



The Florida House of Representatives

Paul Renner
Speaker

NEWS RELEASE

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Media Contact:

media@myfloridahouse.gov

(850) 717-5780

Florida House Invests in Families, Students, and Workers

House proposal includes historic investments in education, public safety, Florida's workforce, and infrastructure

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (March 24, 2023) — Today, Speaker Paul Renner (R-Palm Coast) and Appropriations Chair Tom Leek (R-Daytona Beach) unveiled the Florida House's budget proposal to fortify our state, address long-term infrastructure needs, invest in Florida's workforce, transform how Florida delivers public education, and more.

The proposed budget includes significant investments in three key areas: state infrastructure (\$19.2 billion), support for children and families (\$23 billion), and recognition of public service (\$2 billion). The proposed budget provides for the early retirement of \$137.1 million in state debt. The proposed budget maintains a record level of planned reserves, totaling over \$12.4 billion, including \$7.5 billion in the General Revenue Fund, Unallocated, \$4.4 billion in the Budget Stabilization Fund, and \$500 million in the Emergency Preparedness and Response Fund.

"Thanks to decades of responsible planning and budgeting, Florida is ahead of other states, enjoying the benefits of growing revenues, population, and opportunity for our citizens," **said Speaker Paul Renner (R-Palm Coast)**. "However, the failures in Washington D.C. cast a shadow over our nation's economic outlook, so we must take the necessary steps to provide Floridians with relief and redouble our efforts to invest in our first responders, teachers, and public employees to keep our state running efficiently. We have also prioritized our long-term infrastructure needs and will set the next generation up for success by upgrading how we deliver public education. I am proud of the work our Appropriations Chairs are doing to deliver a balanced budget that upholds the shared goals and values of our constituents."

"We have a paramount responsibility to balance our budget and spend taxpayer dollars wisely," said **Appropriations Chair, Tom Leek (R-Ormond Beach)**. "When we began this process, I had a simple motto and a challenge for anyone seeking to spend even a single state dollar, 'start with zero, and justify the rest.' This budget elevates our state's most critical priorities to provide

Floridians with needed relief, fund essential services and honor public employees, and maintain record reserves to safeguard our state's fiscal health and keep our economy roaring.”

The House is committed to addressing long-term infrastructure needs and investing in strategic projects to secure our water supply, improve water treatment, and protect the natural treasures of our state, like the Everglades and our world class beaches, rivers, lakes, and springs. The Agriculture & Natural Resource Appropriations Subcommittee proposal of \$1.26 billion for Everglades restoration and protection of water resources includes \$200 million for wastewater grants, \$50 million for springs restoration, \$35 million to mitigate harmful algal blooms, additional full-time employees and funds to protect and restore coral reefs, \$251.2 million to acquire lands within the Florida Wildlife Corridor, \$15 million towards Apalachicola Bay oyster restoration, and \$18.4 million to aid Florida's citrus growers.

“In this year's budget, the Florida House makes historic investments to preserve Florida's natural treasures and clean water. Our focus on providing recurring funds for land acquisition, resiliency, and commitment to beach renourishment will ensure our natural wonders remain the envy of the world,” **said Agriculture & Natural Resources Appropriations Subcommittee Chair, Thad Altman (R-Indian River)**.

In order to improve the safety, health and well-being of our children and their families, the Health Care Appropriations Subcommittee budget proposal includes \$34.7 million to provide funding to increase the income eligibility threshold for additional coverage under Florida KidCare. The proposal also seeks to increase the Medicaid reimbursement rate for pediatricians to attract providers and reduce waitlists for services.

“Our health care budget focuses on dramatically expanding our KidCare program to help struggling families, reducing the waitlist for budget waivers to assist Floridians with disabilities, and a significant investment in opioid addiction outreach to combat the fentanyl crisis that stems from Washington's failure to secure our borders,” **said Health Care Appropriations Subcommittee Chair, Sam Garrison (R-Fleming Island)**.

Florida provides the greatest value in higher education in the nation and a place where all ideas can be debated openly. Our top ranked system plays a critical role in developing the next generation of leaders, entrepreneurs, and workers. The Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee proposal includes \$7.4 billion in funding, ensures no tuition increases, while providing increased funding to workforce development programs.

