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President Passidomo Marks of the Conclusion of the 2024 Legislative Session

Tallahassee—Florida Senate President Kathleen Passidomo (R-Naples) today marked the conclusion of the 2024 Regular Session of the Florida Legislature, joining House Speaker Paul Renner (R-Palm Harbor) and other legislators for the traditional Sine Die “Hankie Drop.” The presiding officers then joined Governor Ron DeSantis to mark the conclusion of the session.

“I am so proud to lead the Florida Senate, and amazed by what we have accomplished together over the last two years. Our great Governor, Speaker Renner, and every single member of the Florida House and Senate have worked together on key initiatives that will keep Florida the free, beautiful, and prosperous state we all cherish.

“I am proud of our work on kitchen-table issues important to growing families and seniors. Our work to stabilize and strengthen Florida’s property insurance market is starting to bear fruit. We know families can’t wait. Every little bit helps. Cutting the taxes associated with flood insurance and property insurance premiums is important for families trying make ends meet as our insurance market strengthens.

“More Floridians have options to Live Local, in the heart of the communities they serve. More Floridians will be Living Healthy with as we grow Florida’s health care workforce, expand access and invest in innovation. More Floridians are Learning Local – through universal school choice, or in neighborhood public schools that have served our communities for generations. Through our Compact to Conserve, the Florida Wildlife Corridor will one day be our Central Park as we preserve our state’s beauty for future generations to enjoy.

“I am very proud of our state budgets over the last two years. We wisely utilized pandemic funds to make critical, one-time, generational investments in our infrastructure – from roads and bridges, to education facilities, to clean water and coastal resilience. Instead of spending all of we have, we are paying down debt, setting aside historic reserves, and providing for meaningful tax relief, so Floridians can keep more of their hard-earned money.

“We have listened to our constituents, incorporated ideas and feedback from our communities, and made our mark with historic reforms to keep our state affordable and her people free.”

Links to more information on the following initiatives are available.

- The [Senate’s Live Healthy](#) agenda is designed to grow Florida’s health care workforce, expand access, and incentivize innovation.
- The Senate passed \$1.5 billion in broad-based [tax relief for Florida’s families and businesses](#).

- Florida's [balanced budget](#) makes key investments in infrastructure, education, & historic reserves. The budget pays down state debt and prioritizes public schools and parental choice in education.
- The Senate took up legislation to [reduce property insurance costs](#), including tax relief that provides \$500 million in savings for homeowners.
- The Senate's [Learn Local](#) agenda cuts red tape and supports neighborhood public schools, maintaining high standards and safety, enhancing parental involvement, and empowering teachers.

Additional highlights not included in the links above:

Compact to Conserve: Preserving Florida's Land, Water & Wildlife Legacy

SB 1638, Florida's Compact to Conserve, sponsored by the Dean of the Florida Senate, Senator Travis Hutson (R-St. Augustine), commits revenues available through the Compact between the State of Florida and the Seminole Tribe to establish dedicated funding for continued acquisition and management of Florida's conservation lands and clean water infrastructure.

"Conservation and preservation of Florida's land and water resources is essential to maintaining the quality of life we all enjoy as well as sustaining and growing a thriving economy, including legacy industries like tourism and agriculture," said Senate President Kathleen Passidomo (R-Naples). "The Compact to Conserve invests in the strategic expansion of our Wildlife Corridor, and will help protect endangered native species, including the Florida Panther. I am grateful to Governor DeSantis, Speaker Renner, and Commissioner Simpson for their vision and steadfast leadership in safeguarding Florida's land, water, and wildlife legacy."

"Our Compact to Conserve dedicates a new, steady stream of funds to acquire conservation lands and invest in our clean water infrastructure," said Dean Hutson. "Additionally, we have a tremendous focus on management of our conservation lands, which helps to protect our state from wildfire damage and guard against dangerous non-native species. Together these investments will expand and promote public access to state recreation lands, including Florida's state parks, greenways and trails, and game lands, so our current residents and visitors, and Floridians generations down the road, can get out there and enjoy our pristine land, water, and wildlife legacy."

