proposed changes, including the necessity for such change, and how revenue is expended.
- Promotes transparency by requiring state colleges and universities to keep searchable, downloadable lists of required and recommended textbooks and instructional materials posted for five years. Course syllabi information must also be posted for general education core courses.
- Enhances faculty performance by allowing the Board of Governors to require tenured state university faculty members to undergo a comprehensive post-tenure review every five years.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

77-40
22-15

STATUS

SIGNED BY
GOVERNOR

Human Health Services



HB 5

REPRESENTATIVES

**GRALL &
PERSONS-MULICKA**

REDUCING FETAL AND INFANT MORTALITY



The Florida House is steadfast in our commitment to Florida's children, both born and unborn, and our commitment continues after birth.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Reinforces Florida's unwavering commitment to safeguard all life by protecting the lives of unborn children.
- Invests in evidence-based initiatives working to reduce fetal and infant mortality rates.
- Expands on the success of local health care community efforts to reduce infant mortality.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In 2020, there were 209,645 live births in Florida and 74,868 abortions. Of those abortions:
 - 70,594 were performed in the first trimester (12 weeks and under);
 - 4,274 were performed in the second trimester (13 to 24 weeks); and
 - None were performed in the third trimester (25 weeks and over).
- The Florida Perinatal Quality Collaborative aims to improve Florida's maternal and infant health outcomes through evidence-based perinatal care. It partners with stakeholders to develop and implement quality improvement initiatives at partner hospitals that provide birthing services to address maternal and infant mortality.
- Fetal and Infant Mortality Review Committee work has several benefits, such as including the perspective of the family, identifying issues unique to a community, allowing for targeted initiatives, and engaging community leaders to identify and implement solutions.



BILL BASICS

- Ends the practice of abortions after 15 weeks, with limited exceptions:
 - To save the mother's life.
 - To avert a serious risk of substantial and irreversible physical impairment to the mother.
 - If the fetus has not reached viability and has a fatal fetal abnormality.
- Invests in evidence-based initiatives working to reduce fetal and infant mortality rates, including expanding local fetal and infant mortality review committees statewide and a new counter-marketing advertising campaign on the health hazards of tobacco targeted to pregnant women and women who may become pregnant.
- Expands on the success of local health care community efforts to reduce infant mortality by requiring hospitals to participate in Florida Regional Perinatal Quality Collaborative initiatives.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 78-39
SENATE 23-15

STATUS

SIGNED BY
GOVERNOR

SB 312 (HB 17)

REPRESENTATIVES

**FABRICIO &
GIALLOMBARDO**

TELEHEALTH



SB 312 promotes access to health care while maintaining patient safety by expanding telehealth services.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Lowers costs by allowing practitioners to safely prescribe certain controlled substances via telehealth instead of requiring in-person visits after the initial office visit.
- Empowers patients to get the care they need while promoting quality and safety by reducing the sometimes-arduous and time-consuming burden of in-office visits.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Drugs with an increased potential for patient abuse (controlled substances) are ranked based on their 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). Examples include:
 - II: opioids.
 - III: stimulants and anabolic steroids.
 - IV: benzodiazepines and barbiturates.
 - V: medications with small quantities of opiates, narcotics, or stimulants.
- Currently, telehealth practitioners are prohibited from prescribing any controlled substances unless the prescription is for the treatment of a psychiatric disorder, inpatient treatment at a hospital, the treatment of a patient receiving hospice services, or the treatment of a resident in a nursing home facility.



BILL BASICS

- Allows practitioners to prescribe Schedule III, IV, and V controlled substances via telehealth.
- Retains the current prohibition on prescribing Schedule II controlled substances via telehealth.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 114-0
SENATE 37-0

STATUS

SIGNED BY
GOVERNOR

Increasing health care facility flexibility will help with staffing shortages.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Streamlines and simplifies who can help patients in specified settings.
- Alleviates some of the current staffing-related strain on the health care industry by expanding the scope of duties certified nursing assistants (CNAs) and home health aides can perform.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Currently, home health aides and CNAs provide some assistance with self-administration of medication and tasks to assisted living facility (ALF) residents that they may not provide if they work for a home health agency.
- An ALF may contract with a home health agency to employ home health aides and CNAs, which can cause confusion as to which tasks a home health aide or CNA may provide when they are employed by a home health agency but are working in an ALF.
- Current law requires an advanced life support ambulance transporting a patient between two facilities to be occupied by two people, including one patient attendant (who may be a paramedic, registered nurse, or a physician) and one qualified ambulance driver who is an emergency medical technician (EMT), paramedic, registered nurse, or physician.



BILL BASICS

- Allows home health aides and CNAs to perform additional tasks to assist patients and provides consistency in what tasks the home health aide and CNA can perform when working in an assisted living facility or for a home health agency.
- Allows a nurse to delegate to a home health aide or CNA direct administration of an insulin syringe or pen that is prefilled with the proper dosage by a pharmacist or the manufacturer in a home health setting.
- Removes the requirement for an advanced life support ambulance driver to be an EMT, paramedic, registered nurse, or physician.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

118-0
38-0

STATUS

SIGNED BY
GOVERNOR

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE AND TREATMENT TO MINORS WITHOUT PARENTAL CONSENT



HB 817 saves kids by ensuring that physicians can give medical treatment to minors in emergency situations without parental consent.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Saves kids by removing unnecessary restrictions on physicians.
- Allows physicians to give life-saving care to minors in immediate danger in prehospital settings – when it could take too long to find a minor’s parent or guardian.
- Prioritizes saving lives while maintaining limits that respect parental rights.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Prior to the bill becoming law, physicians were only allowed to provide emergency medical care without parental consent to minors in hospital or college health service settings.
- Paramedics, emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and other emergency medical services personnel may provide emergency care or treatment in a prehospital setting, such as an ambulance or roadside.
- Physicians are qualified to provide emergency medical care in prehospital settings.



BILL BASICS

- Saves kids by authorizing physicians to provide emergency medical care or treatment to a minor outside of a hospital or a college health service setting without parental consent, similar to EMTs and paramedics.
- Respects parental rights by limiting the right of physicians to provide emergency medical care or treatment without parental consent to situations in which a child is in immediate danger.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

107-0
38-0

STATUS

SIGNED BY
GOVERNOR

HB 893

REPRESENTATIVES

**MELO &
WILLIAMS**

CHILD WELFARE PLACEMENTS



HB 893 modernizes the child welfare system to reflect recent changes in federal law and provide better care to Florida's families.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Aligns Florida child welfare law with the federal Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) related to placement of children in residential treatment facilities.
- Updates adoption assistance program eligibility terminology.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Department of Children and Families (DCF) works with families to address child welfare problems, finding safe out-of-home placements if necessary.
- The FFPSA reformed the federal child welfare funding streams, including limiting federal funding for group homes to qualified residential treatment programs, and requiring assessment by a qualified evaluator for admission.



BILL BASICS

- Expands the pool of potential qualified evaluators for specialized therapeutic group homes by adjusting requirements to more accurately reflect their job duties.
- Permits evaluations of children to be through telehealth and requires DCF to furnish a copy of the assessment to the guardian ad litem and the court within 5 days.
- Changes adoption assistance program eligibility terminology from "special needs" to "difficult to place" to refer to a child whose adoption qualifies for adoption assistance.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

116-0
38-0

STATUS

SIGNED BY
GOVERNOR

SB 988 (HB 987)

REPRESENTATIVES

**SHOAF &
YARBOROUGH**

IN-PERSON VISITATION



The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic was a trying time for all Americans, but particularly for patients. Some experienced their final hours in isolation, away from their families and friends because in-person visitation was not allowed. SB 988 creates visitation requirements to prevent this from happening again.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Creates the “No Patient Left Alone Act,” ensuring visitation rights for patients in Florida.
- Applies to intermediate care facilities for the developmentally disabled, nursing homes, assisted living facilities (ALFs), hospitals, and hospices.
- Ensures access to information by requiring facilities to post visitation policies and procedures on their website.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- On March 15, 2020, the Florida Division of Emergency Management issued an emergency order requiring every facility in Florida to prohibit the entry of any individual to the facility except in specified circumstances.
- The availability and accessibility of visitation in Florida’s health care facilities varies widely between facility type and from facility to facility, depending on each facility’s visitation policies. Certain types of facilities, such as nursing homes and hospitals, must adhere to federal guidelines for visitation, while other types are not federally regulated and operate solely under a license issued by the state.



BILL BASICS

- Supports patient visitation by requiring intermediate care facilities for the developmentally disabled, nursing homes, ALFs, hospitals, and hospices to establish visitation policies and procedures.
- Guarantees visitation by allowing a resident to designate an essential caregiver who must be allowed in-person visitation for at least two hours per day regardless of the facility’s visiting hours or any other restriction on visitation. An essential caregiver can be a family member, friend, guardian, or other individual.
- Protects patients and families by requiring visitation policies and procedures to allow in-person visitation, unless the patient objects, when a resident, client, or patient:
 - Is in an end-of-life situation.
 - Was living with family before recent admission to a facility and is struggling with the change in environment and lack of physical family support.
 - Is making one or more major medical decisions.
 - Is experiencing emotional distress or grieving the recent death of a friend or family member.
 - Needs cueing or encouragement to eat or drink that was previously provided by a visitor.
 - Used to talk and interact with others, but now is seldom speaking.
 - Is receiving pediatric care.
 - Is admitted to a hospital for childbirth, including labor and delivery.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 115-2
SENATE 37-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

HB 1209

REPRESENTATIVE
TUCK

ADMINISTRATION OF VACCINES



HB 1209 expands access to vaccines by expanding pharmacy technician scope of practice to include administering vaccines under pharmacist supervision.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Removes barriers by allowing pharmacy technicians to administer immunizations and vaccines.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Pharmacists, pharmacy interns, and pharmacy technicians are regulated under ch. 465, F.S., and by the Board of Pharmacy.
- Current law authorizes pharmacists and registered interns who meet certain educational requirements to administer vaccines to adults within an established protocol with a supervising physician.
- Pharmacy technicians were not authorized to administer vaccines or immunizations.



BILL BASICS

- Authorizes pharmacy technicians to administer immunizations and vaccines to adults under pharmacist supervision.
- Protects patients by requiring at least 6 hours of training to be certified.
- Updates the authorized immunizations or vaccines that a pharmacist, intern, or technician may administer to be consistent with current federal law.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

115-1
35-3

STATUS

SIGNED BY
GOVERNOR

HB 1239

REPRESENTATIVE

MELO

NURSING HOMES



HB 1239 supports seniors by providing more flexibility in how nursing homes can provide the required daily direct care to each resident.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Addresses staffing shortages in nursing homes.
- Allows certified nursing assistants (CNAs) to be assigned according to the resident's needs.
- Protects residents by requiring nursing homes to maintain records documenting compliance with minimum staffing requirements for at least five years.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Prior to HB 1239, nursing homes had to meet the following minimum staffing requirements:
 - A weekly average of 3.6 hours of direct care per resident per day provided by a combination of CNAs and licensed nursing staff.
 - 2.5 hours of direct care per resident per day provided by CNAs. A facility may not staff at a ratio of less than one CNA per 20 residents.
 - 1.0 hour of direct care per resident per day provided by licensed nurses. A facility may not staff at a ratio of less than one licensed nurse per 40 residents.