“To keep Florida's top ranking in higher education, our budget proposal seeks to raise per student funding and provide over \$1 billion for financial aid to Florida's next generation workforce,” **said Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee Chair, Jason Shoaf**. “We must ensure Floridians are ready for the jobs of the future with significant increases in career training and workforce education and a new performance fund that rewards tech centers and adult learners who continue their education in the Florida College System.”

Unlike Washington D.C., Florida runs an efficient government that keeps what works and eliminates what does not. The Infrastructure & Tourism Appropriations Subcommittee is proposing to eliminate Enterprise Florida while providing \$119.8 million for targeted economic development. The House proposal includes \$107.6 million to provide full time positions, training, equipment and more for Florida's State Guard to fulfill their mission to protect and

defend Floridians. The House is proposing \$100 million for broadband, expanding high speed internet access. The proposal also fully funds the Department of Transportation's 5-year Transportation Work Program and provides an additional \$2 billion to accelerate the completion of selected road projects in the Moving Florida Forward program.

"With close to 140 million annual visitors, 20 million residents and over 1,000 people moving to the state each year, the Florida House proposed budget demonstrates our commitment to ensuring our roads, airports and ports are prepared to handle the capacity," **said Infrastructure & Tourism Appropriations Subcommittee Chair, Alex Andrade (R-Pensacola).**

The Florida House is committed to redoubling the state's efforts towards public safety and reaffirming our respect for law enforcement and first responders. The Justice Appropriations proposal totals \$6.4 billion, including funds to assist in recruitment and retention within the Department of Corrections and \$24.5 million to modernize the National Fingerprint File Repository, grant funding for body armor purchases to keep our law enforcement officers safe, the completion of the Sexual Assault Kit tracking system, and more.

"We have embraced the challenge to ensure state resources are used as effectively and efficiently as possible. The funding in these recommendations belong to the people of Florida and I believe our recommendations exhibit great progress in many areas of our justice system," **said Justice Appropriations Subcommittee Chair, Chuck Brannan (R-Macclenny).** "I want to thank Speaker Renner and Chair Leek for their leadership and commend the members of the committee for the commitment to investing in public safety."

The PreK-12 Appropriations Subcommittee budget proposal addresses the needs of Florida's children and modernizes the FEFP. The budget calls for increasing K-12 funding by \$2.1 billion over the current year, or an additional \$459.11 per student. The House is proposing an increase to the base FEFP funding by \$250.7 million for school districts and charter schools to provide salary increases to full-time teachers, certified prekindergarten teachers, and other instructional personnel.

"Florida's education budget is a win for everyone in the state," **said PreK-12 Appropriations Subcommittee Chair, Josie Tomkow (R-Polk City).** "We would not have been able to seize this opportunity if it wasn't for great leadership. I want to thank and applaud Speaker Renner and Chair Leek for their commitment to Florida's future. This budget is a win for students and parents because we fund students, regardless of what school they choose to attend. Educators win because we ensure additional funding for teacher salaries. And, all school districts win because of our historic investment and increases to the FEFP while providing more flexibility to give our students the best education possible."

Finally, the House is committed to investing in the state's essential administrative functions and upgrading our technology and cybersecurity. The State Administration & Technology Appropriations Subcommittee proposal fully funds the My Safe Florida Home Program with \$100 million, provides \$40 million for Local Government Cybersecurity Grants, \$6.7 million for cybersecurity enhancements and equipment, and an additional \$77.9 million for Fixed Capital Outlay for repair and maintenance of state buildings.

"Our budget recommendation is fiscally sound, mindful of the taxpayers' dollars, and serves the interest of our citizens," **said State Administration & Technology Appropriations Subcommittee Chair, Demi Busatta Cabrera (R-Coral Gables).** "I want to thank Speaker

Renner for allowing me to serve and the members of the committee for their dedication to improving Florida's critical infrastructure and technology systems.”

The proposed budget released today totals \$113 billion. This breaks down to:

- \$43.2 billion General Revenue
- \$28.8 billion State Trust Funds
- \$41 billion Federal Trust Funds

There is a total increase of \$2 billion (or 1.8%) over the current-year budget. The proposed increase in General Revenue spending is \$406.1 million (0.9%) which can be attributed to increased revenue.

The House Proposed Committee Bill APC 23-01 will be taken up by the House Appropriations Committee on Tuesday, March 28.

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