GATE Program Expands Access to Career and Technical Education

Alternative pathway to the workforce for students who do not complete traditional high school

SB 7032, by Senator Erin Grall (R-Vero Beach) creates the Graduation Alternative to Traditional Education (GATE) Program, an alternative pathway to career credentials for students 16 to 21 years of age who have discontinued enrollment in traditional high school programs.

"Everyone who wants to work hard has the opportunity to prosper in the free state of Florida. It is important that we have resources in place to help young people, who have made the decision to leave a traditional high school, re-engage in work and educational opportunities and build careers that are needed in our growing communities," said President Passidomo. "Thankfully, over the last several years we have seen a decrease in the number of teens who are not in school or working. However, Florida has a job for anyone who wants one and the earlier we can reach a teen who has left high school the better chance that young person has to thrive in a meaningful career."

“Some students may have challenges in completing the requirements for a high school diploma in a traditional setting, but everyone has gifts and talents that can contribute to their community,” said Senator Grall. “The GATE program will provide students who have left high school before graduation the opportunity to access high-quality workforce education programs that can help them earn industry-recognized credentials that lead to good jobs, at no cost to the students.”

Senate Backs Federal Term Limits, Balanced Budget, Line Item Veto and Balanced Budget Amendments

Legislation calls for convention of the states to amend the U.S Constitution

“The line item veto, term limits, and balanced budget requirements have worked well here in Florida, and help our state guard against the rampant corruption, abuses of power, and overspending we see in Washington. Our founding fathers envisioned elected service as a short-term sacrifice, not a means of personal enrichment in which elected officials can pick and choose which laws to follow. The American people are fed up. With these initiatives, Florida is sending a strong message that the federal government must be accountable to the people,” said President Passidomo.

“Washington desperately needs an infusion of fresh ideas and new perspectives. Congress has become a lifeless shell of what the founders intended – Instead of working for the interests of hard-working Americans, Congress is cowing to special interests and working to advance their own career aspirations,” said Senator Blaise Ingoglia (R-Spring Hill). “By passing Congressional term limits we will provide for much needed accountability and put an end to career politicians in Washington.”

Article V of the U.S Constitution provides an amendments convention, when two-thirds of state legislatures apply, as one method for proposing constitutional amendments.

“Every single penny the government has to spend is taken from a person or a business who earned it. Public service isn’t a blank check to recklessly squander hard-earned money siphoned from the paychecks of working Americans,” continued Senator Ingoglia. “Career politicians have benefited from the status quo for far too long. Families have to balance their budgets, and so should the federal government.”

House Concurrent Resolution (HCR) 703, Balanced Federal Budget, by Senator Ingoglia, is an application to Congress calling for an Article V constitutional amendments convention to propose an amendment requiring that, except in a national emergency, the total of all federal appropriations for any fiscal year not exceed the total of all estimated federal revenues.

HCR 693, Congressional Term Limits, by Senator Ingoglia, is an application to convene an amendments convention to propose an amendment to set a limit on the number of terms a person may be elected to serve as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate.

In 1992, Florida voters overwhelmingly approved an amendment to the State Constitution imposing term limits on the Florida Legislature, Cabinet, and Lt. Governor, as well as the U.S. House and Senate. However, in 1995, the U.S. Supreme Court invalidated the portion of the amendment that applied to federal offices.

HCR 7055, Equal Application of the Law, by Senator Ingoglia, constitutes the Florida’s application to call a convention for the sole purpose of considering and proposing a constitutional amendment prohibiting Congress from making any law applying to the citizens of

the U.S. that does not also equally apply to all U.S. Representatives and U.S. Senators, and all members of the federal legislative branch.

Congress has exempted itself from certain laws that are applicable to the other branches of government or the citizenry at large, such as the Federal Freedom of Information Act and certain provisions of the Whistleblower Act of 1989.

HCR 7057, Line-item Veto, by Senator Ingoglia, constitutes the state's application to call a convention for the sole purpose of considering and proposing a constitutional amendment giving the President authority to eliminate one or more items of appropriations while approving other portions of a bill.

For more information, please visit www.FLSenate.gov.

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