BILL BASICS

- Addresses staffing shortages in nursing homes by reducing the required time of required CNA direct care from 2.5 hours to 2 hours and allowing nursing homes to count care provided by their nursing, dietary, therapeutic, and mental health direct care staff towards the remaining direct care requirements, up to 0.6 hours.
- Protects residents by making sure unpaid judgements against nursing homes do not fall through a loophole, increasing records retention requirements, and ensuring that annual financial reporting forms are discoverable and admissible in court.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

80-31
28-9

STATUS

SIGNED BY
GOVERNOR

GUARDIANSHIP DATA TRANSPARENCY



Basic information about guardianships, such as the number of wards in the state, is unavailable.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Establishes a statewide database of guardian and guardianship information.
- Directs the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Governmental Accountability (OPPAGA) to use the data to evaluate trends in guardianships in Florida and conduct a comparative analysis of guardianship laws in other states.
- Requires the Office of Public and Professional Guardians to publish professional guardian registration profiles and make them publicly accessible and searchable.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- When an individual is unable to make legal decisions regarding his or her person or property, a court may appoint a guardian to act on his or her behalf. A person served by a guardian becomes a ward, and that person's civil and legal rights are transferred to the guardian.
- Situations where guardians have made unethical decisions concerning wards have highlighted the lack of data within Florida's guardianship system. A recently-formed task force found that basic information about guardianships, such as the number of wards in the state, is unavailable.



BILL BASICS

- Protects wards by requiring the Florida Clerks of Court Operations Corporation to establish a database of guardian and guardianship information which may only be accessed by judges, judicial staff, and the clerks of court.
- Directs the Department of Elder Affairs to publish professional guardian registration profiles on its website, which must be searchable by the public.
- Provides policymakers with better information by requiring OPPAGA to annually report on guardianship trends and conduct a comparative analysis of guardianship laws in other states.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

117-0
35-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

DONOR HUMAN MILK BANK SERVICES



SB 1770 continues our mission to protect Florida's children by ensuring medically-vulnerable babies have access to the breast milk they need.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Mothers of infants born prematurely are sometimes unable to produce milk for their child.
- Low birth weight infants are sometimes unable to receive breast milk that is vital to their growth and development.
- Ensures these vulnerable infants have access to breast milk by authorizing Medicaid coverage for donor human milk in hospitals.

CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Breast milk, especially the child's mother's milk, is the best source of nutrition for most infants.
- Mothers of infants born prematurely are sometimes unable to produce milk because their bodies aren't ready, they are too sick, or they're affected by the stress of having their premature infant in intensive care. Similarly, low birth weight infants are sometimes unable to receive breast milk or breastfeed.
- Breast milk donated by nursing mothers provides an option for these infants who are unable to receive adequate nutrition from their mother's own milk or from commercial infant formula.
- Currently, human donor breast milk is not a separately covered benefit in the Medicaid program and only a handful of other states provide some form of coverage; rather, it is reimbursed as part of the all-inclusive payment to the hospital.
- Because it is not a separately covered Medicaid benefit, some hospitals do not provide donor human milk to infants.

BILL BASICS

- Requires coverage of donor human milk in Medicaid managed care and fee for service programs for inpatient hospital infant care when medically necessary.
- Creates evidence-based and patient-focused coverage standards that ensure safe and effective administration for the child.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

117-0
38-0

STATUS

SIGNED BY
GOVERNOR

**SB 1950
(HB 7047)**

REPRESENTATIVE
GARRISON

STATEWIDE MEDICAID MANAGED CARE PROGRAM



The Statewide Medicaid Managed Care (SMMC) program was created for patients by taxpayers, and our goal is to incentivize the highest quality patient care at the lowest possible taxpayer cost.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Fine-tunes the SMMC program, created by Republicans, that continues to accomplish its goal of curbing the cost of Medicaid.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Medicaid is the health care safety net for low-income Floridians. Medicaid is a partnership of the federal and state governments established to provide coverage for health services for eligible persons. The program is administered by the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) and financed by federal and state funds.
- Most Medicaid recipients receive services in a managed care model, for which AHCA competitively procures contracts with managed care plans to provide comprehensive health care coverage.



BILL BASICS

- Expands the Healthy Behaviors Program to include focuses on smokeless tobacco and opioid abuse.
- Requires plans to contract with Moffit Cancer Center and University of Miami–Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center as statewide essential providers and provides a payment rate for services provided without a contract.
- Consolidates the 11 service regions into nine and adjusts the number of plans per region.
- Requires a single statewide procurement and authorizes regional or statewide contract awards.
- Removes a requirement to rebid the procurement, in part, in regions where a provider service network does not submit a responsive bid.
- Specifies procurement related data posting requirements.
- Allows children in the child welfare Guardian Assistance Program to enroll in the child welfare specialty plan as an alternative to a non-specialty plan.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 115-0
SENATE 38-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

**SB 7014
(HB 7021)**

REPRESENTATIVE
BURTON

COVID-19-RELATED CLAIMS AGAINST HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS



We should continue to protect responsible health care providers and long-term care facilities from unnecessary lawsuits that threaten their livelihood.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Continues protections for Florida health care providers and long-term care facilities.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- New variants of the COVID-19 virus continue to prolong the current pandemic, and health care providers and long-term care facilities continue to risk their own health to stay open and serve us.
- Current law provides heightened civil liability protections to health care providers for COVID-19-related claims.
- These liability protections will not apply to any claims that accrue after March 29, 2022.



BILL BASICS

- Extends COVID-19 heightened liability protections for health care providers and long-term care facilities to claims that accrue before June 1, 2023.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

87-31
22-13

STATUS

SIGNED BY
GOVERNOR

SB 7034

REPRESENTATIVE
ALTMAN

CHILD WELFARE



SB 7034 builds on our commitment to supporting foster children.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Supports foster children by increasing benefits for foster families, providing a monthly child care subsidy, and expanding the college tuition waiver for certain students who are or were in the child welfare system.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Florida's licensed foster parents receive a monthly room and board rate payment to cover the cost of caring for foster children. Florida also gives relative and nonrelative caregivers participating in the Relative Caregiver Program or Guardianship Assistance Program a monthly benefit to care for children in their home.
- In 2020, the average annual cost of infant child care in Florida was approximately \$9,312. The average price of infant child care in Florida is currently more than the average annual tuition and fees at a public four-year college or university.
- Youth in foster care face many barriers when it comes to higher education. About 4% of former foster youth graduate from college by the time they reach the age of 26, compared to 36% of the general population.



BILL BASICS

- Increases child welfare room and board payments for certain relative and nonrelative caregivers and gives a supplemental payment for life skill development training to some of those caregivers who care for children ages 13 to 17.
- Makes child care more affordable by requiring DCF to provide foster parents and caregivers caring for children under school age with a monthly payment of \$200 towards the cost of child care.
- Expands the postsecondary school tuition and fee exemption to cover more students who are or were in the child welfare system.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

112-0
39-0

STATUS

SIGNED BY
GOVERNOR

HB 7065

REPRESENTATIVE
ALTMAN

CHILD WELFARE PART 1



We can do more to encourage responsible fatherhood, alleviate the crisis of at-risk boys, and support foster children – especially those who age out of care.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Encourages responsible fatherhood by establishing fatherhood programs and encouraging father involvement.
- Alleviates the crisis of at-risk boys by investing in initiatives and organizations that serve them.
- Supports foster children – especially those who age out of care – by increasing financial supports.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In the United States, one in four children grows up in a household without a biological, step, or adoptive father.
- Children raised in father-absent homes are more likely to abuse drugs and alcohol, show signs of antisocial and delinquent behavior, and drop out of high school. Such children are also more likely to experience poverty, teen pregnancy, abuse, neglect, behavioral problems, and death in infancy.



BILL BASICS

- Recognizes the foundational importance of fatherhood and encourages father involvement by:
 - Establishing fatherhood programs with grants to address comprehensive needs of fathers (e.g. finding employment and managing child support obligations) and to provide evidence-based parenting education specifically for fathers.
 - Ensuring that community-based care (CBC) lead agencies assess how father-oriented they are, create an action plan to address any gaps, and hire father engagement specialists.
 - Awarding grants to organizations that assist non-custodial parents to become self-sufficient and meet child support obligations.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

117-0
38-0

STATUS

SIGNED BY
GOVERNOR

HB 7065

REPRESENTATIVE
ALTMAN

CHILD WELFARE PART 2



We can do more to encourage responsible fatherhood, alleviate the crisis of at-risk boys, and support foster children – especially those who age out of care.



BILL BASICS (CONTINUED)

- Recognizes the foundational importance of fatherhood and encourages father involvement by:
 - Helping parents behind on child support obligations with easily accessible information on the Department of Revenue's website such as how to access CareerSource services.
 - Requiring DCF to promote responsible fatherhood, including through a webpage offering fathers and father figures information, inspiration, and connections to other programs and services established in the bill.
 - Designating June Responsible Fatherhood Month.
- Alleviates the crisis of at-risk boys by:
 - Strengthening and developing small nonprofits that serve at-risk boys with grants to increase mentoring services and prepare them to obtain non-state funding in the future.
 - Investing in children's initiatives to address needs in specific neighborhoods.
 - Requiring quarterly reports from DCF and DJJ on "dually involved youth" –children that are involved with both systems of care.
 - Including DJJ in child welfare multidisciplinary teams for children they serve.
- Supports foster children who age out of care by:
 - Increasing the Postsecondary Education Supports & Services (PESS) program stipend by \$464 per month.
 - Requiring CBCs to conduct individual college readiness assessments with foster youth, provide information about independent living services during the transition process, and help foster youth develop and update a transition plan for meeting their financial obligations after their PESS program eligibility ends.
 - Limiting colleges and universities from requesting paperwork on their tuition exemption every semester.
 - Requiring colleges and universities to have a knowledgeable, accessible, and responsive staff member to assist them.

FLOOR VOTES

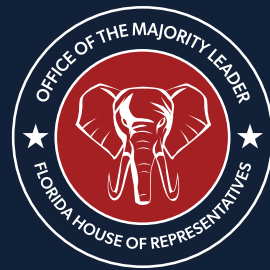
HOUSE
SENATE

117-0
38-0

STATUS

SIGNED BY
GOVERNOR

HEALTH CARE EXPENSES



HB 1527 would have increased transparency in the health care market and encouraged consumerism to help patients find cost-effective care.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Would have provided patients with increased certainty regarding the cost of recommended treatments and planned medical procedures.
- 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 patients by providing a health care billing grievance process, preventing aggressive collection actions by hospitals, 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.
- At least 25 percent of Americans report having difficulty paying medical bills within the last year, and 30 percent reported medical debt of \$5,000 or more.
- Many consumers participate in high deductible health plans or otherwise bear a greater share of health care costs.



BILL BASICS

- Would have required hospitals and ambulatory surgical centers (ASCs) to post a consumer-friendly list of standard charges for shoppable health care services on a facility website, consistent with federal rule.
- Would have prohibited hospitals and ASCs from engaging in extraordinary, premature debt collection.
- Would have increased the ceiling on existing debt collection exemptions.
- Would have required hospitals to create an internal grievance process allowing a patient to dispute any charges.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 107-0

STATUS PASSED
HOUSE ONLY

Judiciary



HB 3

REPRESENTATIVES

**LEEK &
BRANNAN**

LAW ENFORCEMENT



We owe it to our law enforcement officers to express our appreciation not only in word, but in action, and the Florida House is committed to ensuring Florida is the most law enforcement friendly state in the country.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Creates a culture of law enforcement appreciation, assists law enforcement agencies in recruiting and retaining officers, and incentivizes individuals to enter the law enforcement profession in our state.
- Supports law enforcement with new health and wellness training, Family Empowerment Scholarships for their children, and college credit for training and experience acquired while serving.
- Assists recruitment by authorizing bonus payments to new officers, offering scholarships for recruits enrolled in basic recruit training programs, and offering reimbursement for costs and fees associated with obtaining a Florida certification for officers relocating to Florida.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Law enforcement agencies across the country have reported difficulty in attracting and retaining qualified officers.
- The reasons for the difficulty in attracting and retaining officers include negative public perception of law enforcement officers, an increase in retirements, decreased interest in law enforcement careers, the economy and availability of open positions in other occupations, and the lengthy background check and hiring process.



BILL BASICS

- The financial incentives available to our law enforcement officers as a result of this bill include:
 - One-time bonus payments of up to \$5,000 to newly employed law enforcement officers in Florida.
 - Scholarships to cover tuition, fees, and up to \$1,000 of eligible education expenses for trainees enrolled in a basic recruit training program.
 - Reimbursements for up to \$1,000 of equivalency training costs for certified law enforcement officers who relocate to Florida or members of the special operations forces who become full-time law enforcement officers.
 - \$10,000 benefit for adopting a child from within the state child welfare system (\$25,000 benefit for adopting a difficult to place child).
- Benefits our law enforcement officers by requiring them to receive training in health and wellness principles as part of their initial certification training and continued employment training.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

114-3
34-0

STATUS

SIGNED BY
GOVERNOR

HB 195

REPRESENTATIVE
D. SMITH

JUVENILE DIVERSION PROGRAM EXPUNCTION



This bill offers qualifying juvenile offenders a second chance while protecting the public.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Gives juvenile offenders a one-time second chance by authorizing expungement of their qualifying arrest record after their completion of a diversion program.
- Does not apply to forcible felonies or firearm-related felonies.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In Florida, when a law enforcement officer has probable cause to believe that a juvenile has committed a crime, the officer may take the juvenile into custody.
- Diversion is a program designed to divert a juvenile from entering the juvenile justice system by placing him or her on a less restrictive track that affords more opportunities for rehabilitation and restoration.
- As of January 2021, there were 26,903 minors with 64,343 juvenile felony arrest charges with or without a disposition which may qualify for juvenile diversion program expunction.



BILL BASICS

- Allows a juvenile to seek an expunction of a nonjudicial arrest record after completion of a diversion program for any offense other than a forcible felony or firearm-related felony.
- Keeps discretion to refer a juvenile to a diversion program with the law enforcement officer who interacts with the juvenile at the time of the offense or the state attorney assigned to the case.
- Allows a juvenile who successfully completes a diversion program and is granted expunction to lawfully deny or fail to acknowledge his or her participation in the diversion program and expunction of the associated arrest record, with exceptions for inquiries made by criminal justice agencies for the purpose of determining eligibility for other diversion programs, criminal investigations, or making a prosecutorial decision.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE
SENATE

115-0
38-0

STATUS PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

**SB 444
(HB 379)**

REPRESENTATIVE
CHANEY

INDECENT, LEWD, OR LASCIVIOUS TOUCHING



SB 444 protects minors from inappropriate sexual touching by imposing stronger penalties for offenders.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects Floridians 16 and 17 years of age by creating a new crime against indecent, lewd, or lascivious touching by certain offenders.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- An individual commits the crime of lewd or lascivious molestation when he or she intentionally touches a person under 16 years of age against his or her will, or forces a person under 16 years of age to touch them, in a lewd or lascivious manner (on the breasts, genitals, genital area, buttocks, or on the clothing covering them).
- Under current law, a person 24 or older commits a second degree felony by engaging in sexual activity with a 16 or 17 year old victim, regardless of consent.
- A person who touches, in a lewd or lascivious manner, the clothed or unclothed breasts, genitals, genital area, or buttocks of a person under 16 commits a felony offense, but a person who intentionally touches the breasts, genitals, genital area, or buttocks of a 16 or 17 year old may only be charged with a misdemeanor battery.



BILL BASICS

- Creates a new crime of indecent, lewd, or lascivious touching committed by an offender 24 or older upon an individual who is 16 or 17 years of age, regardless of consent, which is punishable as a third degree felony.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

117-0
39-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

**SB 620
(HB 569)**

REPRESENTATIVE
MCCLURE

LOCAL BUSINESS PROTECTION ACT



SB 620 allows businesses burdened by the enactment of a local law, ordinance, or charter provision in certain situations to be compensated by the government that caused the loss.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects Florida businesses from damaging government regulation by counties and municipalities.
- Supports small businesses by allowing them to recover business damages caused by the enactment or amendment of an ordinance or charter provision from a local government.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Under current law, business landowners have a cause of action under eminent domain law for business damages related to a taking of real property, but not for government actions that substantially affect profits.



BILL BASICS

- Protects businesses from government overreach by entitling a private, for-profit business to recover business damages from a local government if:
 - The local government enacts or amends an ordinance or charter provision that has or will cause a reduction of at least 15% of the business's profit, as applied on a per location basis of a business operated within the jurisdiction.
 - The business has engaged in lawful business in the county or municipality's jurisdiction for at least three years before the ordinance or charter provision is enacted or amended.
- Specifies that the bill does not apply to a business that may claim business damages in an eminent domain proceeding.
- Establishes pre-suit requirements, including a settlement offer process involving the provision of business records supporting the business damages claim.
- Provides an opportunity to cure by allowing a local government to avoid liability after receiving notice of a claim.
- Authorizes reasonable attorney fees and costs for the prevailing party.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 69-45
SENATE 22-14

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

**SB 752
(HB 387)**

REPRESENTATIVES
**MANEY &
KOSTER**

PROBATIONARY OR SUPERVISION SERVICES FOR MISDEMEANOR OFFENDERS



Florida often leads the way in setting aside arbitrary prohibitions and finding common sense solutions, and that extends to criminal justice.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Authorizes a private entity to provide probationary or supervision services to misdemeanor offenders who are sentenced by a circuit court.
- Reduces recidivism by incentivizing offenders and probationers to attain educational achievement and obtain stable employment.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Florida has a two-tiered trial court system that consists of circuit courts and county courts. Generally, felony offenses are adjudicated by the circuit court and misdemeanor offenses are adjudicated by the county court.
- Under current law, a private entity may only provide probation services to offenders sentenced by a county court.
- Although an incarcerated inmate may receive a gain time award for advancing his or her education or for working diligently, a probationer or offender in community control is not entitled to any similar incentive.



BILL BASICS

- Authorizes a private entity to provide probationary or supervision services to misdemeanor offenders who are sentenced by a circuit court.
- Reduces recidivism by incentivizing educational achievement and stable employment.
 - Incentivizes educational achievement by awarding a 60-day reduction in the term of supervision for a probationer or offender in community control who obtains an academic degree or a vocational certificate during his or her term of supervision.
 - Incentivizes stable employment by awarding a 30-day reduction in the term of supervision for a probationer or offender in community control for each period of workforce achievement (continuous and verifiable full-time employment for at least 30 hours per week for a 6-month period for which the probationer or offender earns a wage).

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

118-0
38-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

HB 1119

REPRESENTATIVE
TOLEDO

GRANDPARENT VISITATION RIGHTS



Some grandparents have been blocked from seeing their grandchildren in extreme and tragic circumstances. The Florida House is proud to stand up for children, their grandparents, and the special relationships they share.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Supports children by recognizing the importance of family, especially grandparents, in their upbringing.
- Values the relationships children have with their grandparents, which provide fundamental skills and support.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Currently, a grandparent may be awarded visitation rights under very limited circumstances, such as when a minor child's parents are deceased, missing, or in a permanent vegetative state. If only one parent is deceased, missing, or in a permanent vegetative state, the other parent must have been convicted of a felony or violent offense in order for a grandparent to be able to petition for visitation.



BILL BASICS

- Creates a presumption for grandparents' visitation rights for the parents of a deceased parent of a child if a court finds the other parent criminally liable for the death of the deceased parent or civilly liable for an intentional tort causing the death of the deceased parent.
- Allows a court to block visitation if deemed not in the best interest of the child.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

112-3
37-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

**SB 1236
(HB 1561)**

REPRESENTATIVE
BUSH

COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL DETENTION FACILITIES



SB 1236 improves the operation of detention facilities by including a broader group of professionals in the workgroup that oversees county and municipal detention facilities, requiring annual inspections, and imposing penalties on facilities that fail to maintain minimum standards.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Enhances our criminal justice system by improving standards for county and municipal detention facilities.
- Includes professionals with broader expertise on the Florida Model Jail Standards (FMJS) Working Group.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In 2006, the Legislature enacted legislation that established a five-person workgroup, consisting of three people appointed by the Florida Sheriffs Association (FSA), and two people appointed by the Florida Association of Counties (FAC) to develop model standards for county and municipal detention facilities.



BILL BASICS

- Improves standards for county and municipal detention facilities by:
 - Creating the seven-member FMJS Working Group to develop and maintain the FMJS, which provides minimum standards for the operation of county and municipal detention facilities.
 - Requiring every sheriff, county, city, or other entity that operates a county or municipal detention facility to adopt the FMJS as approved by the FMJS Working Group.
 - Ensuring special consideration is given to the appropriate housing of pregnant women.
 - Requiring county and municipal detention facilities to be inspected twice annually, including one announced and one unannounced inspection.
 - Outlining time limitations for a county or municipal detention facility to correct violations of the FMJS and providing penalties if a detention facility fails to correct violations of the FMJS.
- The FMJS Working Group is to be comprised of:
 - Three sheriffs appointed by the FSA.
 - A licensed physician with at least two years of experience in correctional health care appointed by the FSA.
 - A county commissioner appointed by the FAC.
 - An experienced jail administrator of a Florida county jail appointed by the FAC.
 - A licensed psychiatrist with at least two years of experience in correctional psychiatry appointed by the FAC.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 109-0
SENATE 39-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

**SB 1534
(HB 1511)**

REPRESENTATIVE
CLEMONS

RETAIL THEFT



SB 1534 addresses the growing crime of organized retail theft by increasing criminal penalties for bad actors.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects Florida's businesses from the crime of organized retail theft and ensures that they do not lose their inventory.
- Dissuades bad actors from engaging in the activity of "boosting" by increasing the related penalties.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In recent years, instances of organized retail theft have grown substantially and most commonly involve activity known as "boosting."
- "Boosting" is essentially organized shoplifting – often involving multiple offenders operating in different roles to steal multiple items and either resell the items or return them for store credit or cash.
- More often than not, the stolen items are sold via online marketplaces, which makes tracing the criminal activity back to the offender nearly impossible.



BILL BASICS

- Creates two new retail theft offenses aimed at preventing "boosting":
 - Third-degree felony for any person who commits five or more retail thefts within a 30-day period, and obtains or uses 10 or more items of merchandise, regardless of value.
 - Second-degree felony for any person who commits five or more retail thefts within a 30-day period, and obtains or uses 20 or more items of merchandise, regardless of value.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

80-36
38-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS



HB 1571 protects residential privacy by providing law enforcement and prosecutors more tools to prevent protestors and picketers from targeting private homes.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Preserves the tranquility and privacy of the home.
- Ensures that all Floridians, regardless of their status as a public figure, feel safe in their homes.
- Protects Floridians from the detrimental effect of targeted picketing.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In recent years, highly publicized events involving political figures, persons accused of committing crimes, and celebrities have often resulted in large public gatherings outside the homes of persons of interest.
- In *Frisby v. Schultz*, 487 U.S. 474 (1988), the United States Supreme Court upheld an ordinance restricting protests outside of residential homes.



BILL BASICS

- Prohibits a person from picketing or protesting before or about a person's dwelling with the intent to harass or disturb that person. A violation of the prohibition is punishable as a second degree misdemeanor.
- Requires a law enforcement officer to provide a warning to a picketer or protestor before making an arrest for residential picketing.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

76-41
28-3

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

**SB 1796
(HB 1395)**

REPRESENTATIVE
**PERSONS-
MULICKA**

DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE



SB 1796 reforms Florida's alimony system to provide fairer guidelines for divorce proceedings while continuing to prioritize the best interests of children.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Ensures that courts provide swift, equitable resolution of divorce cases.
- Updates divorce proceeding guidelines for judges to follow when determining and modifying alimony awards.
- Ensures the financial security of divorcees by prohibiting alimony under certain conditions and giving courts more guidance with respect to modifying alimony upon retirement.
- Protects the relationships between parents and children with a presumption of equal time-sharing between parents while continuing to prioritize the best interests of the child(ren).



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Current 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 the skills 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

- Updates alimony guidelines by prohibiting permanent alimony, instead requiring courts to utilize the other types of alimony or a combination thereof.
- Sets 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.
- Prohibits an alimony award if the recipient has an equal or greater net income than the payer and generally allows an alimony payer to seek termination or modification upon retirement.
- Protects parent-child relationships by creating a presumption of 50-50 time-sharing of children while continuing to prioritize the best interests of the child(ren).

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

74-42
21-16

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

**SB 1798
(HB 1453)**

REPRESENTATIVE
HARDING

SEXUALLY RELATED OFFENSES



Criminal laws need to be updated frequently to address bad acts committed using new technology. The Florida House is committed to stopping bad actors from utilizing new technology, such as deepfakes, to terrorize their victims.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Ensures Florida law keeps up with the rapid development of new technology.
- Protects Floridians by creating criminal and civil penalties for the theft or unauthorized promotion of a sexually explicit image which depicts a person engaged in sexual conduct or otherwise nude.
- Prohibits the promotion of altered sexual depictions or "deepfakes."
- Increases protections for Florida's children by prohibiting morphed child pornography.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Deepfakes are realistic images or videos that are created using artificial intelligence and can depict a real person saying something they did not say, or engaging in a behavior in which they did not engage. The increasing realism of these images and videos have blurred the lines between reality and fiction. Some deepfakes are created with malicious intent and can be extremely harmful to those depicted.
- Currently, child-like sex dolls are illegal in Florida and a person who possesses such a doll commits a first degree misdemeanor.



BILL BASICS

- Creates a third-degree felony when an individual:
 - Willfully and maliciously promotes an altered sexual depiction, or deepfake, of an individual without consent.
 - Steals and intends to promote a sexually explicit image.
- Creates a second-degree felony when an individual promotes a sexually explicit image without consent for financial gain.
- Increases the minimum amount of monetary damages a victim of sexual cyber-harassment or "revenge porn" can receive from \$5,000 to \$10,000.
- Allows a law enforcement officer to make a warrantless arrest of any individual who he or she has probable cause to believe possesses a child-like sex doll.
- Prohibits the possession or transmission of morphed child pornography as a third degree felony.
- Increases criminal penalties for engaging in prohibited sexual activities with an animal from a first degree misdemeanor to a third degree felony and creates a new felony for filming, possessing, or distributing an image of a person engaged in prohibited sexual activity with an animal.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 117-0
SENATE 37-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

**SB 1808
(HB 1355)**

REPRESENTATIVE
SNYDER

IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT



Florida is a law and order state. Maintaining law and order requires strong borders. This bill ensures our state and local governments do not do business with carriers who further unlawful immigration and also ensures our state collects data necessary to assess the impact of unlawful immigration.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Ensures the rule of law is respected across the board by all government entities.
- Prohibits state and local governmental entities from contracting with common carriers or contracted carriers that willfully transport an unauthorized alien into the state, except to facilitate the person's detention, removal, or departure.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In 2019, Florida passed immigration enforcement legislation to ensure that state and local entities and law enforcement agencies cooperate with federal government officials to enforce, and not obstruct, immigration laws. This bill builds upon that legislation to ensure Florida maintains law and order.



BILL BASICS

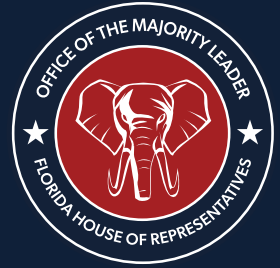
- Requires law enforcement agencies operating county detention facilities to enter into an agreement with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) by January 1, 2023, to participate in the 287(g) program in which ICE trains local law enforcement officers to perform some immigration enforcement functions.
- Prohibits any law, policy, practice, procedure, or custom of any state or local governmental entity that prohibits a law enforcement agency from providing a state entity with information on the immigration status of a person in custody as a "sanctuary policy."
- Requires specified state and local entities to collect the immigration status of inmates and defendants and transmit the data monthly to FDLE.
- Prohibits state, regional, or local governmental entities from entering into, amending, or renewing a contract with a common carrier or contracted carrier if the carrier is willfully providing any service in furtherance of transporting a person into Florida knowing that the person is an unauthorized alien, except to facilitate the detention, removal, or departure of the person from Florida or the United States.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 77-42
SENATE 24-15

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS



HB 7027 meets the growing needs of our state and its judicial system by creating a new appellate district court of appeal (DCA) and new judgeships.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- In 2021, the Florida Supreme Court formally recommended the need for the creation of a sixth DCA and the expansion and realignment of judicial capacity to further effectiveness, efficiency, access to appellate review, professionalism, and public trust and confidence in the court system.
- Ensures access to courts by establishing a sixth DCA, headquartered in Lakeland, and realigns current court boundaries to account for the new district.
- Aims to expand efficiency by adding seven appellate judgeships overall and one additional county court judgeship in Lake County.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Currently, Florida's court system consists of two trial-level courts and two appellate-level courts. The trial-level courts consist of 67 county courts and 20 circuit courts. The appellate-level courts consist of the Supreme Court and five district courts of appeal.
- In May, 2021, Chief Justice Canady issued an administrative order creating the District Court of Appeal Workload and Jurisdiction Assessment Committee (Committee) to analyze the state's courts and prepare a final report and recommendation.
- The Florida Supreme Court certified the Committee's recommendation advising that an additional appellate district would help provide adequate access to oral arguments and other proceedings, foster public trust and confidence based on geography and demographic composition, and attract a diverse group of well-qualified applicants for judicial vacancies including applicants from all circuits within each district.



BILL BASICS

- Creates a new DCA, and modifies court boundaries by:
 - Realigning the judicial circuits within the existing First, Second, and Fifth districts.
 - Creating a Sixth district composed of the Ninth, Tenth, and Twentieth circuits.
 - Preserving the boundaries of the current Third and Fourth districts.
- Adds one additional county court judgeship in Lake County and seven new appellate judgeships, modifying the current makeup by:
 - Decreasing the First DCA from 15 to 13 judges, and the Second DCA from 16 to 15 judges.
 - Increasing the Fifth DCA from 11 to 12 judges.
 - Establishing 9 judges in the new Sixth DCA.
- Makes changes to other provisions within law, including provisions relating to the judicial nominating commissions, to accommodate and implement the new DCA and new court boundaries.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

93-14
33-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

TIME LIMITATIONS FOR PREADJUDICATORY JUVENILE DETENTION CARE



It's important that our juvenile justice system balances the need to keep the public safe with ensuring fairness for juveniles accused of an offense.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Empowers judges with the tools they need to ensure our communities are safe.
- Maintains due process for alleged juvenile offenders by requiring individualized and timely hearings to determine the need for continued detention care.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The current 21-day maximum on preadjudicatory juvenile detention was established over 40 years ago and provides little flexibility for judges to keep the public safe.
- Most juvenile offender's cases are not adjudicated within 21 days of arrest, but courts are required to release them even when their release puts a community at risk.



BILL BASICS

- Creates more tools for our juvenile justice system by removing current limitations on a court's ability to require a child to be appropriately supervised during the pendency of his or her case.
- Authorizes a court to place a child on supervised release for any time period until his or her case is adjudicated and requires a mandatory court hearing to determine the need for continued supervised release after 60 days.
- Authorizes a court to order a child to be held in secure detention beyond the current 21-day time limit in cases in which a child is charged with a specified felony, which may include a crime of violence.
- Provides more opportunities for children to be out of secure detention by authorizing, but not requiring, law enforcement agencies to supervise any court-ordered electronic monitoring.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 77-37
SENATE 27-10

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

HB 7049

REPRESENTATIVES

**GRALL &
FINE**

LEGAL NOTICES



Floridians deserve free, 21st century access to information at the click of a button. Yet, local governments are forced to purchase costly 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 a government website rather than in print ads or on a newspaper's website.
- 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.
- In 2021, the Legislature passed CS/HB 35, which modified the criteria that a newspaper must satisfy to publish legal notices and gave local government the option to publish these notices on newspaper websites.



BILL BASICS

- Provides a local government the option to publish legal notices on a county's publicly accessible website instead of in a print newspaper or on a newspaper's website.
- Maintains authorization for the publication of legal notices in certain free newspapers.
- Protects small communities by requiring local governments in counties with a population of fewer than 160,000 to first hold a public hearing and determine that their residents have sufficient internet access before publishing legal notices on a publicly accessible website.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

79-40
26-13

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

Public Pandemics & Emergencies



**SB 96 & 98
(HB 7023 & 7025)**

REPRESENTATIVE
TRABULSY

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE FUND



Florida needs to be prepared for threats posed by any emergency and act quickly to mitigate negative effects.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Create the Emergency Preparedness and Response Fund for the Governor to use exclusively during emergencies and provide a process for the use of such funds.
- During an emergency, the EPR Fund will reduce the need for the Governor to access funds appropriated for other purposes, unappropriated surplus funds, and funds in the Budget Stabilization Fund.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- During an emergency, the Governor is authorized to utilize all resources of state government and counties and municipalities as reasonably necessary to cope with the emergency. The policy of the state is that funds to meet emergencies must always be available.
- The Governor must first utilize funds regularly appropriated to state and local agencies and thereafter, the Governor may transfer and expend funds appropriated for other purposes, unappropriated surplus funds, and funds in the Budget Stabilization Fund.
- Prior to the passage of this legislation, no specific trust fund was available for emergency spending during a declared state of emergency.



BILL BASICS

- Create the Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) Fund for the Governor to use exclusively during emergencies.
- Do not give more money to the Governor; rather, they provide a cap on moneys available to the Governor during a declared state of emergency and require the Governor to ask the Legislative Budget Commission for additional funds if necessary.
- Authorize spending from the EPR Fund in a declared state of emergency, and spending must be directly related to the declared disaster.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 95-22 HOUSE 99-17
SENATE 31-4 SENATE 34-1

STATUS

SIGNED BY
GOVERNOR

**SB 254
(HB 215)**

REPRESENTATIVES
**DICEGLIE &
MCCLAIN**

RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS



**SB 254 guarantees our constitutional right to religious liberty
against infringement by overzealous public officials.**



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects Floridians' religious liberty from violations by the government during a state of emergency.
- Ensures religious institutions can conduct regular religious services or activities without undue government interference.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- When the COVID-19 pandemic started, states across the country cracked down on religious institutions by preventing them from organizing.
- The Governor has the power to declare a state of emergency and political subdivisions may declare a state of local emergency. Both are authorized to issue orders, proclamations, and rules in response.
- Both the U.S. and Florida constitutions provide the right to freedom of religion and prevent the government from prohibiting the practice of any religion.



BILL BASICS

- Defends religious liberty by preventing an emergency order from directly or indirectly forbidding a religious institution from conducting regular religious services or activities.
- Allows restriction of religious institution activities only if the restriction is applied uniformly to all entities in an affected jurisdiction and serves a compelling government interest in the least restrictive means.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

88-29
31-3

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

HB 7069

REPRESENTATIVE

PEREZ

CONDOMINIUM AND COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATIONS



It is important to make sure that Florida's condominiums and cooperatives are properly maintained in order to ensure the safety of Floridians and to prevent tragedies like the partial collapse of Champlain Towers South in Surfside.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Would have protected Floridians, who deserve to know that they and their neighbors are safe in their homes.
- Would have improved our state's building code to ensure that aging residential condominiums and cooperatives are safe for occupancy.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- On June 24, 2021, Champlain Towers South, a 12-story beachfront condominium building in the Town of Surfside completed in 1981, partially collapsed, resulting in the deaths of 98 people.
- Several inspections revealed structural problems with Champlain Towers South, but the building's owners failed to make the necessary repairs.
- In Florida, there are over 900,000 condominium units that are over 30 years old, and these buildings will continue to age. Our state's geography and terrain make buildings especially vulnerable to structural deterioration. Current law does not adequately address the high number of aging condominiums. While many of these units are well maintained, it is important for Florida to remain vigilant to prevent future tragedies.



BILL BASICS

- Would have protected Floridians by creating a statewide building recertification requirement for condominium and cooperative buildings that are three stories or taller to be performed 30 years after initial occupancy or 25 years if the building is located within three miles of the coast.
- Would have required a more intensive phase 2 inspection if the recertification revealed substantial structural deterioration that negatively affects the building's general structural condition and integrity.
- Would have helped condominiums and cooperatives plan for necessary repairs and maintenance of structural and life-safety systems by requiring associations to complete a structural integrity reserve study every 10 years for their buildings three stories or taller.
- Would have empowered owners by providing that structural integrity reserve studies, recertifications, and phase 2 inspections are part of the official records of a condominium or cooperative, and must be provided to potential purchasers.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 114-0

STATUS

PASSED
HOUSE ONLY

Public Integrity



SB 144
(HB 7063)

REPRESENTATIVE
PEREZ

IDENTIFICATION CARDS



Valid photo identification is often needed to gain access to services in our society. SB 144 ensures our seniors and those less fortunate have access to photo identification by expanding free identification (ID) cards.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Helps vulnerable Floridians gain access to important services and removes an additional burden for our seniors who have lost their driving privileges due to vision loss.
- Provides free Florida ID cards for vulnerable seniors and those experiencing financial hardship.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Valid photo identification, such as driver licenses and ID cards, helps to securely verify important information about individuals and facilitates interaction in our communities for services such as commercial air travel, banking, and voter registration.
- Florida law authorizes the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) to issue an ID card to anyone five or older, or any person who has a disability upon completion of an application and payment of a \$25 application fee.
- Currently, DHSMV must issue ID cards at no charge to certain people like those who present evidence of homelessness or recently released juvenile offenders or prison inmates.



BILL BASICS

- Expands the issuance of free ID cards to:
 - A person who presents a valid Florida voter's registration card and attests that he or she is experiencing a financial hardship.
 - Those 80 years of age or older whose driving privilege is denied due to failure to pass a vision test.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

116-0
35-1

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

**SB 524
(HB 7061)**

REPRESENTATIVE
PEREZ

ELECTION ADMINISTRATION PART 1



Since the 2000 election, the Florida Legislature has continuously worked to improve the reliability and security of elections. SB 524 takes additional steps to strengthen election security, improve election administration, and ensure vote-by-mail (VBM) ballot integrity.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Strengthens election security by creating The Office of Election Crimes and Security in the Department of State (DOS), establishing dedicated elections law investigators within the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE), and increasing penalties for particular election-related frauds.
- Improves election administration by improving the frequency and quality of maintenance and verification of voter rolls and further prohibiting private funds from being used by Supervisors of Elections (SOE).
- Ensures VBM ballot integrity by directing the DOS to develop a plan to further secure VBM ballots with enhanced voter verification.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- 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 DOS Division of Elections.
- The Secretary of State is the chief elections officer with responsibility to ensure the faithful execution of election laws including investigating allegations of irregularities and fraud.
- In addition to early and election day voting, Florida allows voters to vote via a VBM ballot without stating any excuse or reason for doing so. As a result, Florida has a large percentage of voters voting by mail. Some states require a reason for requesting a mailed ballot which is commonly referred to as an absentee ballot.



BILL BASICS

- Strengthens Election Security by:
 - Creating a new election security office, The Office of Election Crimes and Security, within DOS to investigate elections violations which will be staffed with non-sworn officers.
 - Ensuring sworn-FDLE investigators are appointed regionally to provide election crime expertise and local support.
 - Imposing criminal penalties on authorized election observers and non-officials that release information about votes cast or other election results early.
 - Enhancing criminal penalties for illegal ballot harvesting, fraudulent petition signatures, and illegally compensating paid petition circulators.
 - Increasing the maximum fine from \$1000 to \$50,000 (equal to 100 willful violations) against third-party voter registration organizations for violations for mishandling registration applications.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE
SENATE

76-41
24-14

STATUS PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

**SB 524
(HB 7061)**

REPRESENTATIVE
PEREZ

ELECTION ADMINISTRATION PART 2



Since the 2000 election, the Florida Legislature has continuously worked to improve the reliability and security of elections. SB 524 takes additional steps to strengthen election security, improve election administration, and ensure vote-by-mail (VBM) ballot integrity.



BILL BASICS (CONTINUED)

- Improves Election Administration by:
 - Requiring SOEs to take much stronger action to confirm residential addresses of all voters and provides DOS additional information from other agencies to confirm voter eligibility.
 - Ensuring SOEs keep all initiative petition signature forms for one year.
 - Expanding the prohibition on SOEs accepting nonprofit donations to include election office litigation costs.
 - Clarifying provisions of SB 90, which we passed last year, and replacing the term “drop box” to reflect improved security in how VBM ballots are returned.
- Promotes VBM Ballot Integrity by:
 - Directing DOS to create a plan – and report the plan and any proposed legislative changes to the Legislature – to further secure VBM ballots by verifying ballots with a government-issued identification number such as a driver license or social security number.
 - Requiring DOS to seek input from SOEs and address in the plan:
 - Updating the Florida Voter Registration System.
 - Protecting identifying numbers submitted with a VBM ballot.
 - Modifying canvassing procedures to conform with VBM ballot changes.
 - Educating voters about any changes.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

76-41
24-14

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

HB 777

REPRESENTATIVE

W. ROBINSON

LOCAL TAX REFERENDA REQUIREMENTS



Floridians should have control over taxes that affect them. Holding local tax referenda during general elections rather than special elections will ensure that more people have a say over taxes in their communities.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Ensures that more people have a say over local government taxes by requiring referenda authorizing certain optional local taxes to be held at a general election.
- Includes more citizens in important decisions on the taxes that affect their communities.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Counties and municipalities have authority to levy a variety of optional taxes via a majority of electors voting in a referendum.
- Under current law, a number of these taxes may be approved in special elections or may be held in conjunction with other local elections, primary elections, or general elections.
- Voter turnout is much higher in a general election than a special election.



BILL BASICS

- Ensures that the following taxes must be approved in a general election to take effect:
 - Tourist development tax.
 - Areas of critical state concern tourist impact tax.
 - Children's services independent special district tax.
 - County temporary excess ad valorem millage.
 - Municipal temporary excess ad valorem millage.
 - County transportation motor fuel tax.
 - Local option fuel tax.
 - School district millage.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

111-2
39-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

HB 921

REPRESENTATIVE
DRAKE

CAMPAIGN FINANCING



Campaign finance laws should ensure that out-of-state and foreign interests do not unfairly influence our elections. HB 921 protects our elections and state constitution by combating foreign contributions and strengthening protections.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Ensures that no foreign national or foreign government may make any contribution in connection with any election, including candidate races and ballot questions.
- Protects our state constitution from out-of-state influence by applying the contribution limit applicable to statewide candidates also to out-of-state political committees seeking or opposing a ballot initiative but only during the petition circulation period.
- Prohibits local governments from inappropriately using taxpayer dollars to influence a ballot measure.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Federal law currently outlaws foreign contributions in federal, state, and local elections – but it does not provide this protection for ballot question campaigns.
- The Florida Constitution provides for proposed constitutional amendments through an initiative petition process, but the political committees working to place initiatives on the ballot have no applicable contribution limits and can be significantly funded by a handful of out-of-state interests.
- Current state law prohibits local governments from using public funds to send political advertisements as well as electioneering communications, unless such communications are limited to factual information.



BILL BASICS

- Prohibits foreign nationals from directly or indirectly making or offering to make a contribution or expenditure in connection with any election held in the state, including candidate races and ballot questions.
- Provides an expansive definition of foreign national to include entities such as governments, political parties, businesses, and persons.
- Before a ballot measure is certified, limits individual contributions to \$3,000 to political committees sponsoring or opposing constitutional ballot initiatives from non-residents and from organizations that do not have a registered Florida address.
- Stops local governments from using public funds on an election-related communication sent to electors – unless permitted or required by law.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

80-40
22-16

STATUS

SIGNED BY
GOVERNOR

HB 7001 & 7003

REPRESENTATIVE
KOSTER

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL PROHIBITION AGAINST LOBBYING BY A PUBLIC OFFICER & IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL PROHIBITION AGAINST LOBBYING BY A FORMER JUSTICE OR JUDGE



HB 7001 and HB 7003 implement a constitutional amendment overwhelmingly passed by the voters in 2018 that restricts paid lobbying and abuse of office by current and former public officials.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- In 2018, 78% of Florida voters passed Amendment 12, prohibiting paid lobbying by public officials while in office and restricting former officials from paid lobbying for a six-year period.
- Expand integrity in state and local government by implementing prohibitions on paid lobbying for current and former public officials.
- Strengthen accountability by authorizing enforcement by the Commission on Ethics and enacting penalties for violators.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Amendment 12 goes into effect on December 31, 2022 and applies to:
 - State public officers: state legislators, statewide elected officials, and state agency and department heads.
 - State local officers: county, city, and special district elected officers; and school board members and superintendents.
 - State justices and judges.
- While in office:
 - State and local public officers may not lobby for compensation any governmental entity except when exercising their official duties.
- The 6-year lobbying ban prohibits:
 - State public officers from lobbying before any state government body or agency.
 - Local public officers from lobbying before their former agency or governing body.
 - State justices and judges from lobbying the executive and legislative branches.
- Amendment 12 authorizes the Legislature to enact implementing legislation to include definitions and penalties.



BILL BASICS

- Implement Amendment 12 by defining lobbying for compensation and clarifying that Amendment 12's lobbying restrictions apply to officials in office on or after December 31, 2022.
- Authorize the Commission on Ethics to investigate violations.
- Provide penalties for violators consistent with current penalties for prohibited lobbying.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 117-0 HOUSE 118-0
SENATE 39-0 SENATE 38-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

HB 1541

REPRESENTATIVE
TOLEDO

GOVERNMENTAL ACCOUNTABILITY



In Florida, we strive for a government that is honest and accountable to the people. This bill would have continued to ensure that taxpayer funds benefit the citizens of Florida – and are not wasted or abused.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Would have combated waste, fraud, and abuse in government by strengthening the duties and responsibilities of inspectors general.
- Would have promoted integrity by strengthening standards for the use of taxpayer dollars and increasing state and local audits.
- Would have incentivized public servants to do the right thing and prevent fraud by rewarding whistle blowers.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Office of Chief Inspector General is responsible for promoting accountability, integrity, and efficiency in agencies under the Governor's jurisdiction and to investigate fraud, waste, and abuse.
- Additionally, each state agency has an Office of Inspector General to serve as a central point to coordinate on and oversee activities that promote accountability, integrity, and efficiency in government – including conducting investigations.
- The state's "Get Lean" hotline is a 24-hour statewide toll-free hotline that receives information or suggestions from state residents on how to improve the operation of government, increase governmental efficiency, and eliminate waste in government.



BILL BASICS

- Would have required the Chief Inspector General and agency inspectors general to more quickly investigate, identify, and report waste, fraud, abuse, mismanagement, or misconduct in government, and provided a mechanism for recovering such funds.
- Would have increased state and local audits, improved standards for state agency contracts and the use of tax incentive funds, and required reporting of the recommendations received through the state's "Get Lean" hotline to the Joint Legislative Auditing Committee.
- Would have prohibited state agency lobbyists from having inappropriate spending authority over the funds that they lobby for and eliminated a statutory monopoly on public service announcements.
- Would have created a financial reward system based on the amount of funds recovered from reports made by state employees under the Whistle-blower's Act.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 113-0

STATUS PASSED
HOUSE ONLY

State Affairs



HB 45

REPRESENTATIVES
**MORALES &
BENJAMIN**

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR DISABLED VETERANS



HB 45 supports Florida's disabled veterans by allowing those receiving less than full federal educational assistance benefits to receive a waiver covering the remaining costs of tuition and fees they owe at educational institutions.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Supports people who have risked their lives to defend us by increasing access to education.
- Helps Florida's disabled veterans pay off educational costs by supplementing what is provided from the GI Bill to cover 100% of tuition and fees.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The GI Bill provides up to 3 years 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

- Disabled veterans approved for educational assistance under the GI Bill at a state university, Florida College System institution, career center operated by a school district, or charter technical career center, but who do not qualify for 100% of tuition and fees, receive a waiver from the institution for the balance of the remaining tuition and fees.
- Veterans qualify 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
 - Receiving a valid identification card by the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs, proving one of the two previous qualifications.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

115-0
38-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

**SB 266
(HB 139)**

REPRESENTATIVES
**FABRICIO &
RIZO**

MOTOR VEHICLE INSURANCE



As a state that cares deeply for the law enforcement officers who serve us every day, Florida must ensure that officers are always properly insured when driving their work vehicles.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects law enforcement officers by requiring their agency to maintain motor vehicle insurance coverage on law enforcement vehicles used in take-home programs.
- Applies when the agency allows officers to travel to and from work in a law enforcement vehicle.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- According to a 2020 report by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, roughly 90% of the state's law enforcement agencies operate a vehicle take-home program.
- Some of the cited reasons for such a program include increased police presence in the community, improved patrol shift transitions, and improved emergency response.



BILL BASICS

- Ensures law enforcement agencies maintain motor vehicle insurance for the benefit of the law enforcement officer that covers the officer's travel to and from work and any agency assignment if the agency operates a vehicle take-home program.
- Includes bodily injury, death, and property damage liability insurance that covers the period in which a law enforcement officer travels to or from work as well as to and from any other employing agency assignment in an official law enforcement vehicle.
- Authorizes the employing agency to be self-insured, to enter into risk management programs, or to purchase liability insurance in order to meet the bill's requirements.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

117-0
37-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

**SB 494
(HB 323)**

REPRESENTATIVES
**SIROIS &
BUCHANAN**

FISH & WILDLIFE CONSERVATION COMMISSION



SB 494 continues the Florida House's efforts to protect and conserve our environment.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects gopher tortoises by requiring land management agencies to consider the feasibility of creating a gopher tortoise recipient site on state lands larger than 40 acres.
- Keeps our waterways clear by making it easier to remove derelict vessels.
- Preserves our precious environment by providing state agencies with more tools to fight invasive species and wildfires.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is responsible for regulating, managing, protecting, and conserving Florida's fish and wildlife resources.
- A derelict vessel is a vessel stored or abandoned in a wrecked condition in any public waters or at a port or grounded on property without consent. Currently, it is unlawful to abandon any derelict vessel.
- Drones can be used by the government to cover large geographic areas and reach places that are difficult for humans to access.



BILL BASICS

- Requires FWC to submit a report to the Legislature on the progress of establishing gopher tortoise recipient sites, the average time it takes to approve a site, and federal action taken to modify the status of the gopher tortoise under the Endangered Species Act.
- Allows vessels tied to an unlawful or unpermitted structure or mooring to be declared a public nuisance and to be destroyed or disposed of by a contractor.
- Provides more tools to protect our environment by permitting law enforcement officers of FWC and the Florida Forest Service to use drones to manage and eradicate invasive species on public lands and to suppress and mitigate wildfire threats.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

116-0
37-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

**SB 606
(HB 493)**

REPRESENTATIVE
BOTANA

BOATING SAFETY



Florida's world-famous waterways are a precious resource, enjoyed by Floridians and tourists from around the world. SB 606 ensures water-lovers are free to enjoy all that Florida's waterways have to offer while encouraging safe boating practices and operation.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Promotes safe boating in Florida's waters by expanding the boater safety education course curriculum and requiring the use of an engine cutoff switch for operators of vessels used in the instruction of water sports or activities.
- Combats unsafe driving while protecting our precious marine ecosystems by enhancing penalties for boating infractions.
- Ensures safe operation at boat rental facilities (liveries) by requiring permitting and enacting standards that ensure boats are safely rented and renters are properly educated and trained.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Engine cutoff switches are used to shut off the engine of a vessel if the operator is separated from the operating area, reducing the dangers created by a runaway vessel or impact with the spinning propeller.
- Any person born on or after January 1, 1988, must complete an approved boating safety education course in order to operate a vessel powered by a motor of 10 horsepower or greater.
- In 2020, there were 836 boating accidents in the state – an increase of 113 compared to 2019 – and 79 people lost their lives. According to the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, 69 percent of operators involved in fatal boating accidents in 2020 had no formal boater education.



BILL BASICS

- Promotes safe boating by:
 - Expanding boating education courses to include topics covering the dangers associated with unsafe behavior, such as passengers riding in undesignated seating areas or falling overboard, operating a boat near persons in the water, or leaving a vessel unattended while it is running.
 - Requiring the operator of a vessel used in the instruction of a water sport or activity to use an engine cutoff switch and wear an operative link to the switch when a person participating in the sport or activity is in the water.
- Combats unsafe driving by:
 - Authorizing fines for violations related to boating collisions and accidents up to \$1,000.
 - Increasing fines for noncriminal infractions such as unsafe navigating, prohibited anchoring and mooring, and harming protected areas such as seagrass beds or springs.
 - Requiring better enforcement of mandatory education after violations.
- Ensures safe operation of liveries by:
 - Requiring no-cost permits that ensure facilities have proper insurance and safety equipment.
 - Enacting safety standards that promote better record keeping, upkeep and performance of vessels, and education to the renters on boat operation and nearby waterways.
 - Restricting them from renting to minors.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

112-1
36-1

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

HB 689

REPRESENTATIVES
**GIALLOMBARDO
& FISCHER**

WORKERS' COMPENSATION BENEFITS FOR POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER



HB 689 recognizes one of the issues our first responders encounter during their service to our communities - posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The Florida legislature is committed to ensuring they have access to the resources they need to live a healthy life.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects our first responders by expanding access to PTSD disability benefits.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- First responders include law enforcement officers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and paramedics. Many of them witness traumatic events throughout their service to our communities, which can have lasting effects on their lives.
- Currently, employees must notify their employer of a PTSD-related injury within 90 days of the qualifying event or the onset of the disorder, whichever is later. If the injury is disputed, a claim must be filed within 1 year of the qualifying event.
- Symptoms of PTSD can begin to appear soon after a traumatic event but may not appear until years after the event.
- Correctional officers are currently ineligible to receive PTSD disability benefits.



BILL BASICS

- Allows more first responders to access benefits by changing the notification deadline to require the notice of injury within 90 days of the qualifying event or a diagnosis of PTSD.
- Expands the claim filing deadline by requiring a claim to be filed within 1 year of the qualifying event or a diagnosis of PTSD.
- Extends PTSD disability benefits to correctional officers.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

115-0
39-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

**SB 882
(HB 761)**

REPRESENTATIVE
TRUENOW

INVENTORIES OF CRITICAL WETLANDS



Florida is committed to protecting our environment while preserving property rights.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects our environment by directing water management district governing boards to work with local governments to develop a list of critical wetlands to be acquired using funds from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund.
- Preserves property rights by providing a process for landowners to request to have their land removed from the critical wetlands list.
- Requires water management districts opting to develop an annual strategic plan to include a list of critical wetlands in the plan.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Wetlands are vital to the health of the environment because they remove and filter pollutants.
- Wetland plants and soils trap and take up pollutants, which helps keep water suitable for swimming, fishing, and drinking.
- Wetlands also support a wide array of fish and wildlife, which in turn supports the commercial fishing industry, tourism, and other recreation industries.



BILL BASICS

- Directs water management district governing boards to work with local governments to develop a list of critical wetlands to be acquired using funds from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund.
- Safeguards property rights by requiring each water management district governing board to notify the owner of any property that the district contemplates including on the critical wetlands list before it adopts or amends the list. If an owner wishes to have a property removed from the list, he or she must submit a letter, and the board must approve the removal if requirements are met.
- The following criteria will determine if a wetland is critical:
 - Ecological value of the wetland, as determined by physical and biological components.
 - Effect of the wetland on water quality and flood mitigation.
 - Ecosystem restoration value of the wetland.
 - Susceptibility of the wetland to development due to its geographical location or natural aesthetics.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

111-2
38-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

**SB 962
(HB 981)**

REPRESENTATIVE
PAYNE

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING



SB 962 is one step towards more-affordable housing and offers relief to families trying to find homes by offering common-sense exceptions to zoning laws.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Removes unnecessary zoning hurdles to building affordable housing.
- Allows the development of affordable housing as part of a mixed-use residential development project in areas zoned for commercial or industrial use by expanding zoning law exceptions.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Local governments may adopt and maintain in effect any law, ordinance, rule, or other measure for the purpose of increasing the supply of affordable housing through land use mechanisms such as inclusionary housing ordinances or linkage fee ordinances.
- At the request of an applicant, a local government must consider an application for zoning changes that would be required to properly enact any proposed comprehensive plan amendment.



BILL BASICS

- Allows approval of a residential development project, including a mixed-use residential project, in commercial or industrial zones if at least 10% of the units included in the project are for affordable housing and the developer agrees not to apply for or receive funding from the State Apartment Incentive Loan Program.
- Provides that this provision is self-executing and does not require the adoption of an ordinance or regulation before this approval process may be used.

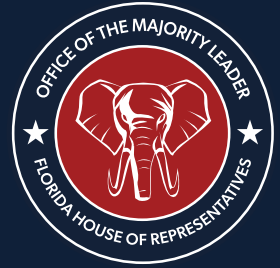
FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

112-0
39-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS



Florida is committed to improving water quality and removing pollution from our rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, and springs for future generations to enjoy.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects our environment with market-based incentives to improve water quality and pollution levels.
- Preserves and enhances our water resources – one of the most important natural resources we have.
- Provides more tools to improve water quality and reduce pollution levels.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Environmental resource permits are required for development or construction activities typically involving the dredging or filling of surface waters, construction of flood protection facilities, building dams or reservoirs, or any other activities that affect state waters.
- Water quality credit trading is a market-based approach that can be used to attain water quality improvements by allowing one source of pollution to control a pollutant at levels greater than required and sell credits to another source that uses the credits to supplement their level of water treatment in order to comply with regulatory requirements.



BILL BASICS

- Authorizes the creation of water quality enhancement areas, which are defined as natural systems constructed, operated, managed, and maintained for the purpose of providing offsite regional treatment for which enhancement credits may be provided.
- Defines an “enhancement credit” to mean a standard unit of measure that represents a quantity of pollutant removed.
- Requires the Department of Environmental Protection or the water management districts to authorize the sale and use of enhancement credits to address adverse water quality impacts of permitted activities or assist governmental entities seeking to meet certain required reductions assigned in a basin management action plan or Reasonable Assurance Plan.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

107-0
39-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

**SB 1000
(HB 1291)**

REPRESENTATIVE
MCCLURE

NUTRIENT APPLICATION RATES



Agriculture has always been one of the most important industries in Florida. We need to make sure our agricultural standards are up-to-date and use modern technology to prepare our citrus industry for the future.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects our citrus industry by enabling citrus producers to use the right data and stay in business.
- Allows citrus producers to work with certified advisors to find the nutrients that work best for their farms.
- Enhances the citrus industry by ensuring farmers can manage their crops with a site-specific approach.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Since the best management practices (BMP) program was implemented in 1999, the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) has adopted and incorporated 10 BMP manuals that cover nearly all major agricultural commodities in Florida.
- Farmers are also dependent upon recommendations from the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS), but their guidelines have not been updated recently.
- Excess nitrogen and phosphorus are the most common causes of water pollution in Florida, having entered surface waters through stormwater, irrigation runoff, or leaching through soils. Accordingly, the Citrus BMPs Manual includes recommended nutrient application rates for nitrogen and phosphorus.



BILL BASICS

- Authorizes citrus producers to use written recommendations from certified professionals to tailor their nutrient application rates.
- Requires a determination that published nutrient applications are not appropriate, as well as any recommendations for site-specific nutrient management, to be documented and kept for 5 years.
- Requires citrus producers using site-specific nutrient management to enroll in and implement certain applicable BMPs adopted by DACS.
- Requires UF/IFAS to analyze the use of site-specific nutrient management for crops other than citrus and crop rotations, develop a research plan and interim recommendations for implementation of site-specific nutrient management, and submit an annual report to the Governor and Legislature by June 30 of each year, beginning in 2023.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

110-6
38-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

**SB 1078
(HB 783)**

REPRESENTATIVE
TRUENOW

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS



SB 1078 ensures that soil and water conservation district boards are composed primarily of people who have the necessary experience to serve their communities.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Prioritizes candidates with experience working in agriculture for membership on soil and water conservation district boards.
- Reduces wasteful government spending by eliminating soil and water conservation districts that do not meet regularly.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In 1937, the Florida Legislature created soil and water conservation districts as a federal, state, and local partnership to protect soil and water sources.
- Today, there are 58 soil and water conservation districts in our state, primarily organized by county, with the purpose of restoring soil and water sources. These districts are governed by elected bodies.



BILL BASICS

- Creates new internal boundary requirements for soil and water conservation districts to ensure that boards have representatives from each part of the county.
- Requires candidates for soil and water conservation district boards to have experience working in the agriculture industry.
- Requires soil and water conservation district boards to meet at least once per calendar year to avoid dissolution.
- Eliminates wasteful government spending by dissolving the Baker and Martin soil and water conservation districts due to inactivity.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

77-39
21-16

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

**SB 1260
(HB 897)**

REPRESENTATIVE
BOTANA

INDEPENDENT HOSPITAL DISTRICTS



SB 1260 empowers independent hospital districts to become private, non-profit entities and provide better care to their communities.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Provides a new pathway for certain public hospitals to become private, non-profit entities and administer better care to Floridians.
- Allows certain public hospitals to change their governing structure if their existing system is ineffective or wasteful for Florida's taxpayers.
- Ensures that Florida's independent hospital districts remain accountable to their communities and provide the best care possible.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In Florida, there are 26 independent hospital districts that specialize in the provision of health care services. These districts have sovereign immunity and taxing authority.
- Under Florida law, hospitals may sell or lease their systems if it is in the best interest of the community.



BILL BASICS

- Authorizes the governing body of any independent hospital district to convert into a private, non-profit entity by approval of the residents of the district voting in a referendum during the next general election if the district levies, collects, or receives property taxes.
- Requires the board to consider the potential benefits of conversion for the residents of the district, conduct public hearings, contract with an independent entity to conduct an evaluation, negotiate necessary conversion agreements with affected counties, and make all documents available to the public.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

112-0
38-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

SB 1658
(HB 1295)

REPRESENTATIVE
GREGORY

EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS



SB 1658 preserves the Governor's executive power to make appointments and ensures that Florida's state agencies continue to be led by well-qualified individuals.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Aligns the process of appointing agency heads with the other business of the Florida Cabinet, which is typically conducted based on a majority vote with the Governor.
- Prevents a single member of the Florida Cabinet from blocking the appointment of qualified agency heads merely for partisan reasons.
- Protects the Governor's executive power to make appointments without undermining the separation of powers and plural executive enshrined in the Florida Constitution.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The three members of the Florida Cabinet are the Attorney General, Chief Financial Officer, and Commissioner of Agriculture.
- For the most part, the Governor has the authority to make appointments to lead executive agencies and he or she does so without the approval of other Cabinet members. Unlike other agencies, the appointment of the heads of the Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Law Enforcement, and Department of Veterans' Affairs requires the approval of all three members of the Cabinet.



BILL BASICS

- Requires the appointment of the Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection to either have the approval of all three members of the Cabinet or be confirmed by the Senate and establishes a process for the Governor to follow when selecting the appointment method.
- Removes the requirement that the appointments of the executive directors of the Department of Law Enforcement and the Department of Veterans' Affairs have the approval of all three members of the Cabinet and instead, makes the appointments subject to a majority vote of the Governor and Cabinet with the Governor on the prevailing side. It also maintains the requirement that the executive directors receive Senate confirmation.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

77-34
26-12

STATUS

SIGNED BY
GOVERNOR

**SB 1712
(HB 1315)**

REPRESENTATIVE
D. SMITH

VETERAN SUICIDE PREVENTION TRAINING PILOT PROGRAM



SB 1712 provides resources to address the problem of veteran suicide and ensures that those who served our country can get the help they need.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects our veterans who risked their lives to defend our freedoms.
- Provides the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) claims examiners and county and city veteran service officers with the tools they need to identify and confront the problem of veteran suicide.
- Raises awareness about the issue of veteran suicide.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Florida has the nation's third-largest veteran population with approximately 1.5 million veterans calling our state home.
- Veterans face unique challenges when reentering civilian life and some struggle with mental health and substance abuse, leading to a suicide rate for veterans that is 1.5 times higher than that of the general population.
- While the United States Department of Veterans Affairs has focused on mental health care for veterans, many veterans turn to local hospitals and health clinics for help.



BILL BASICS

- Requires FDVA to create and oversee the Veteran Suicide Prevention Training Pilot Program, which will provide training and certification in the prevention of veteran suicide to agency claims examiners and county and city veteran service officers.
- Prepares the program's participants to identify indicators of elevated suicide risk and provide emergency crisis referral for veterans in emotional or psychological distress.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 113-0
SENATE 39-0

STATUS

SIGNED BY
GOVERNOR

HB 7053

REPRESENTATIVE
**BUSATTA
CABRERA**

STATEWIDE FLOODING AND SEA LEVEL RISE RESILIENCE



With 1,350 miles of coastline and relatively low elevations, Florida is particularly vulnerable to impacts from flooding and sea level rise – in both coastal and inland communities.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Builds on last year's "Always Ready" legislation by establishing the Statewide Office of Resilience in the Governor's Office, and directing state highway officials to identify roads at risk of flooding and create an action plan by June 30, 2023.
- Prioritizes efforts to prepare our communities and our state for the effects of flooding and sea level rise.
- Takes steps to make Florida more resilient.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In 2021, the Legislature passed SB 1954, which established several new programs and initiatives aimed at addressing the impacts of flooding and sea level rise on the state.
- Florida's coastal communities are experiencing high-tide flooding events with increasing frequency due to sea level rise increasing the height of high tides. In the U.S., sea level rise and flooding threaten an estimated \$1 trillion in coastal real estate value, and analysts estimate that Florida could lose more than \$300 billion in property value by the year 2100.



BILL BASICS

- Authorizes the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to provide grants to small cities and counties to fund preconstruction activities for projects they submit for the annual Statewide Flooding and Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan (Plan).
- Creates the Statewide Office of Resilience within the Executive Office of the Governor.
- Builds on SB 1954 from last year by requiring DEP to rank and include in the Plan all eligible projects that are submitted and expanding the types of entities that can submit projects for the Plan.
- Informs policymakers by requiring DEP to prepare and submit a report on flood resilience and mitigation efforts to the Legislature and Governor by December 15, 2022.
- Requires DOT to develop a resilience action plan for the State Highway System based on current conditions and forecasted future events.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

114-1
37-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS



HB 7055

REPRESENTATIVE
GIALLOMBARDO

CYBERSECURITY

It's no secret that cyber-attacks and ransomware attacks are on the rise. Improving cybersecurity is vital to ensure the availability, confidentiality, and integrity of state and local government data, information technology resources, and critical infrastructure.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Combats cybercrime by enhancing cybersecurity measures across state and local governments in Florida.
- Improves incident prevention by requiring compliance with established cybersecurity standards and providing training to defend against cyber-attacks.
- Strengthens incident response by facilitating the sharing of information about cyber-attack and ransomware incidents among all levels of government.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In 2021, at least 2,323 state and local governments, schools, and healthcare providers experienced ransomware attacks.
- Current law regarding state or local government cybersecurity does not specifically address ransomware.
- 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 cybersecurity and ransomware incident reporting and after-action reports to help the Legislature, law enforcement, and agencies understand the frequency and severity of cybersecurity and ransomware incidents around the state.
- Enhances cybersecurity training for state agency and local government employees.
- Requires local governments to adopt cybersecurity standards consistent with generally accepted best practices.
- Requires state agencies and local governments to report all ransomware incidents within 12 hours and certain high severity cybersecurity incidents within 48 hours, in accordance with five severity levels.
- Deters ransomware attacks by prohibiting state agencies and local governments from paying or complying with ransom demands.
- Makes it a first-degree felony to commit a ransomware attack on a governmental entity and for an employee or contractor of a governmental entity to aid or abet a ransomware attack.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

110-0
38-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

My G Mama's



ADDITIONAL HOMESTEAD PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION FOR SPECIFIED CRITICAL PUBLIC SERVICE WORKFORCE



Home values and property taxes are on the rise, and Florida's critical public employees deserve a break. They shouldn't worry about whether they have a home to return to while they are out protecting ours.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Gives Florida voters the opportunity to provide a property tax exemption for law enforcement officers, members of the Florida National Guard, K-12 classroom teachers, firefighters, active duty military, correctional officers, child welfare services professionals, EMTs, and paramedics at the ballot box this November.
- Recognizes the hard work and dedication of Florida's critical public employees by providing them an additional \$50,000 homestead exemption to their property tax assessment for non-school property taxes.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Florida Constitution requires all property to be assessed annually, at market value, for purposes of ad valorem taxation.
- There are certain exemptions allowed by the Florida Constitution that reduce the taxable value against which local governments levy tax rates each year.



BILL BASICS

- Builds on our commitment to affordable housing for Floridians by proposing a constitutional amendment for property tax relief – an additional \$50,000 homestead exemption – for critical public employees.
- Lessens the financial burden for key members of the public workforce and their families with a significant and historic tax break.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

115-0
37-1

STATUS

FILED WITH SECRETARY
OF STATE

**SM 982
(HM 641)**

REPRESENTATIVE
ROMMEL

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE REGULATIONS



SM 982 calls on Congress to protect Americans data privacy from harmful and intrusive tax reporting regulations proposed by the Biden Administration.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- The Biden Administration's tax reporting proposal puts an undue burden on financial institutions, small business, and law-abiding taxpayers in Florida.
- The proposal puts the privacy and security of America's bank member and customer account information at risk.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In May of 2021, the Biden Administration released a proposal that made changes to tax information reporting.
- The proposal includes requiring financial institutions to provide the IRS reports of any transaction that ranges from \$600 to \$10,000 in a tax year.
- The proposal requires financial institutions to include in the reports a breakdown for physical cash, transactions with foreign accounts, and transfers to and from another account with the same owner, and would be applicable to both personal and business accounts.



BILL BASICS

- Urges the United States Congress to protect consumers from harmful and intrusive IRS regulations, such as burdensome reporting requirements for financial institutions.
- Copies of the memorial will be sent by Florida's Secretary of State to the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and each member of the Florida delegation to the United States Congress.

FLOOR VOTES

VOICE VOTE

STATUS

FILED WITH SECRETARY
OF STATE

**SB 1382
(HB 1041)**

REPRESENTATIVE
STEVENSON

TAX ADMINISTRATION



SB 1382 improves Florida's tax administration by increasing transparency and improving enforcement efficiency.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- Improves transparency by allowing the Department of Revenue (DOR) to respond to contact initiated by taxpayers to discuss audits and assist taxpayers.
- Protects taxpayers by enhancing their ability to hold a conference to discuss audit findings.
- Improves enforcement efficiency by improving recordkeeping.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- SB 1382 authorizes DOR to adopt rules related to:
 - Taxpayer communications and records received in the period leading up to an audit.
 - Subpoena and penalty provisions for intentionally withholding requested records.
 - Tolling periods for taxpayer-provided records after the close of an audit, or for exit interviews requested by the taxpayer.
 - Compliance with federal requirements for unemployment compensation debt recovery.



BILL BASICS

- Protects taxpayers by:
 - Authorizing DOR to respond to contact initiated by taxpayers to discuss audits.
 - Providing DOR with the discretion to assist taxpayers by reopening a closed audit protest or refund denial case in specified circumstances.
 - Requiring DOR to provide a taxpayer with the ability to hold a conference to discuss audit findings, and extending the tolling period to issue an assessment if a taxpayer provides additional data during one of these conferences.
- Improves enforcement efficiency by:
 - Authorizing DOR to include additional daily accrued interests, costs, and fees authorized by law in a garnishment levy; and to deliver notices of levy by electronic means. Creating a rebuttable presumption that failure to provide adequate records when requested by DOR is evidence of willful neglect for purposes of applying or compromising penalties.
 - Providing that failure of a taxpayer to provide documents requested by subpoena allows DOR to estimate assessments.
 - Updating conditions and methods by which DOR may serve subpoenas on businesses registered with DOR.
 - Providing for an alcoholic beverage dealer's ability to hold a resale certificate to be suspended if the dealer is found to have substantial noncompliance with statutory recordkeeping requirements.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE 105-10
SENATE 33-3

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

HB 7071

REPRESENTATIVE

PAYNE

TAXATION PART 1



This year's tax package cuts over \$1 Billion in state and local taxes.



MAJOR MESSAGES

- This year's tax package is the biggest middle-class tax cut in Florida history, and it benefits everyone.
- HB 7071 includes something for everyone: families, students, sports fans, pet lovers, homeowners, new parents, outdoor enthusiasts, mobile home owners, skilled workers, kids in the child welfare system, businesses, state park attendees, moviegoers, schools, and Floridians affected by natural disasters.
- People – not the government – should have the most control over their hard-earned money.



FAMILIES

- BACK-TO-SCHOOL SALES TAX HOLIDAY: 14 days, from July 25th through August 7th, on:
 - Clothing items priced \$100 or less.
 - School supplies priced \$50 or less.
 - Personal computers and related accessories priced at \$1,500 or less.
 - Learning aids and puzzles priced \$30 or less.
 - One-year sales tax exemption on baby and toddler clothes and shoes and children's diapers.
- Three-month sales tax exemption on children's books to encourage reading during summer break.
- One-month gas tax holiday in October 2022.
- Helping more students read on grade level by increasing the annual cap for the New Worlds Reading Initiative Tax Credit program from \$50 million to \$60 million.



WORKERS

- TOOL TIME SALES TAX HOLIDAY: seven days, from September 3rd through the 9th (Labor Day), on tools used in trades (under certain dollar amounts)
 - Hand tools, power tools, and power tool batteries.
 - Safety gear (work gloves, safety glasses, coveralls, work boots, etc.).
 - Tool belts and boxes, and duffel/tote bags.
 - Industry textbooks and code books, electrical equipment, LED flashlights, shop lights, and certain plumbing tools.
- Sales tax exemption for "Green Hydrogen" machinery and equipment (including green hydrogen with biomass as a source).

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

107-0
33-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

HB 7071

REPRESENTATIVE

PAYNE

TAXATION PART 2



This year's tax package cuts over \$1 Billion in state and local taxes.



HOMEOWNERS

- DISASTER PREPAREDNESS SALES TAX HOLIDAY: 14 days, from May 28th through June 10th, on (under certain dollar amounts):
 - Disaster preparedness supplies (e.g. flashlights, radios, batteries, food storage coolers).
 - Generators priced at \$1,000 or less.
 - Pet supplies.
 - Carbon monoxide and smoke detectors and fire extinguishers.
- Cuts property taxes by:
 - Expanding the list of overseas military deployments that qualify for deployed servicemember homestead exemption.
 - Increasing the property tax exemption for widows, widowers, blind persons, and disabled persons from \$500 to \$5,000.
 - Two-year sales tax exemption on impact-resistant windows, doors, and garage doors.
- Permanent sales tax cut on new mobile homes from 6% to 3%.
- One-year sales tax exemption on ENERGY STAR appliances – refrigerators (up to \$3,000), washers, dryers and water heaters (up to \$1,500).
- Encourages more donations toward community development and affordable housing projects by increasing the cap for the Community Contribution Tax Credit Program from \$14 million to \$19 million.



BUSINESSES

- Sales tax exemption on farm trailers and fencing used in agriculture.
- Exempts loans from the federal government made in response to a state of emergency from the documentary stamp tax.
- Creates a corporate income tax credit to encourage investment in short line rail maintenance and improvements and allows them to be transferred in specific situations.



SPORTS FANS

- Permanent sales tax exemption for admissions to the Daytona 500.
- Permanent sales tax exemption for admissions to Formula One Grand Prix races.
- Permanent sales tax exemption for admissions to the FIFA World Cup and any qualifying match held up to 12 months before the World Cup matches.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

107-0
33-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS

HB 7071

REPRESENTATIVE
PAYNE

TAXATION PART 3



This year's tax package cuts over \$1 Billion in state and local taxes.



OUTDOOR ENTHUSIASTS

- **FREEDOM WEEK SALES TAX HOLIDAY:** Seven-day recreation sales tax holiday, from July 1st through the 7th, on:
 - Admissions to live music events, live sporting events, movie theaters, and state parks (for use or events scheduled to be held before the end of the year).
 - Fitness facility dues and fees (for facility use from July 1 through the end of the year).
 - Also included are outdoor recreation items (under certain dollar amounts):
 - Boating/water sports (snorkels, masks, life jackets, inflatable tubes, etc.).
 - Camping supplies (collapsible chairs, sleeping bags, binoculars, tents, etc.).
 - Fishing supplies (rods, reels, bait, tackle, etc.).
 - General outdoor supplies (sunscreen, insect repellent, water bottles, etc.).
 - Pool toys, supplies, and chemicals.



FLORIDIANS AFFECTED BY NATURAL DISASTERS

- Helps Floridians recover from disasters with:
 - Retroactive relief of all property taxes and special assessments for Champlain Towers South property in Surfside.
 - Relief for catastrophic damage to residential dwellings (e.g., fires or hurricanes), beginning in 2023.



CHILDREN IN NEED

- Helps provide more child welfare and well-being services by increasing the annual cap for the Strong Families Tax Credit program from \$5 million to \$10 million.
- Adds timing flexibility to the Strong Families Tax Credit and New World Reading Initiative Tax Credit programs to encourage more donations.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE
SENATE

107-0
33-0

STATUS

PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS