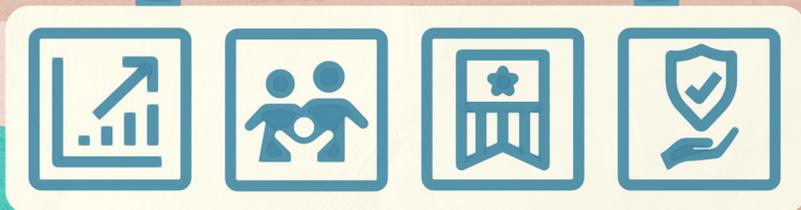


FLORIDA HOUSE *of* REPRESENTATIVES

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

2024





OFFICE *of* THE MAJORITY LEADER

We came into this session with an ambitious agenda, and together, we got it done.

From innovative healthcare solutions to legislation protecting the most vulnerable, we have made Florida a healthier and safer state.

Our Florida House Majority Office has compiled the 2024 Session Highlights to assist you with sharing our successes with your constituents. The information provided here is intended to help House Republicans communicate the topline outcomes from legislative session in a compelling and meaningful way. These high-level summaries are based on information available as of April 8, 2024.

For detailed information on legislation, please visit MyFloridaHouse.gov to check on a bill status, to review the bill text, or to study the staff analysis.

Hopefully you will find this publication a valuable tool in communicating with your district in meaningful ways. Thank you for the honor of serving as your Majority Leader. Our State of Florida is a better place due to your dedication and service.

MAJORITY LEADER MICHAEL GRANT
FLORIDA HOUSE *of* REPRESENTATIVES



FLORIDA HOUSE *of* REPRESENTATIVES

I'm proud of our Members for addressing the problems facing Floridians with both short-term and long-term solutions. I'm thankful for Senate President Passidomo and the Florida Senate for their partnership and to Governor Ron DeSantis for his leadership.

Over the past two years, we took on DEI and ESG. We expanded school choice to every Florida student. We modernized how we deliver public education funding to our schools. We put Silicon Valley and Big Tech's cronies on alert that our children do not belong to them. We expanded mental health services. We stood up for our ally, Israel, and in a unified voice declared 'never again.' We put aside historic reserves to pay down state debts. We supported our first responders and made our streets safer. We gave teachers a raise. We eliminated government permission slips holding Floridians back from exercising their 2nd Amendment rights. We took a stand for life and the value of every unborn child. And unlike Washington, D.C., we balanced our budget and lived up to the promises we made to our constituents.

You can either follow the 'Florida Way' and increase freedom, or you can take it away. You can either eliminate government waste or grow government to unsustainable levels. You can either empower parents and provide every child with greater opportunity to thrive or you can saddle future generations with insurmountable debt and uncertainty. Florida has chosen the brighter path, and I am honored to have led the Florida House of Representatives at such a critical time in our state's history.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Paul Renner".

SPEAKER PAUL RENNER
FLORIDA HOUSE *of* REPRESENTATIVES



TABLE OF CONTENTS

2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

SESSION RECAPS

Protecting Children & Empowering Families	2
School Choice & Education Innovation	3
Accountability, Protecting Taxpayer Dollars & Affordability	4
Health & Human Services	5
Disaster Recovery & Environmental Protection	6
Crime & Public Safety	7
Property Insurance Reform	8
Supporting Military & Veterans	9

COMMERCE LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

HB 3 : Online Protections for Minors – <i>Sirois, McFarland, Rayner, Tramont & Overdorf</i>	29
HB 49 : Employment – <i>Chaney</i>	31
HB 267 : Building Regulations – <i>Esposito</i>	32
HB 433 : Employment Regulations – <i>Esposito</i>	33
SB 812 : Expedited Approval of Residential Building Permits – <i>McClain</i>	34
HB 849 : Veterinary Practices – <i>Killebrew & Buchanan</i>	35
HB 989 : Chief Financial Officer – <i>LaMarca</i>	36
HB 1029 : My Safe Florida Condominium Pilot Program – <i>Lopez, V. & Hunschofsky</i>	37
SB 1142 : Occupational Licensing – <i>Mooney</i>	38
HB 1203 : Homeowners’ Associations – <i>Esposito, Anderson & Porras</i>	39
SB 1526 : Local Regulation of Nonconforming and Unsafe Structures – <i>Roach</i>	40
HB 1645 : Energy Resources – <i>Payne</i>	41
SB 1680 : Advanced Technology – <i>McFarland</i>	42
SB 7028 : My Safe Florida Home Program – <i>LaMarca</i>	43

EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

SB 494 : Graduate Program Admissions – <i>Holcomb</i>	47
SB 832 : Employment of Individuals with Disabilities – <i>Redondo</i>	48
HB 917 : Career and Technical Education – <i>Snyder</i>	49
HB 931 : School Chaplains – <i>McClain & Daniels</i>	50

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION



HB 1109 : Security for Jewish Day Schools and Preschools – <i>Fine</i>	51
SB 1264 : History of Communism – <i>Brannan & Buchanan</i>	52
HB 1285 : Education – <i>Canady</i>	53
HB 1291 : Educator Preparation Programs – <i>Snyder & Jacques</i>	54
HB 1361 : Education – <i>Temple</i>	55
HB 1403 : School Choice – <i>Tomkow</i>	56
HB 1473 : School Safety – <i>Trabulsy</i>	57
SB 7002 : Deregulation of Public Schools – <i>Rizo</i>	58
SB 7004 : Education – <i>Trabulsy</i>	59
SB 7032 : Education – <i>Melo</i>	60

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

HB 73 : Supported Decisionmaking Authority – <i>Tant & Koster</i>	63
HB 159 : HIV Infection Prevention Drugs – <i>Franklin & Trabulsy</i>	64
HB 201 : Emergency Refills of Insulin and Insulin-related Supplies or Equipment – <i>Bell</i>	65
HB 415 : Pregnancy and Parenting Resources Website – <i>Jacques</i>	66
SB 564 : Young Adult Aftercare Services – <i>Tramont & Abbott</i>	67
HB 591 : Hot Car Death Prevention – <i>Brannan & Smith</i>	68
HB 725 : Veterans’ Long-term Care Facilities Admissions – <i>Woodson & Snyder</i>	69
HB 775 : Surrendered Infants – <i>Canady & Beltran</i>	70
HB 1267 : Economic Self-sufficiency – <i>Anderson</i>	71
HB 1365 : Unauthorized Public Camping and Public Sleeping – <i>Garrison</i>	72
SB 1600 : Interstate Mobility – <i>Plasencia & Alvarez</i>	73
SB 1758 : Individuals with Disabilities – <i>Buchanan & Fine</i>	74
SB 7016 : Health Care – <i>Grant</i>	75
HB 7021 : Mental Health and Substance Abuse – <i>Maney</i>	76
HB 7085 : Sickle Cell Disease – <i>Skidmore & Driskell</i>	77
HB 7089 : Transparency in Health and Human Services – <i>Grant</i>	78

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION



INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIES LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

SB 1380 : Transportation Services for Persons with Disabilities and the Transportation Disadvantaged – <i>Busatta Cabrera</i>	81
HB 1557 : Department of Environmental Protection – <i>Chaney</i>	82
SB 1638 : Funding for Environmental Resource Management – <i>Buchanan</i>	83
SB 7040 : Ratification of the Department of Environmental Protection’s Rules Relating to Stormwater – <i>Altman & Payne</i>	84
HB 7049 : Transportation – <i>McFarland</i>	85

JUDICIARY LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

HB 21 : Dozier School for Boys and Okeechobee School Victim Compensation Program	89
HB 117 : Disclosure of Grand Jury Testimony – <i>Gossett-Seidman</i>	90
SB 184 : Impeding, Threatening, or Harassing First Responders – <i>Rizo</i>	91
HB 187 : Antisemitism – <i>Gottlieb & Fine</i>	92
HB 275 : Offenses Involving Critical Infrastructure – <i>Canady</i>	93
HB 385 : Safe Exchange of Minor Children – <i>Rudman & Cassel</i>	94
HB 549 : Theft – <i>Rommel</i>	95
SB 718 : Exposures of First Responders to Fentanyl and Fentanyl Analogs – <i>Baker</i>	96
SB 758 : Tracking Devices and Applications – <i>Overdorf</i>	97
SB 764 : Retention of Sexual Offense Evidence – <i>Plakon</i>	98
HB 801 : Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementia Training for Law Enforcement Officers	99
SB 1036 : Reclassification of Criminal Penalties – <i>Michael & Jacques</i>	100
HB 1171 : Schemes to Defraud – <i>Steele</i>	101
HB 1181 : Juvenile Justice – <i>Jacques</i>	102
SB 1286 : Return of Weapons and Arms Following an Arrest – <i>Brackett & Barnaby</i>	103
HB 1389 : Digital Voyeurism – <i>Cassel & Cross</i>	104
HB 1589 : Driving Without a Valid Driver License – <i>Plakon</i>	105
HB 7063 : Anti-human Trafficking – <i>Overdorf</i>	106

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION



STATE AFFAIRS LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

SB 328 : Affordable Housing – Lopez, V.....	109
HCR 693 : Congressional Term Limits – Borrero & Gregory.....	110
HCR 703 : Balanced Federal Budget – Sirois & Gregory.....	111
HB 919 : Artificial Intelligence Use in Political Advertising – Rizo.....	112
HB 1329 : Veterans – Redondo & Alvarez.....	113
HB 1331 : Commodities Produced by Forced Labor – Yeager.....	114
HB 1615 : Restrictions on Firearms and Ammunition During Emergencies – Gregory & Sirois.....	115
HB 7011 : Inactive Special Districts – Persons-Mulicka.....	116
HB 7013 : Special Districts – Persons-Mulicka.....	117
HCR 7055 : Equal Application of the Law – Alvarez.....	118
HCR 7057 : Line-item Veto – Alvarez.....	119
HB 7071 : Foreign Investments by the State Board of Administration – Caruso.....	120

WAYS & MEANS/APPROPRIATIONS LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

2024-2025 Tax Package – McClain.....	123
HB 1195 : Millage Rates – Garrison.....	126
HJR 7017 & HB 7019 : Homestead Exemption – Buchanan.....	127
Conference Report on HB 5001 – Leek.....	128

FLORIDA HOUSE *of* REPRESENTATIVES

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

2024

SESSION RECAPS





PROTECTING CHILDREN & EMPOWERING FAMILIES

2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

OVERVIEW

This Session, the Florida House protected Florida’s kids from the harms of addictive social media platforms and websites with harmful adult content. We also boosted social safety net programs by addressing benefit cliffs to ensure programs are there when Florida’s families and children need them.

- Protected Florida’s children from addictive and harmful social media platforms by prohibiting those under the age of 14 from creating a social media account and empowered parents with an opt-in for their 14- and 15-year-old children.
- Protected children from harmful online content, such as pornography, by requiring age verification by websites and applications that publish material harmful to minors.
- Maximized the effectiveness of benefit programs with a focus on addressing benefit cliffs to promote economic self-sufficiency and provide families with a hand up, not a handout.

DIG DEEPER

HB 3 ONLINE PROTECTIONS FOR MINORS

by Reps. Sirois, McFarland, Rayner, Tramont and Overdorf

Page 29

HB 1267 ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY

by Rep. Anderson

Page 71

RAPID RESPONSE

- **Why there is a compelling state interest to protect our children from addictive social media platforms:** Some social media platforms use personalized algorithms and addictive features which they know is causing significant and irreparable harm to our children’s mental health. These platforms even admit that if they lose the teenage demographic, they lose the pipeline that feeds their profits. In Florida, we took a bi-partisan stand to protect our children from predatory social media companies who only see children as profit.
- **Why we allowed younger Floridians to work longer hours:** Florida’s young people deserve every opportunity to thrive. We gave Florida’s young workers greater flexibility to earn money to provide for their families and save for college by reverting Florida’s labor laws to the federal standards.



SCHOOL CHOICE & EDUCATION INNOVATION

2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

OVERVIEW

As the undisputed leader in school choice, Florida is laser-focused on improving education outcomes. This Session, the Legislature brought forward innovative solutions to create new educational opportunities for Florida students. By identifying areas in which we can deliver better results, we were able to present comprehensive solutions to the benefit of every Florida student.

- Ensured the Family Empowerment Scholarship for Unique Abilities program can grow to meet demand, improving the school choice application and renewal process, requiring timely payment for tuition and fees, and increasing transparency.
- Expanded New Worlds Scholarship eligibility to include VPK students who exhibit substantial deficiencies in early literacy or math skills based on the most recent progress monitoring assessment.
- Provided opportunities to customize and accelerate learning for students in grades 6-12 and reduce teacher workload by creating a grant program to expand the use of AI in schools.
- Passed comprehensive education policy to:
 - Provide flexibility to districts in setting instructional personnel salaries and ensure our local schools can retain the highest-performing teachers.
 - Expand eligibility for the teacher apprenticeship program
 - Streamline the process for districts to adopt state-required instructional materials.

DIG DEEPER

HB 1403 SCHOOL CHOICE

by Rep. Tomkow
Page 56

HB 1361 EDUCATION

by Rep. Temple
Page 55

SB 7002 DEREGULATION OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

by Rep. Rizo
Page 58

SB 7004 EDUCATION

by Rep. Trabulsy
Page 59

RAPID RESPONSE

- **How we supported teachers:** Because exceptional teachers are critical to the success of our students, we invested an additional \$200 million to increase their salaries and provided opportunities to decrease their workloads.
- **How we're making schools safer:** To ease Florida parents' fears and ensure the safety of their children in our classrooms, we invested \$42 million for school hardening grants so that districts can address security risks and \$20 million to improve security at Jewish day schools and preschools. We allocated \$3.8 million to incentivize public school principals and charter school directors with a \$1,000 bonus for complying with all school safety requirements.
- **Why we discouraged excessive book challenges:** We don't believe in banning books, but we do believe in protecting children by removing dangerous and age-inappropriate literature from school library shelves. In some districts, book challenges have gotten out of hand. We must protect the integrity of the process so valid concerns of age-inappropriate material can be the focus.



ACCOUNTABILITY, PROTECTING TAXPAYER DOLLARS & AFFORDABILITY

2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

OVERVIEW

Floridians deserve transparency and accountability from all levels of government and should be able to trust that their tax dollars are being invested appropriately. Unlike the federal government, we've prioritized putting money back in the pockets of hard-working Floridians to address inflation and tackle the affordability crisis.

- Increased accountability of homeowners' associations (HOA) by setting educational standards for community association managers, clarifying standards for HOA Boards of Directors, and limiting HOAs from issuing unreasonable fines, among other regulatory measures.
- Dissolved inactive special districts that no longer serve a purpose and updated regulatory measures to ensure active special districts are efficient, transparent, and accountable to those they serve.
- Addressed runaway inflation and housing affordability by proposing a constitutional amendment to annually increase the homestead exemption on non-school taxes based on inflation.
- Called for a constitutional convention to propose federal constitutional amendments to impose term limits on members of Congress, to require a balanced federal budget in the absence of a national emergency, to prohibit Congress from excluding its members from any law it passes, and to give the President line-item veto authority for spending provisions.



DIG DEEPER

HB 1203

HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATIONS

by Reps. Esposito, Anderson, & Porras

Page 39

HB 7011

INACTIVE SPECIAL DISTRICTS

by Rep. Persons-Mulicka

Page 116

HB 7013

SPECIAL DISTRICTS

by Rep. Persons-Mulicka

Page 117

HJR 7017 & HB 7019

HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION

by Rep. Buchanan

Page 127

HCR 693

CONGRESSIONAL TERM LIMITS

by Reps. Borrero and Gregory

Page 110

HCR 703

BALANCED FEDERAL BUDGET

by Reps. Sirois and Gregory

Page 111

HCR 7055

EQUAL APPLICATION OF THE LAW

by Reps. Alvarez

Page 118

HCR 7057

LINE-ITEM VETO

by Reps. Alvarez

Page 119

RAPID RESPONSE

- **Why we're not worried about a runaway constitutional convention:** Our concurrent resolutions are revoked and withdrawn if they are used for the purpose of calling a convention, or used in support of conducting a convention, with any agenda other than what is specifically stated in the resolutions.



HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

OVERVIEW

This Session, the Legislature addressed Florida’s need to grow its healthcare workforce. We passed legislation to expand access, incentivize innovation, reduce regulatory hurdles, and increase price transparency.

- Maximized the effectiveness of benefit programs with a focus on addressing benefit cliffs to promote economic self-sufficiency and provide families with a hand up, not a handout.
- Passed legislation to grow Florida’s healthcare workforce, expand access to care, and incentivize innovation.
- Prioritized mental health by:
 - Improving the Baker and Marchman Acts to create personalized health care plans for discharged patients, streamlining processes for involuntary assessments and treatments, and giving more discretion to psychiatric nurses and officers for patients under their care.
 - Designating four behavioral health teaching hospitals linked to universities and authorizing AHCA to designate additional behavioral health teaching hospitals.

DIG DEEPER

HB 1267 ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY

by Rep. Anderson
Page 71

SB 7016 HEALTH CARE

by Rep. Grant
Page 75

HB 7021 MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

by Rep. Maney
Page 76

HB 7089 HEALTH CARE EXPENSES

by Rep. Grant
Page 78

RAPID RESPONSE

- **Why we didn’t expand Medicaid:** The vast majority of the Medicaid expansion population are non-disabled, childless adults of working age. Instead of using your money to pay for their health insurance, in Florida, we’ve invested more in the true safety net for people who have no way to get health care on their own, such as the elderly, the disabled, and children in poverty.
- **How we improved access to care:** As of September 30, 2023, it would take 1,803 primary care physicians, 1,317 dentists, and 587 psychiatrists to eliminate the healthcare professional shortage areas identified across our state. The Legislature addressed that need by expanding graduate medical education, expanding loan repayment programs for nurses and dental practitioners if they work in high-need areas, reducing barriers for foreign-trained physicians to become licensed in the state of Florida, funding the Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) grant program, and increasing the availability of clinical opportunities, including those in rural and underserved communities.



DISASTER RECOVERY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

OVERVIEW

This Session, the Legislature made significant investments in critical infrastructure to ensure a secure and safe water supply and to protect our state's natural resources, including the Everglades and our beaches, rivers, lakes, and springs. The Legislature dedicated proceeds from the Seminole Gaming Compact to expand and protect the Florida Wildlife Corridor, ensure our conservation lands are well managed, and invest in clean water infrastructure. We supported Floridians who were affected by recent hurricanes and encouraged mitigation efforts to ensure Florida and its citizens are well prepared for future catastrophic events.

- Dedicated proceeds generated from the Seminole Compact to annually fund programs to conserve and protect Florida's natural resources.
- Created the My Safe Florida Condominium Pilot Program within the Department of Financial Services to provide hurricane mitigation inspections and hurricane mitigation grants to eligible condominium associations.
- Assisted Floridians by revising the inspection and grant application process and the eligibility criteria for inspections under the My Safe Florida Home Program.

DIG DEEPER

SB 1638 FUNDING FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

by Rep. Buchanan
Page 83

HB 1029 MY SAFE FLORIDA CONDOMINIUM PILOT PROGRAM

by Rep. V. Lopez
Page 37

SB 7028 MY SAFE FLORIDA HOME PROGRAM

by Rep. LaMarca
Page 43

RAPID RESPONSE

- **Why we committed gaming revenue to the preservation of Florida's wildlife and natural resources:** The Legislature made a generational commitment to protect our environment with proceeds from the Seminole Gaming Compact. By preserving the Florida Wildlife Corridor and investing in land management, we safeguard the habitats of native plant and animal species. By dedicating funds for water quality improvement, we ensure Floridians continue to have abundant supplies of safe water. This investment preserves Florida's natural beauty for the enjoyment of generations to come.
- **How we prepared Florida for the next catastrophic event:** To ensure we have the financial stability to support future hurricane and natural disaster recovery efforts, we retired \$500 million of state debt early and maintained planned reserves totaling \$10 billion. We encouraged hurricane mitigation efforts by expanding the My Safe Florida Home Program and establishing the My Safe Florida Condominium Pilot Program.



CRIME & PUBLIC SAFETY

2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

OVERVIEW

Ensuring public safety is one of the most important roles of government. To keep our communities safe, we provided law enforcement with the tools they need and increased penalties against individuals who commit certain crimes.

- Reclassified felony offenses to the next higher level in cases when a person has been previously convicted of a crime relating to unlawful reentry to the United States and that person commits a felony offense after the federal conviction.
- Reaffirmed Florida as a law and order state and protected all Floridians and businesses by targeting organized retail theft and helping to prevent porch piracy by enhancing penalties.
- Reformed the juvenile justice system and improved public safety by enabling law enforcement and the juvenile justice system to hold juveniles charged with the illegal use or possession of a firearm accountable.
- Created a HALO of protection around first responders by establishing penalties for those who threaten, harass, or impede their ability to perform their duty under certain conditions.
- Addressed homelessness by allowing counties and municipalities to designate property for those currently living without housing and allowing people and businesses to sue the county or municipality for failing to abide by the law.



DIG DEEPER

HB 549 THEFT

by Rep. Rommel
Page 95

HB 1181 JUVENILE JUSTICE

by Rep. Jacques
Page 102

SB 184 IMPEDING, THREATENING, OR HARASSING FIRST RESPONDERS

by Rep. Rizo
Page 91

HB 1365 UNAUTHORIZED PUBLIC CAMPING AND PUBLIC SLEEPING

by Rep. Garrison
Page 72

SB 1036 RECLASSIFICATION OF CRIMINAL PENALTIES

by Rep. Michael & Jacques
Page 100

RAPID RESPONSE

- **Why we are addressing illegal immigration and not leaving it up to the federal government:** Washington's lax enforcement of immigration policies allows illegal immigrants to stream across our border. Floridians should not have to fear being the victim of a crime committed by an illegal immigrant who has already been deported from the United States for unlawful reentry. In Florida, we refuse to stand idly by while Washington, D.C., neglects its responsibility to protect our citizens.



PROPERTY INSURANCE REFORM

2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MARKET FACTORS



- **WEATHER:** Three major hurricanes from 2017 to 2022.
- **INFLATION:** Since President Biden took office, inflation has increased by 20.7% — impacting hurricane repair costs, both in materials and labor.
- **HOME VALUES:** An 80% increase in the value of the average Florida home over the past five years resulted in higher premiums to cover that same home.
- **LITIGATION:** In 2021, prior to recent reforms, Florida represented approximately 7% of overall claims nationwide but accounted for 76% of property insurance lawsuits.

LEGISLATIVE REFORMS



TORT REFORM (2022-23)

WHAT WE DID: Eliminated one-way attorney fees, Assignment of Benefits (AOB), and enacted bad faith reform to reduce lawsuits.

HOW THE MARKET RESPONDED: The percentage of nationwide homeowners' lawsuits opened in Florida dropped from 76% in 2021 (79% in 2020) to under 71% in 2022 — *the lowest level since 2017*.



REINSURANCE (2022-23)

WHAT WE DID: Florida boosted reinsurance capital through the Reinsurance to Assist Policyholders (RAP) program and the Florida Optional Reinsurance Assistance Program (FORA).

HOW THE MARKET RESPONDED: In 2023, Florida insurers increased reinsurance purchases by 11% from the previous year.

Risk-adjusted reinsurance costs rose by only half of what was expected in 2022. The Florida Office of Insurance Regulation expects further improvement.



CLAIM MEDIATION (2022)

WHAT WE DID: We authorized an insurer to require binding arbitration with the insured under certain conditions.

HOW THE MARKET RESPONDED: We expect to see a reduction in litigation and increase in settlements.



MY SAFE FLORIDA HOME (2022-24)

WHAT WE DID:

- **2022-23:** \$433.5 million invested into the My Safe Florida Home program.
- **2024:** My Safe Florida Home program funding increased by \$200 million to help Floridians harden their homes — prioritizing low-income families and seniors.
- **2024:** \$30 million invested to create My Safe Florida Condominium Pilot Program which offers mitigation grants to condominium associations for hardening improvements to coastal areas.
 - These programs: (1) increase hurricane and wind-storm resiliency, statewide, and (2) increase the number of homes that qualify for insurance discounts.

HOW FLORIDIANS BENEFITED:

70% of Floridians using the My Safe Florida Home Program have seen a rate stabilization or decrease. Homeowners who have completed recommended improvements and received grants report an average savings of over \$1000 a year. The Natural Hazard Mitigation Saves Report shows every \$1 invested in home hardening saves \$11 in recovery costs.

ADDITIONAL REFORMS (2024)

- **Allow** select surplus line insurers to cover Citizens Property Insurance Corporation policies for second homes, reducing Citizens' liability exposure.
- **Eliminate** the requirement for for Citizens policyholders to purchase contents insurance as part of their required flood coverage.
- **Immediate tax-relief** estimated to save Florida policyholders \$501.8 million.

RESULTS SEEN



- **NEW COMPANIES ENTERING THE STATE:** Seven new companies are coming into Florida bringing \$1.25 billion in new capital.
- **CITIZENS DEPOPULATION:** The Florida Office of Insurance Regulation is seeing greater participation in the Citizens' Depopulation Program by insurance carriers — decreasing Citizens' total policy count for the first time in several years (1.2 million last year, down from 1.4 million in 2022).
- **REINSURANCE RATE INCREASES SLOWING** After recent reforms, the Florida Office of Insurance Regulation says this rate slowed to only 27% in 2023.



SUPPORTING MILITARY & VETERANS

2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

OVERVIEW

Florida is the most military-friendly state in the nation.

- Affirmed our commitment to servicemembers by removing unnecessary barriers to graduate programs.
- Provided service, support, and benefit eligibility for residency at state veterans' homes to a spouse or surviving spouse of a veteran.
- Prioritized veterans' needs by providing enhanced support for veterans and their families and recognizing the historical significance of their service throughout history.
- Provided financial assistance for postsecondary educational opportunities to qualifying Florida National Guard servicemembers.



DIG DEEPER

SB 494 GRADUATE PROGRAM ADMISSIONS

by Rep. Holcomb

Page 47

HB 725 VETERANS' LONG- TERM CARE FACILITIES ADMISSIONS

by Rep. Woodson & Snyder

Page 69

HB 1329 VETERANS

by Rep. Redondo & Alvarez

Page 113

HB 5001 (INFRASTRUCTURE & TOURISM)

Page 138

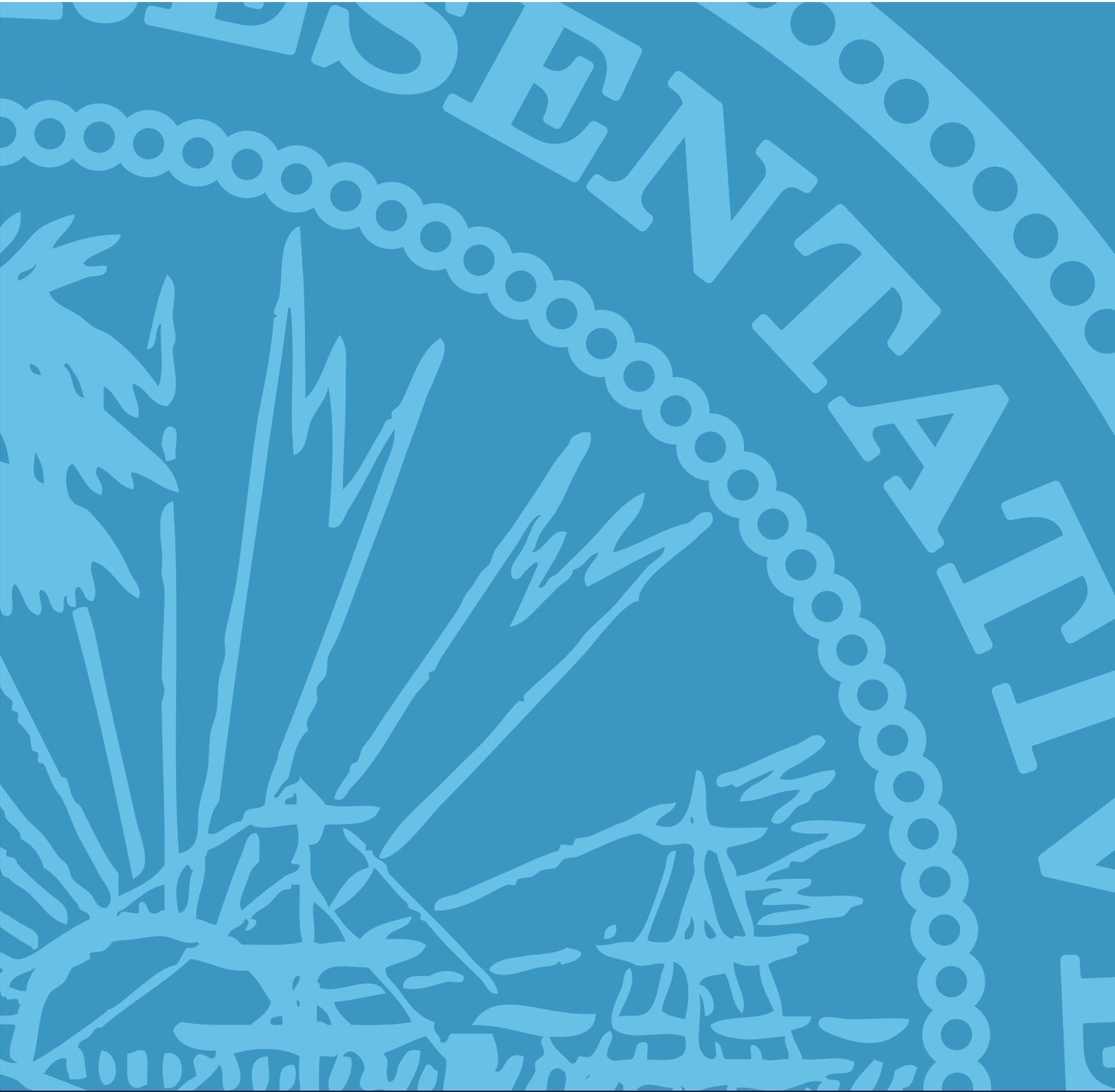
FLORIDA HOUSE *of* REPRESENTATIVES

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

2024

COMMERCE





HB 3

**PROTECTING CHILDREN.
OUR FUTURE.**



HB 3

ONLINE PROTECTIONS FOR MINORS

BY REPRESENTATIVES SIROIS, MCFARLAND, RAYNER, TRAMONT, OVERDORF & SEN. GRALL



Speaker Renner Priority to Protect Florida's Children from Online Dangers Signed into Law

Legislation targets the addictive features social media companies use to prop up their businesses and protects children from accessing pornography online

“The internet has become a dark alley for our children where predators target them and dangerous social media leads to higher rates of depression, self-harm, and even suicide ... I am proud of the work of all our bill sponsors, Representatives Tyler Sirois, Fiona McFarland, Michele Rayner, Chase Tramont, and Toby Overdorf for delivering a legislative framework that prioritizes keeping our children safe. Thanks to Governor DeSantis' signature, Florida leads the way in protecting children online as states across the country fight to address these dangers.”

PAUL RENNER

SPEAKER, FLORIDA HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES

“Social media harms children in a variety of ways ... HB 3 gives parents a greater ability to protect their children. Thank you to Speaker Renner for delivering this landmark legislation.”

RON DESANTIS

GOVERNOR of FLORIDA

Florida Can Lead Where Others Failed.

The science is clear. Use of social media's addictive platforms results in negative body image issues, higher rates of depression, and suicidal and self-harm ideation – and they know it.

FLORIDIANS SUPPORT ONLINE PROTECTIONS FOR CHILDREN

69% Among Parents SUPPORT
(51% STRONGLY SUPPORT)

Bi-Partisan Support

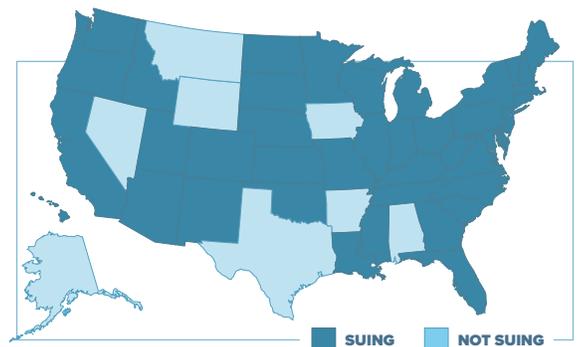
- 79% Republicans
- 64% Independents
- 57% Democrats

90% of parents agree that kids spend too much time on social media

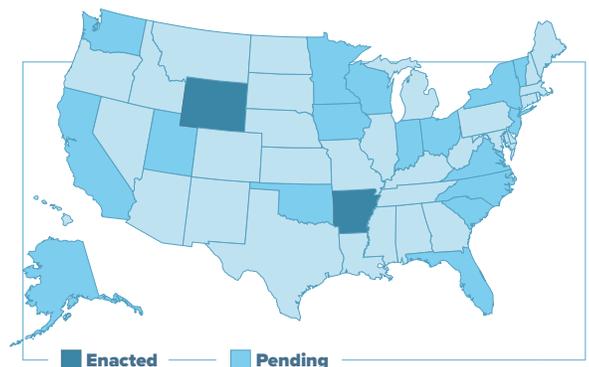
—CYGNAL POLLING OF FLORIDA VOTERS

42 States currently suing META

for deliberately engineering its social media platforms Instagram and Facebook to be addictive to children and teens



States with legislation regarding the effects of social media



Why Florida's HB 3 will succeed

- ▶ Targets addictive methods used by social media, not content.
- ▶ Prohibits accounts for all children under 14 years of age
- ▶ Parental opt-in for children 14 and 15 years of age.

It's the Algorithms.

On one platform alone, test accounts were created for 13 year old users. Here's what the algorithm recommended:



within **2.6 minutes** suicide/self harm content

within **8 minutes** eating disorder content

—CENTER FOR COUNTERING DIGITAL HATE

Investigations have found that large networks of social media accounts, *purportedly operated by minors*, are openly advertising self generated child sexual abuse material for sale.

The platforms then analyze user behaviors and content consumption to *suggest related content and accounts to follow...and to connect buyers and sellers.*

—STANFORD POLICY CENTER

“Social media use can legitimately rewire the brains of children as young as 12 years old. Adolescents who engaged in habitual checking behaviors have a different brain development pattern in areas related to emotions, motivation, and cognitive control.”

—JAMA PEDIATRICS, JANUARY 3, 2023

What does HB 3 do?

Under HB 3 social media companies must remove children under the age of 14. Only social media platforms that meet all four of the following conditions must ensure minors under 14 are not permitted:

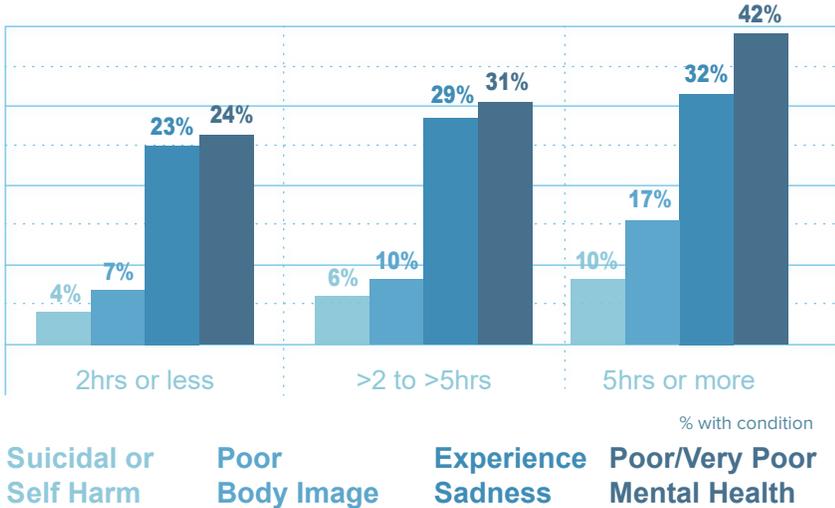
1. Ten percent of daily active users are children under 16 who use the platform for two hours or more a day (*which corresponds to mental health harms*);
2. The platform employs addictive design features;
3. The platform uses an algorithm that gathers personal information about each child and delivers ever-changing content to keep them on the platform for as long as possible; and,
4. The platform allows users to upload content and view the activity of other users.

Damage Done

Majority of teens are on social media for a daily average of

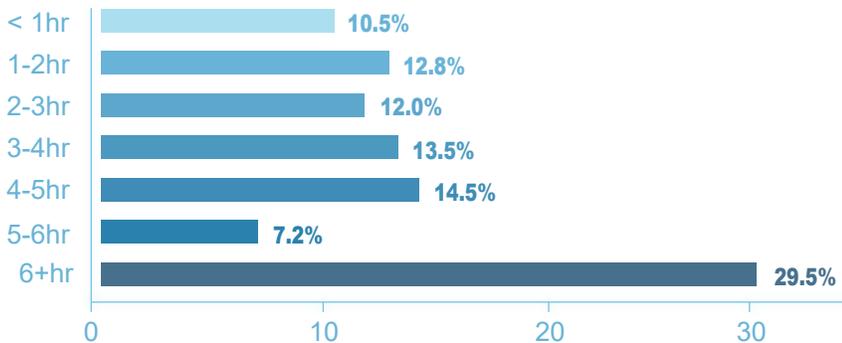
4h 48m

Adolescent Mental Health Issues by Screen Time Use



—INSTITUTE FOR FAMILY STUDIES/GALLUP

Daily Social Media Usage Among U.S. Teens



—INSTITUTE FOR FAMILY STUDIES/GALLUP

17% of teen girls said that eating disorders worsened after using Instagram.

—MAYO CLINIC

32% of teen girls said that they felt bad about their bodies after using Instagram.

—MAYO CLINIC

NEARLY 2 in 3 adolescents are 'often' or 'sometimes' exposed to hate-based content on social media.

—THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION

54% of teens say it would be difficult to give up social media.

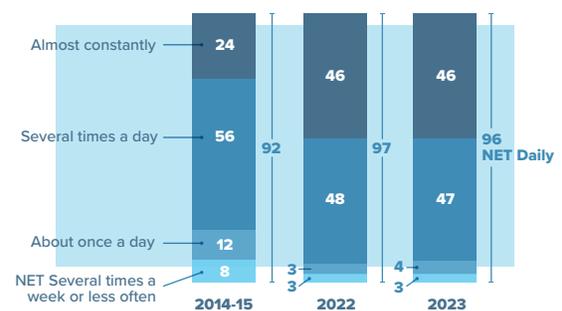
—PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Screen addiction keeps teens from family, friends, neighbors, and other community figures; it supplants team sports, exercise, good sleeping habits, life outdoors, and time for public service. Social media floods teens with dispiriting content that erodes their appreciation for their common inheritance and promotes the most toxic forms of social engagement with peers. The question for lawmakers is what must be done?"

—INSTITUTE FOR FAMILY STUDIES

The share of teens who say they are online 'almost constantly' has roughly doubled since 2014-2015

% of U.S. teens ages 13 to 17 who say they use the internet



—PEW RESEARCH CENTER



FLORIDA HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES

SOCIAL MEDIA CAN HARM KIDS FLORIDA MUST ACT TO BREAK ITS GRIP ON CHILDREN

Before drug manufacturers can sell prescription drugs, they must undergo stringent testing to ensure safety, including the risk of addiction. Shamefully, the architects of social media purposely designed their platforms to be addictive, like a drug. As a result, social media dominates our culture and permeates the lives of our children.

In the chilling documentary *The Social Dilemma*, social media's architects share regret about their role in its design and warn of its threats to society. They describe how the platforms deploy addictive algorithms and dopamine-releasing features like infinite scrolling and notifications to keep children hooked. Those addictive features lure children toward the platforms, endlessly seeking the next dopamine hit.

After what amounts to a decades-long social experiment, we know that social media use correlates with increasing mental health challenges among children. Children who use social media three hours a day are twice as likely to suffer depression. Overall, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that 57% of high school girls experienced persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness in the previous year; 41% experienced poor mental health in the last 30 days, and nearly one out of every three girls seriously considered suicide the previous year. If you don't have time to read a study, just ask any parent of teenagers.

The Wall Street Journal's extensive investigations uncovered internal documents revealing that Meta knew, "We make body image issues worse for one in three teen girls...Teens told us they don't like the amount of time they spend on the app, but they feel they have to be present."

Despite acknowledging that their products were toxic to the mental health of young users, they ignored complaints and shut down criticism to maintain their profits.

Meta conceded that "[i]f we lose the teen foothold in the U.S., we lose the pipeline." In 2021 alone, they spent \$390 million recruiting 13 to 15-year-olds. Social media companies stand to earn hundreds of billions in profits if they get our children hooked early, knowing they will become lifetime users.

Since children's brains and judgment are not fully developed, parents and the public have agreed on setting minimum age requirements in a wide variety of areas: cigarettes, alcohol, gambling, driving, voting, working and marriage, among

others. Similarly, there is a compelling public interest in restricting access to social media platforms for children under 16. This session, we have proposed House Bill 1 as a necessary step to protect our children from the harms of these addictive platforms.

Unlike other states that focused on monitoring content, HB 1 narrowly prohibits access to those platforms that deploy addictive technology, which, in turn, harms children's emotional and mental health. If passed, the law would require these platforms to use a third-party, commercially reasonable, age-verification process. Third-party verifiers could not share any information outside the verification process and would be required to delete all information upon completion.

In Florida, we already see positive results from helping children reconnect to the world in front of them. Last year, we passed legislation that prevents K-12 students from using their cell phones during classroom time. Just six months since the bill's implementation, teachers and administrators say that students are more engaged, socializing and interacting with their peers, and disciplinary incidents are down.

Social media companies know that their platforms harm children. Nevertheless, their business model depends on monetizing those children, so we expect them to lobby and lawyer up to oppose our reforms. In the meantime, millions of American children will continue to suffer irreparable harm, losing their sense of purpose and self-worth.

HB1 will protect children, give them back their childhood, and prevent this from happening to another generation. It will be a fight, but it's a fight we intend to win.

—**PAUL RENNER**

SPEAKER, FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Miami Herald, January 22, 2024

**The content of the article above refers to a previous version of the legislation.*

Supporting Parents

“As we’ve seen in numerous reports over the years — exposure to screen time and social media platforms has a direct correlation to mental health issues. As the country’s leading advocates in school safety — anything we can support that will help alleviate a constant strain on mental health will benefit future generations.”

—TONY MONTALTO
STAND WITH PARKLAND PRESIDENT

A Connection

Three of the most challenging issues teens face according to adults —AMERICAN FAMILY SURVEY

40% MENTAL HEALTH, INCLUDING THOUGHTS OF SUICIDE

39% OVERUSE OF TECHNOLOGY

29% BULLYING

“Florida has led the nation in promoting the primary right of moms and dads to determine who and what influences their children. On parental rights, we take a back seat to no one.” —PAUL RENNER
SPEAKER, FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

▶ At what age do [parents] think it is appropriate for a child to have an account on:

SNAPCHAT: 16 YRS. + **63%**

INSTAGRAM: 16 YRS. + **61%**

TIKTOK: 16 YRS. + **66%**

FACEBOOK: 16 YRS. + **57%**

—YOUNGOV 2023 SURVEY

Support for government regulations that require social media companies to enforce age restrictions

69% SUPPORT **24%** NEITHER **8%** OPPOSE

—AMERICAN FAMILY SURVEY



FLORIDA HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES

WE TRUST PARENTS, NOT SOCIAL MEDIA GIANTS

Congress recently held a hearing on the negative effects of social media on children. In a dramatic moment, Meta's Mark Zuckerberg was compelled to apologize to dozens of parents whose children took their own lives because of social media. Even with engaged parents, those children were unable to handle social media's constant threats or break free from the addictive platforms.

Nevertheless, Zuckerberg denied any connection between platforms and the dramatic spike in depression, self-harm, and suicide among children. With grieving parents seated behind him, he brushed off the research and insisted that restricting children from accessing these addictive platforms constitutes an infringement of parents' rights. But the complete opposite is true.

Florida's social media legislation is the most important measure we can take to empower parents and save children from irreparable harm. The proposed legislation sets an age requirement for children under 16 to access social media platforms that meet all four of the following conditions:

- A significant number of children under 16 use the platform for two hours or more a day (*which corresponds to mental health harms*);
- The platform employs addictive design features;
- The platform uses an algorithm that gathers personal information about each child and delivers ever-changing content to keep them on the platform as long as possible; and
- The platform allows users to upload content and view the activity of other users.

If those platforms remove the addictive design features or the personalized algorithm, children could once again access the platforms.

Florida has led the nation in promoting the primary right of moms and dads to determine who and what influences their children. On parental rights, we take a back seat to no one.

Yet, everyone agrees that certain activities should be off limits for children. When it comes to drinking, smoking, or getting behind the wheel of a car, we have drawn bright line age restrictions to keep children safe. Common justifications for these regulations include: using addictive qualities or features, potentially significant physical and mental harm, hindering children's brain development and practical challenges for parents to supervise the child's activity 24/7. Any one of these justifications support age restrictions on social media platforms.

Social media was designed to be addictive. Design features intended to deliver little hits of dopamine make us want to get

on the platforms and stay on. Children are especially vulnerable and do not have the ability to self-regulate. Whether it's smoking, drinking, or other potentially addictive activities, society routinely sets age limits.

Social media's potential harm to children's mental health and safety is significant. Studies have shown that the longer children spend on social media platforms the more likely they are to experience feelings of depression, self-harm, and even thoughts of suicide. While an adult could recognize this and step away, a child's brain is still developing and can't recognize the problem or solution as easily.

Our state's sheriffs and prosecutors have endorsed our legislation. They detail how these platforms attract and empower pedophiles, enable criminal acts against children, such as human trafficking, and facilitate criminal activity by some juveniles against others.

A child's brain is still developing. We don't let children get behind the wheel of a car because they lack the judgment to make smart decisions on the road like speeding up or slowing down when the light turns yellow. In the same way, a child has less perception that their time spent on social media is proving addictive or harmful.

Social media companies have rendered parental oversight impractical. Big Tech and their allies are promoting the false promise of a parental opt-in, knowing once a child is on the platforms, parents are robbed of any real supervision. A parent can never realistically give consent without sitting and watching their child's social media use in real time.

Think of the difference between algorithm-driven social media and more static forms of entertainment, like movies. Parents can preview a movie and decide whether it is appropriate. Social media platforms that use personalized algorithms do not give parents that same opportunity. These algorithms are dynamic and always changing, manipulating what a child views, constantly one step ahead of parents for the platform's own ends.

The case for bright line age limits on social media accounts is compelling. We will not allow social media companies to replace the role of parents. Freeing children from these platforms reestablishes the right of parents to raise their children as they see fit.

—**PAUL RENNER**

SPEAKER, FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Orlando Sentinel, February 19, 2024

**The content of the article above refers to a previous version of the legislation.*

Views Change.

After leaders of social media admitted internal research showed platforms were harming children, reality and the need to act become obvious to all.

U.S. SENATE HEARING ON THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

JANUARY 26

JANUARY 31

FEBRUARY 01

WHOOPI GOLDBERG



“The government should not be the one who makes that decision.”

“We need better laws.”

SARA HAINES



“Social media is a problem, and as a parent, I’m concerned, but that is not the government’s [role].”

“I agree bills need to be passed. A lot of them are so reasonable: age verification, making sure they’re not marketing the algorithm to our young kids. These are very simple fixes.”

SUNNY HOSTIN



“[HB 1 is] actually kind of a good idea, but not in the way they’re implementing it. If you’re a parent, you already monitor your kids’ social media.”

“I don’t think people should be allowed to have social media accounts until they’re 18. You can’t vote until you’re 18. You can’t drink until you’re 21 ... Social media is such a danger to the mental health of our children ... I’m raising a teenager; it’s really hard to monitor them.”

JOY BEHAR



“Why can’t they put it on a ballot like a proposition and ask the parents?”

“It reminds me of the tobacco industry a little bit that also knew the harm that they were doing to people but didn’t say anything until they got called out.”

6 DAYS IS AS LITTLE AS IT TAKES



FLORIDA HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES

HERE'S HOW FLORIDA IS PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM HARMFUL AND ADDICTIVE SOCIAL MEDIA

Everyone knows someone whose child has been hurt by social media. I've heard too many stories to count.

The daughter of one friend became suicidal because of what she experienced on a popular platform. The daughters of two different friends cut themselves after spending too much time on social media.

So many parents have watched their daughters and sons spiral downward while racking up more posts and likes.

As parents of two young children, my wife and I are already worried about what will happen if they're exposed to social media. It's no exaggeration to say we're afraid for their futures – and even their lives.

It's time to keep children safe. That's why Florida is moving to protect kids from the most harmful and addictive social media platforms.

This week, the Florida House and Senate will overwhelmingly pass bipartisan legislation to that effect. We are narrowly targeting social media platforms that promote addiction, while ensuring that children can still access the countless educational, entertainment, and productive tools found online.

Kids deserve the many opportunities that the internet offers. They also deserve protection from the worst the internet has to offer.

Under our legislation, children who are younger than 16 years old cannot create accounts on social media platforms that target them in concerning ways. That includes the use of individualized algorithms, which are designed to keep kids glued to the screen as long as possible, as well as deliberately addictive features like infinite scrolling and video auto-play.

The bill is also limited to platforms on which at least 10% of young users spend two or more hours a day – a threshold that studies show threatens kids' mental health. Many kids spend far more time on social media, and when teens reach three hours a day, they're twice as likely to struggle with depression.

The kids who are already struggling with mental health challenges get hurt the most. Algorithms and addictive features feed them an endless supply of content on the very things they should avoid, from self-harm to suicide.

Young girls are especially vulnerable, and as social media has taken off, their well-being has plummeted. We live in a time when 57% of high-school girls report persistent hopelessness or loneliness and 41% report monthly mental-health challenges.

Worst of all, a stunning 30% of high-school girls have contemplated suicide in the last year. This is a crisis – a crisis that's made worse by harmful social media.

Social media didn't have to take this road, and under our legislation, kids will still be allowed on platforms that do the right thing. They simply have to get rid of the kid-targeting algorithms and addictive features.

The companies may say that's not in their financial interest, but protecting the mental development of children is far more important than the corporate bottom line. Cigarette companies, brewers, distillers, and strip clubs would also make more money if they could target kids. But that's illegal, as it should be.

Some have asked me why we don't leave these decisions in parents' hands. My response is simple: We're strengthening parental rights.

Social media companies have designed their algorithms and features to outsmart children and parents alike. A child's primary influence should be his or her parent, not an algorithm designed by strangers, and similar laws are designed to support parents in the difficult work of raising kids.

When the law bans children from drinking alcohol, it gives parents more room to help them develop and find a path to a fulfilling life. Protecting kids from harmful social media is exactly the same.

The past two decades have been one big experiment on how social media affects America's children. The results are in – and they're awful to behold.

Companies are deliberately getting kids addicted to something that hurts them in profound ways. More children are suffering than ever before, pushed into depression, self-harm, and even taking their lives.

Florida will no longer let this experiment continue. Our children are too important to sacrifice to social media gone wrong.

–**PAUL RENNER**

SPEAKER, FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FoxNews.com, February 22, 2024

**The content of the article above refers to a previous version of the legislation.*

In the News



SPEAKER
PAUL RENNER

“We must address the harmful effects social media platforms have on the development and well-being of our kids. Florida has a compelling state interest and duty to protect our children, their mental health, and their childhood. I’m grateful to the members of this body for their decisive action to fight for our kids and their ability to thrive.”



SENATOR GRALL
SENATOR ERIN GRALL

“This isn’t about parental rights, because we don’t allow parents to harm their children. This bill goes a long way to be as narrowly tailored as possible to make it through that constitutional analysis.”



REPRESENTATIVE
TYLER SIROIS

“You don’t have to be a parent of a young person to understand the addictive nature of social media platforms. Even our children know social media is harming them, but due to addiction and peer pressure, they are unable to step away.”



REPRESENTATIVE
FIONA McFARLAND

“Social media platforms are addictive by design. Combine that with intense social pressures, bullying, and harassment, and it’s no wonder our kids’ mental health is declining. This bill puts an end to that, because social media companies have not.”



REPRESENTATIVE
MICHELE RAYNER

“This is a generational bill that will save lives. In this moment, the state of Florida is taking a bipartisan stand and saying that we will not allow social media companies to build their businesses on the backs of our children. We have no choice but to act.”



ATTORNEY GENERAL
ASHLEY MOODY

“Our children are being exposed to inappropriate material. They’re being addicted online. We have to do something to stand up for our kids. I’m proud of the state of Florida who is exploring ways to do that.”



FLORIDA HOUSE *of* REPRESENTATIVES

HERE'S WHY WE SPONSORED THE FLORIDA BILL TO BAN MOST SOCIAL MEDIA FOR KIDS UNDER 16

Studies from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Federation of Teachers, Pew Research, and the U.S. Surgeon General have warned us that social media use among young people is linked to increased anxiety, clinical depression, negative body image perception, and even increased thoughts of suicide. The addictive features of these platforms, like infinite scrolling and push notifications, are designed to keep people compulsively focused, so the platforms can act like a drug to children's still-developing brains.

Internal documents from social media companies have revealed that they know about the harmful effects on our kids, yet to keep making more profits, they continue to keep kids addicted. Social media platforms target kids similarly to how Big Tobacco did with their harmful, addictive products. And our kids deserve similar legal protections. That is why we have sponsored House Bill 1: to protect Florida's youth by banning these addictive social media platforms for children under the age of 16.

Everyone agrees that children should not be permitted to join a gambling website or purchase alcohol. It should be no different when people go on addictive social media platforms. It should be no different than going on a gambling website that requires age verification, walking onto a casino floor, walking into a liquor store, purchasing tobacco or getting a marriage license, all of which require ID.

Study after study has demonstrated the clear harm these sites pose to our young people. When it comes to areas that threaten the development of our children, like tobacco, alcohol, driving a motor vehicle, playing a slot machine, or even entering into a contract for marriage, not only does Florida have a compelling state interest in taking a stand, but it must protect our children.

Social media companies that employ the addictive, harmful or deceptive features defined in our legislation must be compelled to put our children first by mandating adoption of age verification processes that are managed by an independent, nongovernmental third party that verifies the age of all prospective account holders. This process also protects account holders' private information by mandating that any documentation that may be received during the verification be deleted. These modern age-verification systems will allow

users to remain anonymous, while still providing reliable age verification.

Unlike laws in other states regulating social media, our legislation is narrowly crafted to withstand the inevitable court challenges these companies will bring forward. Meanwhile, platforms that don't employ addictive, harmful or deceptive features like infinite scrolling, push notifications, and auto-play are not affected by this legislation.

For us, it is not about restricting access to the internet at large, it is about protecting our children from the harms of social media. For the social media companies, this fight isn't about protecting your First Amendment rights or preserving the role of the parent, it's about one thing: money.

Don't take our word for it. Internal documents show these companies have acknowledged "if we lose the teen foothold in the U.S., we lose the pipeline," which is why, in 2021 alone, just one company spent \$390 million recruiting 13- to 15-year-olds.

The Florida House passed House Bill 1 with overwhelming bipartisan support. This is not a "red" issue or a "blue" issue. In Florida, we have a duty to protect our kids, and this is a fight we intend to win.

—TYLER SIROIS

REPRESENTATIVE, FLORIDA HOUSE
HB 1 Bill Sponsor

—MICHELE RAYNER

REPRESENTATIVE, FLORIDA HOUSE
HB 1 Bill Sponsor

Tampa Bay Times, February 9, 2024

**The content of the article above refers to a previous version of the legislation.*

Their Words. Our Children.

**Things social media companies know
... but don't want the public to know.**

VIA THEIR OWN DOCUMENTS AND STUDIES:

- They make body image issues worse for 1 in 3 teen girls.
- If they “lose the teen foothold in the U.S., [they] lose the pipeline.”
- Their algorithms could be amplifying negative social comparisons.
- Social comparisons are valuable to their business models while simultaneously causing harm to teen girls.
- Content inciting negative appearance comparisons is some of the most engaging content.
- Recommendation algorithms trigger intermittent dopamine releases in young users.
- They optimize for “retention” and “time spent”...they want users on as long as possible.
- Platform algorithms are built to quickly detect users' musical taste, physical attractions, emotional state, potential drug interest, and more.
- Some of the largest platforms have NO idea where all user data goes, or what they are doing with it.

“My heart is completely shattered ... I post this now only so that not one more kid dies. We watched him so closely. Straight A student. Getting ready for college. Experimentation gone bad. He got the drugs delivered to the house.”

— **THERAPIST DR. LAURA BERMAN**, mother of 16 year old Samuel who died after he bought illicit drugs on Snapchat

“This is not going to stop, and more kids are gonna die and more kids are gonna get hurt ... The longer this takes, the worse it’s going to be. The numbers are going to keep growing because this is an ongoing problem.”

— **NEVEEN RADWAN**, mother of 16 year old Mariam who died from severe anorexia after watching pro-eating disorder content on TikTok and Facebook

“It was a hard thing because I found these videos on Snapchat shortly after he had passed away.”

— **JENNIFER MITCHELL**, mother of 16 year old Ian who shot himself after watching Snapchat videos

“I had no idea that it could get to that. I would have never let her have it in the beginning. These are all things that are all hidden in the background. That, you know, it seems like these big tech companies, they know exactly how to make it work for them. And the parents don't know what's going on.”

— **TAMMY RODRIGUEZ**, mother of 11 year old Selena who died by suicide after an extreme social media addiction led to sexual exploitation by online predators on Snapchat and Instagram



HB 3

REPRESENTATIVES
**SIROIS, McFARLAND,
RAYNER, TRAMONT
& OVERDORF**

ONLINE PROTECTIONS FOR MINORS



Kids face daily threats to their mental health while using social media which even the most involved parents struggle to confront. Children have always faced bullies, but social media platforms have changed the game by becoming the bully through the use of deceptive and addictive designs that cause unprecedented damage to our children’s mental health.

This cannot be the fate of our children. HB 3 is a bold step to rescue our children from addictive technology that cripples their sense of self-worth and purpose.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Here’s the truth — the social media companies have known this for years and continued to do it anyway. They also know they designed social media to be as addictive as possible. Before social media, bullies barely made a dent in our children’s mental health because once our children were home safely we could protect them. The rise of social media has brought bullies inside our homes and inside our children’s bedroom- something even scarier, and it has hollowed out what should be a childhood of happiness and big dreams to one of anxiety, depression, and addiction.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In 2023, an estimated 4.9 billion people worldwide used social media. Many experts have tied the increased use of social media in our society to the increase in rates of depression, anxiety, and stress in adolescents. Additionally, many minors are regularly exposed to pornography online.
- Recent surveys of high school girls prove social media’s devastating effects. When asked:
 - “Have you experienced persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness within the past year?”
57% answered yes.
 - “Have you experienced poor mental health during the past 30 days?”
41% answered yes.
 - “Have you seriously considered suicide within the last year?”
30% answered yes.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Protects Florida’s children from deceptive, addictive and harmful social media platforms by prohibiting those under the age of 14 from contracting to create a social media account and empowers parents with an opt-in for their 14- and 15-year-old children.
- Is narrowly focused on the addictive features some social media platforms employ to target children which cause significant irreparable harm.

[CONTINUED NEXT PAGE →](#)

HB 3

REPRESENTATIVES
**SIROIS, McFARLAND,
RAYNER, TRAMONT
& OVERDORF**

ONLINE PROTECTIONS FOR MINORS



BILL BASICS CONTINUED...

- Uses a narrow four-prong test to focus on platforms where:
 - Ten percent of daily active users are children under the age of 16 who use the platform for two hours or more a day (which corresponds to mental health harms);
 - The platform employs addictive design features;
 - The platform uses an algorithm that gathers personal information about each child and delivers ever-changing content to keep them on the platform for as long as possible; and
 - The platform allows users to upload content and view content posted by other users.
- Social media platforms that meet these four criteria must ensure that minors under 14 are not permitted on their platforms.
- Allows platforms to develop their own methods to ensure minors under 14 are not permitted.
 - The platforms must also adopt reasonable methods for parental opt-in for 14- and 15-year-old children.
- Requires adult websites that host content that includes material harmful to minors, like pornography, to provide anonymous third-party age verification methods to ensure that the user is 18 years of age and requires that any information gathered by such website be deleted upon verification.
- Increases subpoena powers for the attorney general to enforce the measure and outlines penalties for violations by offending social media platforms and adult websites.



HB 49 empowers youth workers by removing barriers and allowing them to voluntarily work more hours.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Removes barriers to entering the workforce.
- Removes restrictions on the hours 16- and 17-year-olds are allowed to work and the amount of days they may consecutively work.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Florida law contains protections specifically directed to 16- and 17-year-olds, including restrictions on what times during a day they may work, how many hours in a week they may work, and what jobs or occupations they may perform.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Clarifies that minors 15 years old or younger cannot work more than 15 hours in any one week when school is in session.
- Provides that minors 16- and 17-years-old:
 - May only work between 6:30 a.m. and 11 p.m. when school is scheduled the following day.
 - May not work for more than 8 hours in any one day when school is scheduled the following day, except when the day of work is on a holiday or Sunday.
 - May work for more than 30 hours per week when the minor's parent or custodian, or the school superintendent or his or her designee, waives the limitation on a form prescribed by DBPR and provided to the minor's employer.
- Provides that minors 15 years of age or younger, instead of 17 years of age or younger, may not work more than:
 - 6 consecutive days in any one week.
 - 4 hours continuously without an interval of at least 30 minutes for a meal period.
- Provides that minors 16 and 17 years of age who work for 8 hours or more in any one day may not work for more than 4 hours continuously without an interval of at least 30 minutes for a meal period.



HB 267 expedites the building permit process by shortening the time period local governments have to review building permits while maintaining the same safety standards.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Shortens building permit application timelines.
- Improves government efficiency and accountability.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Florida Building Code (Building Code) must be applied and enforced uniformly and consistently across the state. Local governments are required to enforce the Building Code and are responsible for issuing building permits.
- Current law provides standards and timeframes for local governments to follow for the issuance of building permits.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Requires a local government to approve, approve with conditions, or deny a complete and sufficient permit application within the following timeframes:
 - 30 business days for applicants using local government review for certain structures less than 7,500 square feet, previously set at 120 days.
 - 60 days for the following applicants using local government review, previously set at 120 days:
 - Certain structures more than 7,500 square feet.
 - Signs.
 - Nonresidential buildings that are less than 25,000 square feet.
 - Multifamily residential, not exceeding 50 units.
 - Site-plan approvals and subdivision plats not requiring public hearing or notice.
 - Lot grading and site alteration.
- 12 business days for applicants for a permit under an already-approved master plan permit, currently dependent on the local program, or 30 days for single-family residential dwellings.
- 10 business days for applicants for a single-family residential dwelling for a property owner who participates in a Community Development Block Grant–Disaster Recovery program, previously set at 15 days.
- 10 business days for applicants using an engineer or architect private provider who affixes his or her professional seal, previously set at 120 days.
- Requires a local government to determine if a building permit application is complete within 5 business days of receiving the application, previously set at 10 days.



HB 433 protects taxpayer dollars by preventing local governments from having unnecessary requirements for their contractors.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Keeps businesses on an equal playing field by preventing local governments from imposing additional regulations on businesses.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- On November 11, 2023, the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners considered a proposal that would require construction and agriculture companies with five or more employees to guarantee workers access to water and give them 10-minute breaks in the shade every two hours on days when the heat index equals or exceeds 95 degrees Fahrenheit. The proposal would also require employers to train workers to recognize the signs of heat illness, administer first aid, and call for help in an emergency. Enforcement includes a warning, fines of up to \$2,000 per day per violation, and debarment of contractors from county work for certain repeated violations and unpaid penalties.
- Some municipalities have required private contractors to pay above market wages, wasting taxpayer dollars.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Prohibits political subdivisions from:
 - Requiring an employer, including an employer contracting with the political subdivision, to meet or provide heat exposure requirements not otherwise required under state or federal law.
 - Giving preference, or considering or seeking information, in a competitive solicitation to an employer based on the employer's heat exposure requirements.
- Effective September 30, 2026, prohibits political subdivisions from:
 - Seeking to control or affect the wages or employment benefits provided by its vendors, contractors, service providers, or other parties doing business with it through its purchasing or contracting procedures.
 - Using evaluation factors, qualification of bidders, or otherwise awarding preferences on the basis of wages or employment benefits provided by its vendors, contractors, service providers, or other parties doing business with the political subdivision.
 - Requiring a minimum wage for certain employees under the terms of a contract.
- Prohibits local governments from adopting or enforcing any ordinance, resolution, order, rule, policy, or contract requirement regulating scheduling, including predictive scheduling, by a private employer except as expressly authorized or required by state or federal law.

SB 812

(HB 665)

REPRESENTATIVE
McCLAIN

EXPEDITED APPROVAL OF RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMITS



One of the major delays in construction is how long it can take to get a permit to build or modify a home. SB 812 requires governing bodies to create or update programs to expedite the process for issuing residential building permits for developments and preliminary plats.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Reduces government bureaucracy.
- Expedites the residential building permit process.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Typically, people or entities seeking a building permit must apply for one from their local government. Due to increasing population and continued growth, this process can take significant time as offices become backlogged.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Requires certain local governments to create a process to expedite the issuance of building permits based on a preliminary plat and to issue the number or percentage of building permits requested by an applicant, under certain circumstances.
- Provides that vested rights may be formed in a preliminary plat, under certain circumstances.
- Requires a governing body to establish a registry of at least three qualified contractors whom the governing body may use to supplement staff resources for processing and expediting the review of an application.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 89-25 SENATE 40-0 **▶ STATUS** PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS

HB 849

REPRESENTATIVES
**KILLEBREW
& BUCHANAN**

VETERINARY PRACTICES



HB 849 removes limitations on veterinarians who choose to use telehealth and expands access to telehealth services for pet owners and their pets, ensuring lower costs, increasing availability and ensuring high quality care for all pets in Florida.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Provides pet owners with options and increases access to vet care.
- Authorizes telehealth for initial appointments.
- Reduces costs by allowing vets to treat animals via telehealth for common ailments like skin allergies or flea and tick medication.
- Allows pet owners to get immediate access to care from remote or rural locations.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Telehealth, the use of electronic communications to facilitate health care, is not specifically prohibited or authorized in Florida for veterinarians.
- Vet telehealth is projected to grow 18% every year for the next 10 years.
- The University of Florida projects a shortage of 14,000 to 24,000 companion-animal veterinarians by 2030.



BILL BASICS

- Allows Florida licensed veterinarians to establish an initial relationship and care for animals via telehealth.
- Allows veterinarians the limited ability to prescribe certain medications while prohibiting more serious controlled substances.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE **113-0** SENATE **40-0** **STATUS**  **PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS**



REPRESENTATIVE
LaMARCA

HB 989 takes steps to assist Florida's Chief Financial Officer (CFO) in his various roles, including with the Department of Financial Services, Office of Financial Regulation, as State Fire Marshal, and various public and quasi-public entities that he has or will have a role with under the bill.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Creates, updates, and amends Florida law relating to financial services to better serve Floridians.
- Expands on 2023 HB 3 to increase protection for individual and business bank and credit union account holders from unwarranted account cancellations and restrictions.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The CFO is an elected member of the Cabinet, serves as the state's chief financial officer, and is designated as the State Fire Marshal and Treasurer. The CFO is the head of the Department of Financial Services (DFS) and oversees, along with others, the Office of Financial Regulation and Office of Insurance Regulation in his role on the Financial Services Commission.



BILL BASICS

- Allows complaints to be filed with the Office of Financial Regulation for certain account access restrictions, and provides for investigation of financial institutions who terminate or restrict a customer's account based on the customer's political beliefs or affiliations, religious beliefs or affiliations, business sector, any other factor that is not a quantitative, impartial, risk-based standard; or apply social credit scores. Penalties and prosecution are authorized.
- Allows credit unions to participate in the qualified public deposits program with limitations on the type and amount of public deposits held that credit unions may hold.
- Permits the CFO to appoint a Federal Tax Liaison to assist Floridians with federal tax issues.
- Increases oversight of select governmental or quasi-governmental entities by requiring DFS approval of certain contracts.
- Increases DFS efficiency and consumer protections, especially within the funeral and cemetery services industry.
- Implements a modernization and update of Florida's Disposition of Unclaimed Property Act consistent with the national model law.



REPRESENTATIVES

**LOPEZ, V. &
HUNSCHOFSKY**

Recent storms have left widespread destruction in our communities — showing the need for greater efforts to increase resiliency across the State. HB 1029 helps more Floridians inspect and harden their condos.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Helps coastal condominium associations protect their property by creating a program similar to the My Safe Florida Home Program (MSFH).
- Provides resources to condominiums to keep Floridians safe from the next storm.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The MSFH Program provides inspections of single-family residential properties to determine what mitigation measures are needed, premium discounts are available, and improvements can be made to reduce susceptibility to hurricane damage.
- Mitigation inspections are limited to homesteaded properties. Funds may be used to inspect townhouses to determine if opening protection mitigation would help decrease the risk of hurricane damage and grant funds may be used to pay for such opening protection mitigation if warranted.



BILL BASICS

- Creates the My Safe Florida Condominium Pilot Program to provide licensed inspectors to perform inspections to identify improvements that warrant insurance discounts and provide mitigation grants to eligible condominium associations to harden the buildings and increase hurricane resiliency.
- Maintains requirements similar to the MSFH Program in regards to requirements for participation, hurricane mitigation inspectors and inspections, eligibility for mitigation grants, contract management by Department of Financial Services, and required annual reports.
- Subject to appropriations and certain limitation, coastal condominiums will have access to grants up to \$175,000 to reimburse costs related to storm hardening. [The final budget included \$30 million for the pilot program.]

SB 1142

(HB 1579)

REPRESENTATIVE
MOONEY

OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING



Burdensome requirements can stifle business and negatively impact markets in Florida. SB 1142 makes it easier for contractors in Florida to obtain a state license to provide services while also maintaining a regulatory framework to ensure their work is up to building code standards and consumers are protected.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Cuts red tape for occupational licenses.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In 2021, HB 735 was enacted, relating to preempting occupational licensing to the state, and specifically preempted local licensing that is outside the scope of state contractor licensing provisions. Specifically, it provided that a county or municipality may not require a license for a person whose job scope does not substantially correspond to a statutory or specialty contractor category licensed by the Construction Industry Licensing Board (CILB).
- In 2023, HB 1383 was enacted, as a follow-up to HB 735 in 2021. The law extended the expiration date for local licensing and established new specialty license categories. Recently, some local governments have stopped performing certain local licensing functions related to specialty contractors.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Extends the expiration date for local licensing and the establishment date for new specialty license categories by DBPR to July 1, 2025.
- The bill requires the CILB to issue a registration to an eligible applicant to engage in the business of contracting in a specified local jurisdiction, provided each of the following conditions are satisfied:
 - The applicant held, in any local jurisdiction in Florida during 2021, 2022, or 2023, a certificate of registration issued by the state or a local license issued by a local jurisdiction to perform work in a statutory category of contractor licensed by the CILB.
 - The applicant submits all of the following to the CILB:
 - Evidence of the certificate of registration or local license held by the applicant.
 - Evidence that the specified local jurisdiction does not require a license for the category of work for which the applicant was issued a certification of registration or local license.
 - Evidence that the applicant has submitted the required fee.
 - Evidence of compliance with certain insurance and financial responsibility requirements.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 112-0 SENATE 40-0 **▶ STATUS** PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS



REPRESENTATIVES
**ESPOSITO, ANDERSON
& PORRAS**

Homeowners' associations (HOAs) can offer governance structure for communities and provide many cooperative services. However, bad actors can use them to bully homeowners with draconian standards if not subject to a regulatory framework.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Increases HOA accountability to benefit homeowners and curb HOA abuse.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- An HOA is an association of residential property owners in which voting membership is made up of parcel owners, membership is a mandatory condition of parcel ownership, and the association is authorized to impose assessments that, if unpaid, may become a lien on the parcel.
- HOAs may levy fines against or suspend certain access rights of a parcel owner for failing to comply with the HOA's governing documents.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Sets educational standards for community association managers and HOA directors.
- Establishes criminal penalties for HOA officers, directors, or managers that accept kickbacks or commit certain election related crimes, such as voting fraud.
- Makes certain acts related to fraudulent HOA voting a first-degree misdemeanor.
- Prevents homeowners from installing, displaying, or storing certain items if they are visible from an adjacent common area or community golf course.
- Allows a homeowner to make a written request for a detailed accounting of any amounts owed to the HOA, and the HOA must provide such information or else the board forfeits any outstanding fine under certain circumstances. Requires an HOA with 100 or more parcels to post certain official records on the HOA's website or application by January 1, 2025.
- Prohibits an HOA or its architectural and construction improvement committee (ARC) from limiting or placing requirements on the interior of an HOA members home, for the replacement of an HVAC system, or for the installation of vegetable gardens or clotheslines, if such cannot be viewed from the front of the property, the adjacent property, the adjacent common area, or the community golf course.

SB 1526

(HB 1647)

REPRESENTATIVE
ROACH

LOCAL REGULATION OF NONCONFORMING AND UNSAFE STRUCTURES



SB 1526 establishes requirements governing the demolition and redevelopment of certain structures on the coast.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Empowers property owners and developers by restricting local government interference.
- Ensures adherence to essential regulatory standards for replacement structures.

CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Through the years, a variety of events, such as hurricanes, caused Florida to mandate and adopt a statewide Building Code and have an enhanced oversight role over local code enforcement. The most recent Building Code is from 2023.

BILL BASICS

- Preempts any potential conflicting local ordinances and safeguards owners and developers from punitive measures through a retroactive application.
- Prohibits a local government from prohibiting, restricting, or preventing, for any reason other than public safety, the demolition of any structure seaward of the coastal construction control line that is also a:
 - Nonconforming structure, which is a structure that does not conform to the base flood elevation requirements for new construction issued by the National Flood Insurance Program for the applicable flood zone;
 - Structure determined to be unsafe by the local building official; or
 - Structure ordered to be demolished by the local government.
- Prohibits a local government from imposing additional regulatory or building requirements on replacement structures or development applications not otherwise applicable to a similarly situated parcel in the same zoning district.
- Provides that the bill does not apply to certain historic structures and single-family homes.



REPRESENTATIVE
PAYNE

Florida is committed to energy policies that prioritize a reliable, resilient, and cost-effective energy supply. HB 1645 updates our energy policy and amends specific energy-related laws to meet these goals and to solidify our energy resources for the future.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Updates the intent of Florida's energy policy — the purpose of the state's energy policy is to ensure an adequate, reliable, and cost-effective supply of energy for the state in a manner that promotes the health and welfare of the public and economic growth.

BILL BASICS

- Protects the reliability and affordability of electrical power by requiring the Public Service Commission (PSC) to determine whether early retirement of a power plant is prudent and consistent with the state's energy policy goals.
- Enhances resilience of the state's natural gas supply by clarifying where facilities used to deploy natural gas reserves during system outages or natural disaster may be permitted.
- Requires the PSC to develop a plan to assess the security and resiliency of the state's electric grid and natural gas facilities against both physical threats and cyber threats.
- Prepares Florida for the future by requiring the PSC to study and evaluate the technical and economic feasibility of using advanced nuclear power technologies and requiring the Department of Transportation to study and evaluate the potential development of hydrogen fueling infrastructure to support hydrogen-powered vehicles that use the state highway system.
- Requires rural electric cooperatives and municipal electric utilities to be prepared to restore power from natural disasters by having at least one mutual aid agreement with another electric utility.
- Prohibits the construction, operation, or expansion of offshore wind energy facilities and wind turbines located on real property within one mile of the state's coastline or on waters of the state.

CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In the electric power industry, natural gas is the dominant fuel in Florida and since 2011 has generated more electric power than all other fuels combined. Natural gas fueled approximately 70 percent of electric energy consumed in Florida in 2022.
- In 2021, renewable energy resources were used to generate approximately 6 percent of the electric energy consumed in Florida. This number is anticipated to increase over the next ten years, reaching 28 percent by 2032, primarily from the addition of new solar generation.
- Prohibits community development districts and homeowners' associations from prohibiting certain types or fuel sources of energy production and appliances that use such fuels.
- Removes obsolete grant programs and removes a requirement for the Department of Management Service to maintain a Florida Climate-Friendly Preferred Products List which state agencies were required to consult when procuring products from state term contracts.
- Authorizes the PSC to approve utility programs for electric vehicle charging if it determines that the utility's general body of ratepayers, as a whole, will not pay to support recovery of the utility's EV charging investment by the end of the useful life of the assets dedicated to the EV charging service.

SB 1680

(HB 1459)

REPRESENTATIVE
McFARLAND

ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY



SB 1680 protects children from the creation of AI-generated child pornography and creates an advisory council to study AI.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects children from being used in AI-generated child pornography.
- Creates an advisory council to study and monitor the development and deployment of new technologies and AI.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- AI is the development of computer systems to perform tasks that normally require human intelligence, such as learning and decision-making. Investments in AI have led to transformative advancements such as mapping technologies, voice-assisted smartphones, handwriting recognition for mail delivery, financial trading, smart logistics, spam filtering, and language translation.
- Generative AI is a type of AI technology that can produce high-quality content, including text, images, audio, or video, through training on large volumes of data within seconds, based on user prompts.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Protects children by criminalizing the creation and possession of AI-generated child pornography generated through the use of actual pictures of children.
- Creates the Government Technology Modernization Council to study and monitor AI systems and other advanced technology and recommend policies to balance protecting Florida jobs with promoting AI development.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE **114-0** SENATE **40-0** **▶ STATUS** **PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS**

SB 7028

(HB 1263)

REPRESENTATIVE
LaMARCA

MY SAFE FLORIDA HOME PROGRAM



Recent storms have left widespread destruction in our communities — showing the need for greater efforts to increase resiliency across the State. HB 7028 helps more Floridians inspect and harden their homes.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Dedicates \$200 million to help Floridians harden their homes.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The My Safe Florida Home Program was created with the intent to provide trained and certified inspectors to perform mitigation inspections for owners of site-built, single-family, residential properties to identify improvements that warrant insurance discounts, and provide mitigation grants to eligible applicants to harden their homes, subject to the availability of funds, and increase hurricane resiliency.
- In May 2022, to implement the renewed My Safe Florida Home Program, \$150 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund was appropriated to the DFS.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Prioritizes elderly and low- and moderate-income Floridians — requires that for the first 60 days that the Department of Financial Services (DFS) accepts inspection and mitigation grant applications following any legislative appropriation, DFS must prioritize the review and approval of applications by low- and moderate-income persons and those applicants who are at least 60 years old.
- Help document reduced homeowners' insurance costs — requires that, in order to receive grant funds, homeowners must agree to provide DFS with information from their homeowners' insurers that identifies premium discounts received as a result of improvements made with grant funds. Prior studies have found that MSFH grants can lead to up to \$1,000 savings in annual homeowner property insurance premiums.
- Increases flexibility — allows MSFH program participants to choose any properly licensed contractor to perform the improvements.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 115-0 SENATE 40-0 **STATUS** PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS

FLORIDA HOUSE *of* REPRESENTATIVES

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

2024

EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT



SB 494

(HB 511)

REPRESENTATIVE
HOLCOMB

GRADUATE PROGRAM ADMISSIONS



Florida is the most military-friendly state in the nation. This bill affirms our commitment to servicemembers by removing unnecessary barriers to graduate programs.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Recognizes servicemembers have valuable, real-world, decision-making experiences that can't be captured in a standardized test.
- Waives GRE and GMAT testing requirements because we believe servicemembers have unique experiences that qualify them for many graduate programs.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- GRE and GMAT fees can be a significant burden.
 - GRE General Test Fee: \$220
 - GRE Subject Test Fee: \$150
 - GMAT Exam Fee: \$275 (in person), \$300 (online)

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Requires an institution of higher education to waive the GRE or the GMAT requirement for servicemembers.
- Includes people serving in the United States Armed Forces, the Florida National Guard, or the United States Reserve Forces.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 113-1 SENATE 37-0 **STATUS** PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS

SB 832

(HB 1137)

REPRESENTATIVE
REDONDO

EMPLOYMENT OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES



Florida won't leave anyone behind and will help those who need it most. This bill increases collaboration and accountability of Employment First agencies to achieve better employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Improves government efficiency to ensure we help individuals with disabilities achieve independence and fulfillment.
- Helps individuals with disabilities overcome unique barriers to employment.

CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Employment is the most direct and cost-effective means to assist an individual in achieving independence and fulfillment; however, individuals with disabilities are confronted by unique barriers to employment which inhibit their opportunities to compete fairly in the labor force.
- The Legislature created the Employment First Act in 2016 to prioritize the employment of individuals with disabilities and to better integrate them into the workforce.

BILL BASICS

- Requires interagency cooperative agreements to ensure collaborative efforts between the agencies include the collection and sharing of data.
- Requires accountability measures to include, minimally, systemwide measures to increase the number of individuals working in competitive integrated employment, decrease the number of individuals working in subminimum wage employment, and decrease the number of individuals working in nonintegrated employment settings.
- Monitors progress by requiring an annual statewide report on the implementation of the Employment First Act and progress made on accountability measures.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 113-0 SENATE 38-0 **STATUS**  SIGNED BY GOVERNOR



REPRESENTATIVE
SNYDER

HB 917 enhances career and technical education opportunities by empowering 16- and 17-year-olds to work in trades.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Provides workforce opportunities by cutting red tape and eliminating barriers to employment.

CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Prohibitions regarding the employment of minors age 16 or 17 in hazardous occupations in Florida are consistent with regulations adopted by the United States Secretary of Labor.

BILL BASICS

- Authorizes minors aged 16 or 17 to work in residential building construction if the minor:
 - Has earned his or her Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 10 certification;
 - Is under the direct supervision of a person 21 years of age or older with at least two years of related experience and who has earned his or her OSHA 10 certification;
 - Is not working on any scaffolding, roof, superstructure, or ladder above six feet; and
 - Is not in violation of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act, any OSHA rule, or federal law related to minors in the workplace.
- Authorizes a student who earns credit for completion of one year of related technical instruction in an apprenticeship or preapprenticeship program to satisfy high school graduation credit requirements for certain courses.

HB 931

SCHOOL CHAPLAINS



REPRESENTATIVES

**McCLAIN
& DANIELS**

HB 931 offers students extra support in times of need.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Authorizes school districts and charter schools to adopt a policy allowing volunteer school chaplains to provide support, services, and programs to students.
- Ensures any school district or charter school that adopts a policy publishes the list of volunteer school chaplains, including any religious affiliation, on the school district's website.

CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The term “chaplain” is not confined to any particular church or denomination. Clergy and ministers appointed to a variety of institutions and corporate bodies—such as cemeteries, prisons, hospitals, schools, colleges, universities, embassies, legations, and armed forces— are usually called chaplains.
- Individuals who work in or provide services to school districts, charter schools, alternative schools, and private schools participating in state school choice scholarship programs must undergo a fingerprint-based background screening before being permitted access to school grounds.

BILL BASICS

- Requires chaplain policies to describe the supports, services, or programs that volunteer school chaplains may be assigned; requires that principals inform all parents of the availability of such supports, services, and programs; and requires written parental consent before student participation can take place.
- Permits parents to select a volunteer school chaplain from a list provided by the school district, which must include any relevant religious affiliation.
- Protects children by requiring volunteer school chaplains to pass a level 2 background screening of both state and federal criminal records.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 89-25 SENATE 28-12 **STATUS**  PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS



REPRESENTATIVE
FINE

The Florida House is committed to keeping Floridians safe by providing at-risk institutions, such as vulnerable Jewish day schools and preschools, with additional security resources and infrastructure.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects Jewish students and families while they are at school.
- Secures Jewish day schools and preschools by creating a program at the Department of Education (DOE) to administer funds for security measures.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Since 2018, the Legislature has appropriated more than \$1 billion in the Safe Schools Allocation in the Florida Education Finance Program to assist school districts in their compliance with the statutory requirements for safe schools.
- For Fiscal Year 2023-2024, the Legislature appropriated \$5 million for security funding at Jewish day schools. In November 2023, an additional \$25 million was appropriated for security measures at Jewish day schools and \$20 million was appropriated for the Nonprofit Security Grant Program.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Creates a program at DOE to make Jewish day schools and preschools more secure.
- Requires funds to be used for:
 - The purchase and installation of security cameras, perimeter lighting, perimeter fencing, and shatter resistant glass for windows.
 - Hiring or contracting with security personnel who are licensed and regulated by the state and insured.
 - Transportation expenses to minimize security exposure of staff, parents, and students.
 - Other nonhardening security measures, including, but not limited to providing professional detection, prevention, and security services to such schools and preschools.

SB 1264

(HB 1349)

REPRESENTATIVES

**BRANNAN
& BUCHANAN**

HISTORY OF COMMUNISM



Florida is home to many refugees from communist countries including Cuba, Venezuela, China, the former Soviet Union, Nicaragua, and Vietnam. SB 1264 helps our children learn about the evils of Communism and understand the importance of freedom.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Offers children context to understand the privilege of being an American.
- Includes the History of Communism in required instruction to public school students in an age and developmentally appropriate manner beginning in the 2026-2027 school year.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- On May 9, 2022, the Governor signed into law HB 395, creating Victims of Communism Day to annually be observed in public schools on November 7. The law also required, beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, high school students enrolled in the required United States Government class, to receive at least 45 minutes of instruction on “Victims of Communism Day.”

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Creates the Institute for Freedom in the Americas at Miami Dade College and renames the Adam Smith Center for the Study of Economic Freedom as the Adam Smith Center for Economic Freedom.
 - Expands the goals of the Center to include educational freedom with the study of the effect of government and free market economies.
 - Requires the Center to partner with the Institute for Freedom in the Americas to provide networking opportunities for leaders in Latin America and the Caribbean to gain insight and ideas for promoting democracy and the foundational elements of a democratic society.
- Requires instruction on the History of Communism to include:
 - The history of Communism in the United States and domestic Communist movements, including their histories and tactics.
 - Atrocities committed in foreign countries under the guidance of Communism.
 - Comparative discussion of political ideologies, such as Communism and totalitarianism, that conflict with the principles of freedom and democracy essential to the founding principles of the United States.
 - The increasing threat of Communism in the United States and our allies through the 20th Century, including the events of the Cultural Revolution in the People’s Republic of China and other mass killings from Communist regimes.
 - The economic, industrial, and political events that preceded and anticipated Communist revolutions.
 - The Communist policies of Cuba and spread of Communist ideologies throughout Latin America, including the roots of the Communist Party of Cuba and guerilla forces throughout Latin America.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 106-7 SENATE 25-7 **STATUS** PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS



REPRESENTATIVE
CANADY

HB 1285 makes various strategic changes to put Florida's teachers and students in the best possible position to succeed.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Simplifies qualifying for residency for postsecondary tuition purposes.
- Gives students greater educational opportunities.
- Expands Florida's support of military families.
- Prevents frivolous objections to school materials.

CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Currently, establishing residency for postsecondary tuition purposes takes two or more documents.
- There have been reports of frivolous book challenges by individuals without students enrolled in the district in which they challenge books.

BILL BASICS

- Requires district school boards to make reasonable efforts to enter into dual enrollment articulation agreements with a Florida College System (FCS) institution which offers online dual enrollment courses.
- Requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to adopt rules for the issuance of a classical education teaching certificate.
- Provides a single-document method for a student to prove residency for postsecondary tuition purposes.
- Specifies the responsibilities of a school district implementing a turnaround plan for a public school which is reopening as a charter school.
- Creates the Purple Star School District program and requires each school district and charter school to provide the opportunity for students to take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) and consult with a military recruiter if a student chooses.
- Limits a resident of a county who is not the parent or guardian of a child attending school in that county from objecting to more than one educational material per month.



REPRESENTATIVES

**SNYDER
& JACQUES**

HB 1291 builds on our commitment to improving education for all students by removing indoctrination from educator preparation programs.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Ensures teachers are focused on improving teaching abilities instead of indoctrinating students.
- Protects students from indoctrination by keeping educator preparation programs accurate and focused on preparing teachers to help students become critical thinkers.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Florida law prohibits classroom instruction from distorting significant historical events or including curriculum or instruction that teaches identity politics, violates Florida's K-20 education anti-discrimination statutes, or is based on theories that systemic racism, sexism, oppression, and privilege are inherent in the institutions of the United States and were created to maintain social, political, and economic inequities.
- While Florida law already prohibits these concepts from ultimately being taught in the classroom, it is equally imperative that prospective teachers are not trained in the same divisive topics.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Prohibits teacher preparation programs from distorting significant historical events or including instruction which teaches identity politics, violates the Florida Educational Equity Act, or is based on theories that systemic racism, sexism, oppression, and privilege are inherent in the institutions of the United States and were created to maintain social, political, and economic inequities.
- Focuses teacher preparation programs on the fundamentals of educating students by giving candidates the opportunity to think critically, achieve mastery of academic program content, learn instructional strategies, and demonstrate competence.



REPRESENTATIVE
TEMPLE

We must commit to a future in which every child masters the reading and math skills needed to reach their full potential. The bill extends and reinforces our commitment to support Florida's students.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Helps children struggling with reading and math by expanding New Worlds Scholarship eligibility and creating a tutoring program.
- Empowers parents and teachers by providing them with quality resources to ensure their students receive the best education.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The New Worlds Scholarship Program provides parents with access to education savings accounts to pay for tuition and fees related to tutoring or instructional materials for the purpose of improving reading and math skills.
- Micro-credentials help improve teacher development and retention, both of which can positively impact student success. They equip birth to twelfth-grade instructional personnel to:
 - Identify literacy difficulties and determine appropriate interventions.
 - Apply evidence-based practices.
 - Effectively use progress monitoring and intervention materials.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Helps students improve in reading and math by:
 - Expanding New Worlds Scholarship eligibility to include VPK students who exhibit substantial deficiencies in early literacy or math skills based on the most recent progress monitoring assessment.
 - Encouraging parental involvement by ensuring parents receive notification about the process to request and receive a scholarship.
 - Providing teachers opportunities to earn micro-credentials to improve reading and math instruction.
 - Creating a tutoring program administered by the University of Florida Lastinger Center to provide tutoring to K-5 students who exhibit a substantial deficiency in reading or math skills.
 - Providing stipends for in-person tutoring during, before, or after school, or during a summer program.
- Provides opportunities to customize and accelerate learning for students in grades 6-12 and reduce teacher workloads by creating a grant program to expand the use of AI in schools.



REPRESENTATIVE
TOMKOW

Last year we passed one of the largest expansions of school choice in the nation to empower parents to choose the education which meets the needs of their student. **HB 1403** continues our work by ensuring the Family Empowerment Scholarship for Unique Abilities (FES-UA) program can grow to meet demand, improving the school choice application and renewal process, requiring timely payment for tuition and fees, and increasing transparency.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Increases the growth rate of the FES-UA scholarship program cap from 3 to 5 percent and includes an automatic 1 percent increase based on demand. For the 2024-2025 school year, the cap for the Unique Abilities scholarships will be 72,615.
- Increases efficiency by establishing separate application and renewal deadlines so renewals can be funded earlier.
- Repeals the scholarship funding portion of the Hope Scholarship Program, but maintains notice requirements for parents, whose students were subjected to incidents like bullying or harassment, of the opportunity to enroll at another public school or receive a scholarship to attend an eligible private school under the Family Empowerment Scholarship and Florida Tax Credit scholarship programs.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Florida's school choice programs primarily consist of the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship (FTC) including students in a personalized education program (PEP), the Family Empowerment Scholarship for students attending private school (FES-EO), and the Family Empowerment Scholarship for students with disabilities (FES-UA).

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Increases Scholarship Funding Organization (SFO) transparency and stakeholder involvement by requiring them to report on performance metrics on applications and reimbursement requests and to solicit feedback from parents, private schools, and providers before substantially modifying the reimbursement process.
- Increases accountability by requiring SFOs to create and annually submit a purchasing handbook for the FTC and FES-EO programs that specifically states any prohibited items and any items requiring preauthorization.
- Requires the Florida Center for Students with Unique Abilities to consult with parents in the development of the FES-UA scholarship purchasing guide.
- Authorizes a charitable organization to apply at any time to be recognized as an SFO and participate in the state scholarship programs.
- Requires timely payment by SFOs for full-time tuition and fees to occur within 7 business days of approval by the parent and school.
- Provides that enrollment at a private school at least 2 days a week under a PEP student learning plan, does not constitute full-time enrollment for eligibility purposes.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 89-18 SENATE 40-0 **▶ STATUS** PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS



REPRESENTATIVE
TRABULSY

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 1473 continues our mission to ensure students are safe at school.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Gives parents confidence in their child’s safety at school.
- Encourages schools to follow new perimeter and door safety requirements by providing bonuses for school principals and charter school administrators who are found to be in full compliance.
- Improves school safety and security by implementing new school guardian reporting requirements.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In 2023, the Legislature expanded the guardian program by authorizing private schools to partner with a law enforcement or security agency to establish or assign a safe-school officer to their schools.
- The School Safety Awareness Program is a mobile suspicious activity reporting tool known as FortifyFL, which is based upon a recommendation by the students of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Increases school safety consistency by standardizing reporting requirements. Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) will serve as the central repository of information regarding certified and appointed guardians.
- Keeps students safe by establishing new perimeter and door safety requirements for school districts and charter school governing boards.
- Requires the Office of Safe Schools to develop and adopt a Florida school safety compliance inspection report to document compliance with Florida school safety requirements.
- FDLE will provide grants to Sheriff’s Offices and Law enforcement Agencies to conduct physical site security assessments and provide reports to private schools with recommendations on improving infrastructure, safety, and security.
- Prohibits a person from operating a drone over a public or private school serving students in any grade from voluntary prekindergarten through grade 12.

SB 7002

(HB 7039)

REPRESENTATIVE
RIZO

DEREGULATION OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS



SB 7002 removes overly-burdensome regulations on our school districts and helps them focus on improving education for all students in Florida.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Helps schools focus more on educating kids instead of being impeded by unnecessary regulations.
- Provides school districts more flexibility and efficiency and reduces unnecessary and burdensome regulations.
- Supports school districts' efforts to recruit and retain teachers and address teacher shortages.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In 2023, the Legislature passed HB 1, which included provisions regarding the deregulation of public schools.
- The bill required the State Board of Education (SBE) to develop and recommend to the Governor and Legislature for adoption during the 2024 Legislative Session repeals and revisions to the Florida Early Learning-20 Education Code.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Gives school boards more flexibility in completing their duties to provide public notices by authorizing publication on their websites.
- Repeals obsolete or overly-burdensome reporting requirements.
- Provides flexibilities for school districts in facilities planning and construction and financial reporting.
- Supports school district efforts to recruit and retain teachers by requiring the SBE to develop strategies to address critical teacher shortages and waive certain fees for individuals seeking exceptional student education certification, authorizing districts to use advanced degrees when setting salary schedules and to develop policies for mentorship and support for first-time teachers, and revising eligibility for the Teacher Apprenticeship Program.
- Prevents collective bargaining between school districts and teacher unions from precluding a district from carrying out its duties to provide incentives to effective and highly effective teachers or implement school safety requirements and student intervention and support strategies.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE **115-0** STATUS PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS
SENATE **38-0**

SB 7004

(HB 7025)

REPRESENTATIVE
TRABULSY

EDUCATION



SB 7004 removes unnecessary regulations on school districts, provides school districts with additional flexibility and authority, and empowers students and parents.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Maintains high standards for Florida students by maintaining:
 - 3rd grade English Language Arts (ELA) assessment and retention requirements.
 - Algebra 1 end-of-course assessment.
 - Grade 10 ELA assessment to earn a standard high school diploma.
- Helps struggling students earlier by requiring that the student progression plan specify retention requirements for students in kindergarten through grade 2 based on each student's performance in ELA and mathematics.
- Empowers parents by ensuring they are immediately notified if their student is exhibiting a substantial deficiency in reading or mathematics and includes an opportunity for parental input on the retention decision.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In 2023, we passed one of the largest expansions of school choice in the nation. As part of the expansion, we tasked the State Board of Education to develop and recommend revisions to Florida's education laws in an effort to provide more flexibility and efficiency and reduce unnecessary regulation for public schools.



BILL BASICS

- Provides more flexibility to school districts with regard to determining the amount of instructional materials in a classroom, to superintendents with regard to reporting timeframes, and to principals by authorizing them to determine collection of funds for lost or damaged instructional materials.
- Reduces regulation by removing the requirement for school districts to offer a virtual instruction option and the requirement for a virtual provider to be nonsectarian.
- Authorizes school district virtual programs to provide equipment and access for participation to every student, regardless of income.
- Strengthens the role of the parent in retention and remediation decisions for students in kindergarten through grade 2 and students who have been promoted to 4th grade with a good cause exemption.
- Eliminates unnecessary testing by reducing the administration of the coordinated screening and progress monitoring system in the summer VPK program from 3 times per year to 2 times per year and removing the requirement for administration of the common assessment for students in Department of Juvenile Justice prevention, residential, or day treatment programs.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 117-0 SENATE 38-0 **STATUS** PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS

SB 7032

(HB 7051)

REPRESENTATIVE
MELO

EDUCATION



SB 7032 creates the Graduation Alternative to Traditional Education (GATE) Program to re-engage individuals aged 16-21 who have withdrawn from high school by providing opportunities to earn valuable workforce credentials while also completing a standard high school diploma or equivalent credential.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Creates the GATE Program to re-engage students who have withdrawn from high school.
- Creates new opportunities for people with continued education and workforce credentials.

CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- A high school diploma is often a necessary requirement for jobs and career opportunities.
- In the 2022-2023 school year, 8,888 students were enrolled in a GED program with 5,330 of those students being under the age of 21.

BILL BASICS

- Creates additional opportunities for those who may need further workforce training and schooling to obtain their desired career.
- Creates the GATE Scholarship Program to reimburse participating institutions for costs occurred from waiving tuition and fees for students participating in the program during their first semester.
- Creates the GATE Startup Grant Program to start GATE programs and increase access to adult and career education in rural areas.
- Creates the GATE Program Performance Fund to reward participating institutions \$1000, or \$500 each if there are two participating institutions for successful student outcomes.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 112-0 SENATE 40-0 **STATUS**  PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS

FLORIDA HOUSE *of* REPRESENTATIVES

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

2024

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES





HB 73 creates a legal framework for Supported Decisionmaking (SDM), which enhances the ability of individuals with developmental disabilities or other cognitive impairments to make decisions with support and avoid unnecessary guardianships.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Helps individuals with disabilities make life choices with help from a supporter while allowing the values, priorities, and wishes of the individual with a disability to drive the process.
- Facilitates SDM agreements for adults with disabilities by creating an SDM agreement under Florida's Power of Attorney chapter.

CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- A guardianship removes rights of an individual with autism or an intellectual disability or other cognitive impairment and is expensive, but may be the only choice available to families to ensure a loved one's legal decisionmaking needs are met.
- SDM is less restrictive and expensive, providing a way for an individual who can articulate wishes and priorities to make key decisions with the help of designated supporters.
- An SDM agreement is the written document evidencing the agreement between an individual with disabilities and at least one supporter that describes, in detail, the type of help the individual needs. The agreement outlines the terms and conditions of both parties and asks that third parties, including courts, recognize and respect the agreement.

BILL BASICS

- Empowers individuals with disabilities by creating an alternative to allow for assistance with decisionmaking and other activities that do not require more restrictive instruments like guardianship or guardian advocacy.
- Ensures the SDM agreement model does not give the designated agent, advisor, or supporter the authority to bind or act on behalf of the adult with a disability on any subject matter.
 - Permits the supporter to only:
 - Obtain information on behalf of the principal.
 - Assist the principal in communicating with third parties, including conveying the principal's communications, decisions, and directions to third parties on behalf of the principal.
- Directs a circuit court to consider the specific needs and abilities of a person with developmental disabilities when determining whether to approve a request for a guardian advocate.



REPRESENTATIVES
**FRANKLIN
& TRABULSY**

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is an immune system virus that can destroy cells to the point that the body cannot fight off infections and disease. If not properly treated, HIV can lead to fatal acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS).

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Improves outcomes by increasing the likelihood of early diagnosis, by authorizing licensed pharmacists to screen adults for HIV exposure and provide results.
- Eliminates barriers to treatment for HIV exposure by making it quicker and easier to obtain.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Once a person has HIV, he or she has it for life – however, the symptoms and transmission of HIV can be mitigated through medication. People who have HIV can transmit the virus through sex, sharing of IV needles, pregnancy, and breastfeeding.
- Post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) is a biomedical prevention method taken after a person has been exposed to HIV. PEP is intended for use in emergency situations, and when taken within 72 hours of HIV exposure, PEP significantly reduces the risk of HIV infection.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Creates a process by which a pharmacist may become certified to order and dispense PEP under a collaborative practice agreement with a physician.
- Sets minimum criteria for the certification which a pharmacist must obtain before ordering and dispensing HIV infection prevention drugs.
- Outlines minimum requirements for the contents of the collaborative practice agreement, and requires pharmacies in which a pharmacist is providing services under such an agreement to submit an access-to-care plan to the Board of Pharmacy and Department of Health.



REPRESENTATIVE
BELL

Diabetes affects millions of Americans who need insulin and insulin-related supplies to manage their blood sugar levels. Emergencies should not stop them from being able to manage their disease.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Expands current law to allow for emergency refills of insulin and insulin-related supplies or equipment to treat diabetes if a pharmacist is unable to readily obtain refill authorization.
- Helps diabetics manage blood sugar levels during emergency situations, especially when traveling.

CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- 38 million people in the United States are diagnosed with diabetes, including over 2 million Floridians.
- Diabetes occurs when blood glucose, also called blood sugar, is too high due to an individual's inability to effectively produce or process insulin. Over time, high blood glucose leads to various health problems, some of which could be fatal.

BILL BASICS

- Allows a pharmacist to dispense an emergency refill of insulin and insulin-related supplies or equipment to treat diabetes up to three nonconsecutive times per calendar year if the pharmacist is unable to readily obtain refill authorization from a prescriber.



REPRESENTATIVE
JACQUES

Florida is committed to defending life. We believe that all children matter – the born and the unborn. Part of being pro-life is ensuring parents have the resources they need to raise their child.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Empowers families by creating a website with resources and information to help expectant and new families transition to parenthood.

CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- More than half of parents in Florida report feeling inadequately prepared for parenthood.
- Florida currently does not have a comprehensive state website containing information relating to available public and private pregnancy and parenting resources.

BILL BASICS

- Requires the Department of Health (DOH), in partnership with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA), to contract with a third-party to create a website that provides information and links to public and private pregnancy and parenting resources. The website will include:
 - Educational materials on pregnancy and parenting.
 - Maternal health services.
 - Prenatal and postnatal services.
 - Educational and mentorship programs for fathers.
 - Social services.
 - Financial assistance.
 - Adoption services.
- Requires DOH, DCF, and AHCA to include a clear and conspicuous link to the website on their respective websites.

SB 564

(HB 631)

REPRESENTATIVES

**TRAMONT
& ABBOTT**

YOUNG ADULT AFTERCARE SERVICES



SB 564 expands access to Aftercare services for young adults formerly in the child welfare system.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Allows more young adults formerly in foster care who are between the ages of 18 and 22 to access needed services.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Aftercare services, which help with emergencies and meeting other temporary needs, are available to young adults who age out of the foster care system.
- Young adults who spent time in the foster care system and reached permanency through adoption or placement with relatives can still have challenges upon reaching adulthood, when that support does not continue after age 18.



BILL BASICS

- Expands eligibility for receiving Aftercare services.
 - If a young adult did not age out of foster care but was placed in out-of-home care for at least six months after turning 14 years of age and did not achieve reunification with their parent or guardian, they may be eligible for Aftercare services if funding is available.
- Authorizes Department of Children and Families (DCF) to distribute federal funds to all young adults deemed eligible by the federal funding source in the event of a state of emergency declared by the Governor or the President of the United States.

FLOOR VOTES

HOUSE **113-0**
SENATE **32-0**

STATUS



**PASSED BOTH
CHAMBERS**

HB 591

HOT CAR DEATH PREVENTION



REPRESENTATIVE
BRANNAN

HB 591 improves public awareness of the dangers of leaving a child unattended in a motor vehicle in Florida's heat and ways to prevent hot car deaths.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects kids by educating Floridians about vehicular heatstroke.

CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Since 1998, Florida has lost 110 children to vehicular heatstroke, including 7 in 2023.
- The Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (FLHSMV) reports that law enforcement cited 1,282 people statewide for leaving a child under the age of 6 unattended or unsupervised in a vehicle over the last ten years.

BILL BASICS

- Encourages the Department of Children & Families, Department of Health, Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, local governments, and other agencies to sponsor events that promote awareness of the dangers of leaving a child unattended in a motor vehicle and methods to prevent hot car deaths.
- Designates April as "Hot Car Death Prevention Month."

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE **118-0** SENATE **38-0** **STATUS**  SIGNED BY GOVERNOR

HB 725

VETERANS' LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES ADMISSIONS



REPRESENTATIVES

**WOODSON
& SNYDER**

HB 725 provides service, support, and benefit eligibility to a spouse or surviving spouse of a veteran.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Honors veterans and their spouses by expanding eligibility for residency at state veterans' homes to include the spouse or surviving spouse of a qualifying veteran.

CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs operates a network of nine veterans' homes and provides outreach to ensure veterans have access to support, benefits, and services. These homes are currently either nursing homes or domiciliary homes.
- Under current law, only veterans of wartime service or peacetime service are eligible for admission into these homes.

BILL BASICS

- Allows the spouses of veterans, or surviving spouses of veterans, to be eligible as a qualifying veteran for residency at a state veterans' home.
- Ensures that priority of admittance to these homes is given to veterans over non-veterans, such as a spouse or surviving spouse of a veteran.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE **117-0** SENATE **36-0** **STATUS**  **PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS**

HB 775

SURRENDERED INFANTS



REPRESENTATIVES

**CANADY
& BELTRAN**

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

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects children at the earliest stages of life by allowing infants to be surrendered in a safe manner.
- Prevents unsafe abandonment by allowing more time for parents to decide whether to surrender a child.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Florida law allows parents who are unwilling or unable to care for their newborn infants to safely relinquish them at hospitals, fire stations, and emergency medical services stations.
- Florida law currently allows parents to anonymously surrender newborn infants up to 7-days-old and grants the parents immunity from criminal prosecution unless there is actual or suspected child abuse or neglect.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Saves infant lives and prevents unsafe abandonment by increasing the age that an infant may be surrendered from 7 days old to 30 days old.
- Authorizes a parent, after delivery of an infant in a hospital, to surrender the infant in the care of hospital medical staff.
- Authorizes a parent to call 911 and request that an emergency medical services provider meet the surrendering parent at a specified location for the purpose of surrendering the infant.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 117-0 SENATE 35-0 **▶ STATUS** PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS



REPRESENTATIVE
ANDERSON

HB 1267 enhances the effectiveness of benefit programs with a focus on addressing benefit cliffs.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Helps families achieve self-sufficiency by addressing barriers to economic mobility.

CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Low-income families in public assistance programs can still have difficulty achieving economic self-sufficiency even after leaving assistance due to higher wages.
- A benefit cliff occurs when a modest increase in wages results in a net loss of resources due to the reduction in or loss of public benefits.
 - Benefit cliffs create a financial disincentive for low-income individuals to earn more income due to the destabilization and uncertainty which often results from a loss in benefits, such as child care, especially when the benefit lost was essential to a parent's ability to reliably work.

BILL BASICS

- Provides case management services for individuals who have stopped receiving Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) due to higher earnings so they have help facing future benefit cliffs.
- Requires local workforce boards to use the innovative CLIFF Navigator tool to provide individually-tailored information to career seekers to help them see how job advancement affects their benefits – so they can chart the best course for their families.
- Encourages participants to further their education by allowing GED classes to count toward requirements to receive TCA, and requires some adult SNAP recipients to participate in education and training programs so they can advance their careers.
- Replaces the School Readiness Program benefit cliff with an off ramp, creating the School Readiness Plus Program to support the continued school readiness and child care needs of working families with children and providing funding for the program for FY 2024-25.
- Requires certain Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participants ages 18-59 to engage in services to support employment as a condition of receiving SNAP.



REPRESENTATIVE
GARRISON

HB 1365 addresses the safety and well-being of homeless people and the public safety issues caused by public camping by creating a framework for Florida's homeless population to have safe places to reside with services they need and ensuring that our public spaces can be used as intended.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Incentivizes municipalities to provide their homeless populations with safe and secure spaces as well as the behavioral health services they may need.
- Ensures Florida's public spaces remain safe for all to use.

CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Homelessness affects every city in Florida. Not every municipality has adequate services to provide for their homeless population, even though these services may be necessary to ensure their safety and well-being.
- In many places, the homeless population has grown and moved into public spaces, making them no longer usable or safe for others.

BILL BASICS

- Allows a resident of a county or municipality, an owner of a business located in a county, or the Attorney General to bring a civil action in any court of competent jurisdiction against a county or applicable municipality to enjoin the county or municipality from authorizing public camping or sleeping on public property.
- Authorizes a county, by majority vote of the county's governing body, to designate property owned by the county or municipality within the boundaries of the county to be used for public camping or sleeping for a continuous period of no longer than one year.
- Requires Department of Children and Families (DCF) to certify a county's designation and makes the designation effective upon certification. To obtain DCF certification, the county must submit a request to the Secretary of DCF and include certification that, and documentation proving:
 - There are not sufficient open beds in homeless shelters in the county for the homeless population of the county.
 - The designated property is not contiguous to property designated for residential use by the county or municipality in the local government comprehensive plan and future land use map.
 - The designated property would not adversely and materially affect the property value or safety and security of other existing residential or commercial property in the county or municipality.
 - The county has developed a plan to satisfy the requirements for maintaining the designated property.

SB 1600

(HB 1273)

INTERSTATE MOBILITY



REPRESENTATIVES

**PLASENCIA
& ALVAREZ**

SB 1600 helps Florida's health care workers and entrepreneurs by cutting red tape in the licensure process.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Addresses Florida's health care worker shortage by removing barriers to licensure and encourages entrepreneurship by improving the occupational license application process while maintaining high standards.

CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- All health care professionals licensed by Department of Health (DOH) are now eligible for licensure by endorsement.
- Health care professionals seeking licensure by endorsement must:
 - Hold an active, unencumbered license with a similar scope of practice in a US jurisdiction;
 - Have passed any required national licensure examination or Florida-specific test;
 - Have actively practiced the profession for three of the last four years;
 - Make an attestation related to licensure discipline;
 - Meet certain financial responsibility requirements; and
 - Submit a set of fingerprints for a background screening, if required.

BILL BASICS

- Removes barriers in the health care professional market by authorizing licensure by endorsement for 17 professions regulated by DOH and repealing existing licensure by endorsement statutes to establish a single standardized process for licensure by endorsement for all health care professions regulated by DOH.
- Improves the occupational license application process at DBPR by allowing the Secretary to review applications for licensure by an out of state applicant for licensure based on reciprocity or endorsement, before a denial, and issue the license under certain circumstances.
- Requires DBPR to allow licensure by endorsement, when license endorsement based on years of licensure is not otherwise provided in the practice act for a profession, for any applicant who meets certain qualifications.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 114-0 SENATE 32-0 **STATUS**  PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS

SB 1758

(HB 1271)

REPRESENTATIVES

**BUCHANAN
& FINE**

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES



The Florida Legislature is committed to improving services for individuals with developmental disabilities.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Improves state agency programs and services for individuals with developmental disabilities.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) administers services to individuals with developmental disabilities, such as through federally funded Medicaid waiver programs.
- iBudget, APD's Medicaid waiver program, permits individuals to choose the home and community-based services they need to help them live in the community, rather than an institutional setting.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Enhances the iBudget waiver eligibility determination and enrollment process for by:
 - Offering an online application process.
 - Specifying time standards for review and action on eligibility by pre-enrollment category.
 - Requiring APD to communicate with applicants about certain application actions.
- Expands the iBudget program and improves service delivery by:
 - Reprioritizing individuals whose caregivers are ages 60-69 in a higher category on the pre-enrollment list.
 - Authorizing care navigation to assist individuals waiting for services in accessing community resources.
 - Authorizing about \$38 million for waiver enrollment for individuals in pre-enrollment categories 3-5.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 114-0 SENATE 38-0 **▶ STATUS** SIGNED BY GOVERNOR

SB 7016

(HB 1549)

REPRESENTATIVE
GRANT

HEALTH CARE



SB 7016 is a robust package of policy initiatives and strategic investments that will help make sure Florida's health care workforce, health care services programs and health care-related education programs grow and innovate at the same pace as the rest of our great state.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Expands Florida's health care workforce through new opportunities for education, training, and retention.
- Removes regulatory barriers to increase workforce mobility.
- Increases access, efficiency, and quality of health care.

BILL BASICS

- Grows and Retains Florida's health care workforce:
 - Enhances partnerships between our hospitals and Florida schools that train health care workers, as well as more residency slots and creative loan repayment options that drive providers to underserved areas.
 - Funds provider increases that incentivize our workers to continue serving in needed fields like mental health, labor and delivery, and Floridians with disabilities.
 - Expands eligibility and increases funding amounts for health care practitioner loan repayment programs.
- Removes Regulations to Increase Workforce Mobility:
 - Removes barriers that can get in the way of quality care for patients while maintaining rigorous training requirements.
 - Expands sites for clinical training to include more rural, remote, or difficult to access locations, expanding the role of medical school graduates waiting to be placed in a residency, and reducing barriers for autonomous nurse midwives, while ensuring quality care for mothers and babies.
 - Removes barriers to licensure for practitioners licensed in other states by entering Florida into the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact, the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact, and the Physical Therapy Licensure Compact.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Florida is attracting families, businesses, and seniors. Over the next 5 years, our population will grow by almost 300,000 new residents per year, over 800 per day. That is like adding a city slightly smaller than Orlando, but larger than St. Petersburg every year.
- With all of this growth, we will need more maternity rooms to welcome new Floridians to the family. We will need more services for seniors to live out their golden years with dignity and safety. We will need more primary care providers who play a vital role as the main point of contact in the health care system for families and seniors.
- Increases Access to Quality, Efficient Health Care:
 - Streamlines ERs by creating partnerships with Community Health Centers and other primary care settings so care that is needed, but not life threatening, can be handled outside of the hospital ER in a more efficient and appropriate setting.
 - Expands access to preventative health screenings to ensure early diagnosis and better management of chronic disease for all Floridians.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 117-1 SENATE 39-0 **STATUS** SIGNED BY GOVERNOR



REPRESENTATIVE
MANEY

HB 7021 updates Florida's key laws on involuntary treatment for mental health and substance abuse to improve access to and effectiveness of services.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Addresses the revolving door in and out of behavioral crisis care by improving discharge processes.
- Expands opportunities for mental health involuntary outpatient treatment for individuals who, often due to the severity of their mental illness, won't comply with prescribed treatment.
- Streamlines the process for friends and family members to help loved ones access substance abuse treatment through the Marchman Act.

BILL BASICS

- Makes some different Baker Act and Marchman Act processes, criteria, and standards more similar.
- Gives law enforcement officers discretion on initiating involuntary mental health examinations.
- Revise standards for Baker Act proceedings to make it easier for the court to get additional information and avoid unnecessary obstacles.
- Allows the court more authority to determine type of involuntary services to which a person is ordered—it could order to inpatient, outpatient, or a combination of both.
- Prohibits the placement of an individual with a developmental disability in a state mental health facility for an involuntary inpatient placement if that individual has no mental illness.
- Increases the number of beds allowed in crisis stabilization units.
- Requires only one petition, rather than the current two petition process (one for assessment and stabilization, one for treatment) for accessing involuntary services under the Marchman Act.
- Authorizes the court to prohibit, or law enforcement to waive, Marchman Act service of process fees for indigent petitioners.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Baker Act governs safety-net mental health services, and the Marchman Act governs safety-net substance abuse services.
- During Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-2022, over 170,000 individuals were involuntarily examined under the Baker Act.
- Florida has significantly expanded community-based mental health services, such as the number of mobile response teams, but laws governing access to treatment haven't been updated.
- Expands situations when individuals' release from an involuntary exam (Baker) or emergency involuntary assessment and stabilization (Marchman) may be delayed to include early morning hours.
- Increases requirements for facilities to follow when discharging a Marchman Act or Baker Act patient.
- Requires additional detail in Baker Act statistical reports and the compilation of Marchman Act statistical reports.
- Revises roles of professional staff and clinicians under the Baker and Marchman Acts.
- Increases access to civil mental health services for individuals in the forensic system who are not restorable after being found incompetent to proceed.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 111-0 SENATE 39-0 **STATUS** **PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS**



REPRESENTATIVES

**SKIDMORE
& DRISKELL**

Sickle cell disease (SCD) is the most common inherited blood disorder in the United States, affecting approximately 100,000 Americans. SCD affects mostly, but not exclusively, those of African ancestry. Florida is committed to protecting the health of those with SCD.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Improves SCD health outcomes by providing funding to award grants for treatment and research centers.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- SCD is a group of inherited disorders in which abnormal hemoglobin cause red blood cells to buckle into the iconic sickle shape. The deformed red blood cells damage blood vessels and over time lead to a variety of negative health effects beginning in infancy and worsening as people age.
- Treatment and prevention strategies can mitigate complications and lengthen the lives of people with SCD. On average, people with SCD have shorter life expectancies by 22 years.
- Management of SCD focuses on treating and preventing complications caused by the disease, especially strokes.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Creates the Sickle Cell Disease Research and Treatment Grant Program, which will award grants to community-based SCD treatment and research centers. The grants will be awarded for projects that:
 - Provide facility-based education programs, continuing education curriculum development, and outreach and education activities with the local health care practitioner community.
 - Create Sickle Cell Disease Treatment Centers of Excellence.
- Expands the existing sickle cell registry to allow adults with SCD to opt into the registry if they desire.

HB 7089

TRANSPARENCY IN HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



REPRESENTATIVE
GRANT

HB 7089 ensures that patients have access to vital data so they can make informed decisions, and improves accountability for contracted services in the child welfare system.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Increases patient access to health care cost information and protects consumers from unreasonable medical debt action.
- Improves the child welfare system by enhancing provider accountability and updating funding methodologies.

CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- U.S. health care expenditures per person are higher than in any other high-income country, and continue to rise; commercial health spending per enrollee rose by 61% from 2008 to 2022.
 - As health care costs rise, most insurers have increased the patient share of those costs, with higher deductibles, coinsurance and copayments.
 - Medical costs can result in overwhelming patient debt and even bankruptcy. Nationwide, over 100 million have some form of medical debt.
 - Price transparency and the ability to shop for health care services empowers patients to avoid some high costs.
- Regional community-based care lead agencies (CBCs) provide services for the state's the child welfare system under contract with Department of Children and Families (DCF).
 - Recent audits identified a range of accountability and performance problems with CBCs, such as lack of board oversight, financial conflicts of interest.

BILL BASICS

- Requires hospitals and ambulatory surgical centers (ASCs) to post a consumer-friendly list of standard charges for at least 300 shoppable health care services on a facility website, consistent with federal rule, and delays this requirement for ASCs until January 1, 2026.
- Requires facilities to provide patient-specific price estimates for non-emergency services, and requires insurers and HMOs to provide patients advance explanations of benefits (AEOBs) to identify their out-of-pocket costs for those services.
- Creates a contingent effective date: makes the bill requirements for facility price estimates and insurer/HMO AEOBs effective only when and if the federal government issues certain final regulations.
- Requires insurers and HMOs to count shared savings incentives as medical expenses for accounting purposes.
- Authorizes direct care agreements with mental health providers.
- Requires facilities to establish internal grievance processes for billing disputes, disclose whether cost-sharing obligations exceed the cash price, and comply with limits on extraordinary collection actions.
- Establishes medical debt collections exemptions for motor vehicles and personal property up to \$10,000.
- Gives DCF more authority to address CBC performance problems.
- Enhances processes to avoid conflicts of interest and increase competition when CBCs subcontract for child welfare services.
- Requires DCF to collaborate with CBCs and other child welfare service providers to develop a new CBC funding methodology.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 111-0 SENATE 37-0 **STATUS**  **PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS**

FLORIDA HOUSE *of* REPRESENTATIVES

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

2024

INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIES



SB 1380

(HB 1673)

REPRESENTATIVE
BUSATTA CABRERA

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND THE TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED



Florida is committed to aiding persons who are unable to transport themselves.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Enhances accessibility, accountability, and the quality of transportation services in Florida for individuals in need of transportation assistance.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Florida law defines the term “transportation disadvantaged” as those persons who, because of physical or mental disability, income status, or age, are unable to transport themselves or to purchase transportation and are, therefore, dependent upon others to obtain access to a variety of life-sustaining activities.
- In 1989, the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged was created within the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to help provide transportation services to the transportation disadvantaged.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Introduces specific requirements for transportation service providers that offer paratransit services to persons with disabilities, including driver training, establishment of reasonable time periods for a request for service; transparency of data relating to timelines, etc.
- Requires FDOT to ensure that all grants and agreements between FDOT and entities providing paratransit service include certain provisions relating to performance requirements, penalties for repeated violations, minimum liability insurance, and complaint processes.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 115-0 SENATE 40-0 **▶ STATUS** PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS



REPRESENTATIVE
CHANEY

Florida is known for its exceptionally diverse and beautiful waters, drawing thousands of visitors and new residents to the state each day. HB 1557 safeguards our state's water resources for generations to come.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Optimizes water quality for all Floridians.
- Continues Florida's national leadership in water reuse by requiring the use of reclaimed water to the maximum extent safely possible.
- Strives to mitigate surface water discharges and meet growing water supply demands.
- Creates a water quality dashboard to ensure Floridians have access to meaningful water quality metrics.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The proper treatment and disposal or reuse of domestic wastewater is an integral part of protecting Florida's water resources.
- A person generates approximately 100 gallons of domestic wastewater per day.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Designates a new aquatic preserve that encompasses the Kristin Jacobs Coral Reef Ecosystem Conservation Area which stretches from the St. Lucie Inlet in northern Martin County down to Biscayne National Park in Miami-Dade County.
- Requires, by July 1, 2034, any wastewater treatment facility providing reclaimed water to certain areas to meet advanced waste treatment standards.
- Requires DEP to establish a program to expeditiously evaluate and approve enhanced nutrient-reducing technologies for onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems.
- Expands the types of projects undertaken by municipalities and counties that may be awarded funding by the Resilient Florida Grant Program.
- Requires the Chief Science Officer to coordinate with the Chief Resilience Officer and the Florida Flood Hub when developing statewide sea level rise projections.

SB 1638

(HB 1417)

REPRESENTATIVE
BUCHANAN

FUNDING FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT



SB 1638 conserves Florida's lands, protects state waters for future generations, and improves flood resiliency.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Dedicates proceeds generated from the Seminole Compact to annually fund programs to conserve and protect Florida's natural resources and to improve flood resilience.
- Provides over \$500 million this year to conserve and protect Florida's natural resources.

CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In 2021, Florida entered into a gaming compact with the Seminole Tribe of Florida, and the compact guaranteed a payment period of five years. The Seminole Tribe is required to share specified revenues with the state.

BILL BASICS

- Dedicates 96% of revenue from the Seminole Compact to various environmental protection programs and agencies. The funds will be distributed:
 - To support the Florida Wildlife Corridor.
 - For the management of uplands and removal of invasive species, divided between Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services.
 - To DEP for the Statewide Flooding and Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan.
 - For the Water Quality Improvement Grant Program within DEP.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 114-0 SENATE 37-0 **STATUS**  SIGNED BY GOVERNOR

SB 7040

(HB 7053)

REPRESENTATIVES

**ALTMAN
& PAYNE**

RATIFICATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION'S RULES RELATING TO STORMWATER



As a result of the Clean Waterways Act of 2020, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has been actively engaged in rulemaking activities to decrease harmful nutrients in our waterways. SB 7040 ratifies those rules.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Increases water quality standards for stormwater runoff currently going into our waterways.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Florida has long had severe impacts from stormwater runoff. It was thought that stormwater rules passed over 40 years ago adequately addressed the removal of nutrients from stormwater, but science has demonstrated otherwise.
- Ratifying the DEP stormwater rules is the last piece of the puzzle for implementing the 2020 Clean Waterways Act.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Ratifies DEP stormwater rules that were developed over the past 3 years using the most recent scientific information available. The rules:
 - Increase stormwater treatment design performance standards and provide guidance on how to achieve those standards.
 - Require stormwater management system operation and maintenance entities to estimate annual operating expenses and certify that they have the financial, legal and administrative capability to maintain the system over time.
 - Establish a schedule of inspections of stormwater management systems and require operation and maintenance entities to report certain information.
 - Require applicants to provide information regarding dam systems for collection in a repository maintained by DEP, and establish a downstream hazard potential for each dam indicating potential adverse impacts should the dam fail.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 114-0 SENATE 37-0 **STATUS** PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS



HB 7049 would have improved transportation in our state to accommodate our evolving needs for the 21st century.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Would have updated the legislative intent of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to focus on all modes of transportation.
- Would have revised MPO planning requirements to include projects and strategies that would conserve natural resources and reduce traffic congestion.
- Would have required MPOs within the same urbanized area to plan regional projects.
- Would have directed the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to review district boundary limits to account for population growth.
- Would have called for an updated design of the standard state license plate.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Florida law requires the Legislature to encourage the safe and efficient management, operation, and development of transportation systems that serve the needs of people and freight and foster economic growth while minimizing fuel consumption and pollution.
- MPOs are comprised of representatives from local governments and transportation authorities and are responsible for regional transportation planning in urban areas.



BILL BASICS

- Would have developed performance and production measures used by the Florida Transportation Commission, as well as expanding the duties of the commission.
- Would have provided express authority for local governments to impose minimum age requirements, require possession of a government-issued photographic ID, and provide training relating to electric bicycles, motorized scooters, and micromobility devices.
- Would have repealed the MPO Advisory Council and required an annual meeting of MPOs of similar size for the purpose of exchanging best practices.

FLORIDA HOUSE *of* REPRESENTATIVES

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS 2024

JUDICIARY



HB 21

REPRESENTATIVE
SALZMAN

DOZIER SCHOOL FOR BOYS AND OKEECHOBEE SCHOOL VICTIM COMPENSATION PROGRAM



The Arthur G. Dozier School for Boys (Dozier School) and the Florida School for Boys at Okeechobee (Okeechobee School) were places of great horror for many children. While the harm that occurred there can never be undone, HB 21 is one step forward that attempts to address the atrocities committed.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Compensates living persons who were abused at the Dozier School or Okeechobee School during a specified time period.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Dozier School opened in Marianna, Florida, on January 1, 1900, as the Florida State Reform School. In 1955, the Okeechobee School opened to address overcrowding at the Dozier School, and some of the Dozier School's staff transferred to the Okeechobee School.
- Allegations of abuse at the Dozier School began as early as 1903 with reports of children being chained to walls, whippings, and peonage; allegations of abuse at the Okeechobee School began shortly after it opened with reports of children receiving severe beatings and being forced to fight one another for the staff's entertainment.
- Between 2012 and 2016, forensic anthropologists from the University of South Florida led an excavation of Dozier School property and uncovered human remains in 55 unmarked graves, some with gunshot wounds or signs of blunt force trauma. At least one set of remains belonged to a child listed as missing in school records.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Creates the Dozier School for Boys and Okeechobee School Victim Compensation Program (Program) within Department of Legal Affairs (DLA) to compensate living persons who were confined to the Dozier School or the Okeechobee School at any time between 1940 and 1975 and who were subjected to mental, physical, or sexual abuse.
- Allows the Commissioner of Education to award a standard high school diploma to a person compensated through the Program who has not completed high school graduation requirements.
- Appropriates \$20 Million in non-recurring funds to DLA for the Dozier School for Boys and Okeechobee School Victim Compensation Program.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 116-0 SENATE 36-0 **STATUS** PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS



REPRESENTATIVE
GOSSETT-SEIDMAN

HB 117 could bring to light many unanswered questions about the state's case against Jeffrey Epstein by allowing a court to authorize the disclosure of grand jury testimony under certain circumstances for the purpose of furthering justice when disclosure furthers a public interest.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Would allow the court to order the release of grand jury records relating to the state's case against Jeffrey Epstein.

CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Section 905.24, F.S., requires grand jury proceedings to be kept secret. A grand jury's primary role is to determine whether sufficient evidence exists to justify indicting an accused individual.
- In 2006, Palm Beach County police opened an investigation into Jeffrey Epstein regarding allegations of sexual abuse of minors. In 2021, the Palm Beach Post sued the state attorney and clerk's office in an attempt to obtain a court ordered release of the grand jury testimony in Epstein's case, seeking the disclosure for the purpose of furthering justice. However, the presiding judge ruled against the Post and the testimony was not released.

BILL BASICS

- Allows a court to authorize the disclosure of grand jury testimony for the purpose of furthering justice when disclosure furthers a public interest and the disclosure is requested by the media or an interested person, regardless of whether the purpose of the disclosure is for use in a criminal or civil case, and:
 - The subject of the grand jury inquiry is deceased.
 - The grand jury inquiry related to criminal or sexual activity between the subject of the grand jury investigation and a person who was a minor at the time of the alleged criminal or sexual activity.
 - The testimony was previously disclosed by a court order.
 - The state attorney is provided notice of the request.
- Does not hinder the court's ability to limit the disclosure of grand jury testimony including, but not limited to, redaction.

IMPEDING, THREATENING, OR HARASSING FIRST RESPONDERS



It is important to protect our first responders who risk their lives for us by creating laws to protect them from threats and harassment.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects law enforcement from persons attempting to impede or interfere with their ability to perform their lawful duty.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Currently, depending upon the facts of the case, interference with a law enforcement officer in the performance of his or her official duties may be punished as resisting an officer without violence or resisting an officer with violence, but not all types of interference rise to this level.
- A “first responder” includes a law enforcement officer, a correctional probation officer, a firefighter, and an emergency medical care provider.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Makes it a second-degree misdemeanor for any person, after receiving a verbal warning not to approach from a first responder who is engaged in the lawful performance of a legal duty, to knowingly and willfully violate the warning and approach or remain within 25 feet of the first responder, with the intent to:
 - Impede or interfere with the first responder’s ability to perform such duty;
 - Threaten the first responder with physical harm; or
 - Harass the first responder.

HB 187

REPRESENTATIVES

**GOTTLIEB
& FINE**

ANTISEMITISM



HB 187 provides a working definition of antisemitism to better protect Jewish individuals from hate crimes and discrimination.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects Jewish individuals and institutions by helping law enforcement and state attorneys better identify what may qualify as a hate crime.
- Codifies this new definition into Chapter 1 of Florida Statutes making it applicable to all sections of Florida Law.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Between 2021 and 2022, there was a 54.7 percent overall increase in hate crimes with 23.6 percent reported in 2022 being motivated by religion.
- The Anti-Defamation League reports that since 2020, there has been over a 100% increase in antisemitic incidents in Florida.
- The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), which is composed of 35 countries, has a Committee on Antisemitism and Holocaust Denial that crafted a working definition of “antisemitism” which was fully adopted by the IHRA in 2016.
- This definition was constructed by building an international consensus on the meaning of “antisemitism” to assist nations with the rise in hate and discrimination.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Codifies a definition of antisemitism into Florida law based on the IHRA’s definition.
- Provides contemporary examples of antisemitism.
- Clarifies that the term “antisemitism” does not include criticism of Israel that is similar to criticism of any other country.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 115-0 SENATE 40-0 **▶ STATUS** PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS



REPRESENTATIVE
CANADY

Critical infrastructure provides functions necessary for our way of life, and we must protect it from tampering and trespass.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects critical infrastructure by creating criminal penalties for tampering with them.
- Prohibits a person from willfully entering or remaining on critical infrastructure if not permitted.
- Criminalizes unauthorized use of computer systems related to critical infrastructure.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Due to the vast number of critical infrastructure facilities, the difficulty in securing and monitoring such facilities, and the widespread effects that damage to such facilities can cause, critical infrastructure facilities have become a frequent target of both physical and cyber-attacks in recent years.
- In 2022, physical security incidents against electric infrastructure, such as vandalism, trespassing, and theft, increased 70 percent from the previous year.
- Under Florida law, there is not a specific criminal offense prohibiting a person from tampering with critical infrastructure.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Creates new criminal offenses involving critical infrastructure, including:
 - Knowingly and intentionally improperly tampering with critical infrastructure that results in damage to such critical infrastructure that is \$200 or more or results in the interruption or impairment of the function of critical infrastructure which costs \$200 or more in labor and supplies to restore, punishable as a second-degree felony.
 - Trespassing on critical infrastructure as to which notice against entering or remaining in is given, punishable as a third-degree felony.
 - Willfully and knowingly accessing a computer, computer system, computer network, or electronic device owned, operated, or used by a critical infrastructure entity knowing such access is without authorization, punishable as a third-degree felony.
 - Willfully and knowingly physically tampering with or inserting a computer contaminant into a computer, computer system, computer network, or electronic device that causes a disruption in any service delivered by any critical infrastructure, punishable as a second-degree felony.



REPRESENTATIVES

**RUDMAN
& CASSEL**

The Florida Legislature is committed to protecting families by providing them with the tools they need for safe custody exchange.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects children and parents by creating safer exchanges of minor children whose parents are in shared decision-making and physical custody of the minor children.
- Provides families with a neutral safe location to conduct minor child exchanges.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- A court may prescribe a “parenting plan” by which parents are ordered to share decision-making and physical custody of a minor child. A parenting plan governs the relationship between parents relating to decisions that must be made regarding the minor child at issue and must contain a timesharing schedule for the parents and the child.
- Ideally, a parenting plan should attempt to address all issues concerning the minor child including, but not limited to, the child’s education, health care, and physical, social, and emotional well-being. The court should take into consideration all circumstances between the parents including their historic relationship, domestic violence, and other factors.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Requires parenting plans to detail the exchange of a minor child at a neutral safe exchange location.
- Requires each sheriff to designate at least one parking lot as a neutral safe exchange location equipped with a camera surveillance system.
- Amends the existing form for protection against domestic violence to require court-ordered injunctions for protection against domestic violence to designate certain locations for the exchange of a child.



REPRESENTATIVE
ROMMEL

HB 549 reaffirms Florida as a law and order state and strengthens our commitment to protect all Floridians and retail businesses from crime.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Cracks down on large-scale, coordinated retail theft like shoplifting or smash-and-grab theft that continues to plague businesses and frighten people from shopping.
- Increase penalties for porch piracy.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- It is estimated that in 2023, there was \$120 billion lost as a result of retail theft crimes.
- It is estimated that in 2022, there was \$112 billion lost as a result of retail theft crimes.
- 75% of small business retailers reported monthly losses between \$500 and \$2,500 due to theft.
- Nearly eight in ten Americans have reported having a package stolen from their front porch in 2022.
- Around 260 million packages worth nearly \$20 billion were stolen from outside homes across the U.S. in 2022.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Targets organized retail theft by:
 - Creating new penalties for smash-and-grab theft by five or more people acting in concert.
 - Enhancing penalties for committing repeated retail theft or retail theft with a firearm.
 - Widening the window to aggregate offenses from 30 to 120 days for the purpose of determining the total value of property stolen or the number of thefts committed.
- Helps prevent porch piracy by:
 - Reducing the threshold value for third degree felony theft from a dwelling or its unenclosed curtilage from \$100 to \$40.
 - Creating new felony offenses for theft of property valued at \$750 or more when taken from a dwelling or its unenclosed curtilage and theft from more than 20 dwellings or from the unenclosed curtilages of more than 20 dwellings.

SB 718

(HB 231)

REPRESENTATIVE
BAKER

EXPOSURES OF FIRST RESPONDERS TO FENTANYL AND FENTANYL ANALOGS



SB 718 reaffirms our commitment to first responders. This bill increases penalties for those who expose first responders to dangerous fentanyl drugs.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects first responders from fentanyl exposure by increasing penalties for exposing a first responder to fentanyl or fentanyl analogs.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid analgesic that is approximately 50 to 100 times more potent than morphine.
- With the increase in the illicit use of fentanyl, first responders such as law enforcement officers are increasingly coming into contact with fentanyl that is seized while making arrests and traffic stops.
- In recent years, there have been several reports of law enforcement officers suffering medical complications such as lightheadedness, heart palpitations, and nausea after being exposed to fentanyl.



BILL BASICS

- Creates a second-degree felony for a person 18 years or older who is unlawfully in possession of dangerous fentanyl or fentanyl analogs and who recklessly exposes a first responder, including a law enforcement officer, correctional officer, correctional probation officer, firefighter, emergency medical technician, or paramedic, to fentanyl or fentanyl analogs resulting in an overdose or serious bodily injury to the first responder.
- Includes ingestion, inhalation, needlestick injury, or absorption through skin or mucous membranes in the definition of “exposure.”

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE **100-12** SENATE **30-0** **STATUS**  SIGNED BY GOVERNOR

SB 758

(HB 401)

REPRESENTATIVE
OVERDORF

TRACKING DEVICES & APPLICATIONS



Floridians shouldn't have to worry about being tracked without their consent. This bill penalizes those who track another person or their property without that person's consent.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects Floridians by prohibiting a person from knowingly using a tracking device or tracking application to determine the location or movement of another person or another person's property without their consent.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Current law does not specifically prohibit the placement or the use of a tracking device or application to track another person or their property without their consent.
- With the introduction of technologies such as AirTags and other tracking devices, it is crucial for the Legislature to ensure the privacy and safety of all Floridians.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Prohibits placing a tracking device or tracking application on another person's property without that person's consent or using a tracking device or tracking application to determine the location or movement of another person or another person's property without that person's consent.
- Includes an exception for placement of a tracking device or tracking application under certain circumstances by: law enforcement officers, or any local, state, federal, or military law enforcement agency; a parent or legal guardian of a minor; a caregiver of an elderly person or disabled adult; and an owner or lessee of a motor vehicle.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 113-0 SENATE 37-0 **STATUS** PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS

SB 764

(HB 607)

REPRESENTATIVE
PLAKON

RETENTION OF SEXUAL OFFENSE EVIDENCE



Every victim of sexual assault deserves justice. This legislation provides non-reporting victims with the opportunity to seek justice if and when they are comfortable.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- We believe in supporting victims of sexual assault and bringing offenders to justice.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- While s. 943.326, F.S. currently provides specific guidance controlling the retention period and destruction of sexual assault kits collected from reporting victims, there is no clear guidance on retention or destruction procedures for sexual assault kits collected from non-reporting victims.
- A non-reporting victim is one who does not authorize reporting an offense to law enforcement. The medical provider still carries out the complete forensic and medical examination and the sexual assault kit evidence is preserved and maintained in a manner that protects the victim's identity.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Requires the retention of a sexual assault kit collected from a non-reporting victim for a minimum of 50 years.
- Requires medical facilities and certified rape crisis centers that collect such a kit to transfer the kit to Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) within 30 days of collection.
- Requires FDLE to store a sexual assault kit collected from a non-reporting victim anonymously, in a secure, environmentally safe manner and with a documented chain of custody.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 112-1 SENATE 40-0 **▶ STATUS** PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS

HB 801

REPRESENTATIVE
BUCHANAN

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE & RELATED DEMENTIA TRAINING FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT



HB 801 requires Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) to establish an online continued employment training component relating to Alzheimer's disease and related forms of dementia.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Establishes an online, continued employment training component to ensure law enforcement, correctional officers, and correctional probation officers have the opportunity to be trained on techniques to improve their interactions with Alzheimer's patients or others with a related form of dementia.
- Requires training to be developed in consultation with the Department of Elder Affairs.

CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Dementia is an overarching classification of diseases whose characteristic symptoms present difficulties with memory, language, problem solving, and other thinking skills. Included in this category is Alzheimer's disease, which accounts for 60 to 80 percent of all dementia patients.
- Current law requires each certified law enforcement officer to complete training to identify and investigate elder abuse and neglect as part of their basic training; however, there is no current requirement for law enforcement officials to complete training specifically tailored to recognizing and effectively communicating with dementia or Alzheimer's patients.

BILL BASICS

- Requires FDLE to establish an online, continued employment training component relating to Alzheimer's disease and related forms of dementia.
- Requires the training component to be developed in consultation with the Department of Elder Affairs and to include, but not be limited to, instruction on interacting with persons with Alzheimer's disease or a related form of dementia, including instruction on techniques for:
 - Recognizing behavioral symptoms and characteristics;
 - Effective communication;
 - Employing alternatives to using physical restraints; and
 - Identifying signs of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- The bill specifies that completion of the training component may count toward the 40 hours of instruction required for continued employment or appointment as a law enforcement officer, correctional officer, or correctional probation officer.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 117-0 SENATE 40-0 **STATUS**  SIGNED BY GOVERNOR

SB 1036

(HB 1449)

REPRESENTATIVES

**MICHAEL
& JACQUES**

RECLASSIFICATION OF CRIMINAL PENALTIES



We must take a stand to protect Floridians and ensure public safety.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Floridians shouldn't have to suffer because of the broken federal immigration system.
- No one should have to fear being the victim of a crime committed by an illegal immigrant who has already been deported from the United States after a felony conviction.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Federal law prohibits an alien that has been denied admission, excluded, deported, or removed or who has departed the United States while an order of exclusion, deportation, or removal is outstanding from reentering or attempting to reenter the United States, unless the Attorney General has given express consent. A violation of the prohibition is a federal crime.
- The bill defines a “transnational crime organization” as an organization that routinely facilitates the international trafficking of drugs, humans, or weapons, or the international smuggling of humans.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Reclassifies felony offenses to the next higher level in cases when:
 - A person has been previously convicted of a crime relating to unlawful reentry to the United States pursuant to 8 U.S.C. s. 1326; and
 - That person commits a felony offense in Florida after his or her federal conviction.
- Provides similar reclassifications of criminal penalties when a defendant is convicted of committing a misdemeanor or felony for the purpose of benefiting, promoting, or furthering the interests of a transnational crime organization.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 83-30 SENATE 32-0 **▶ STATUS** SIGNED BY GOVERNOR



REPRESENTATIVE
STEELE

We believe in protecting our most vulnerable populations, specifically our seniors, children, and people with disabilities.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects a person's image and likeness – which is integral in preserving their individual rights.
- Increases penalties for schemes to defraud when committed against people over 65, minors, and people with disabilities.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Current law defines a “scheme to defraud” as a systematic, ongoing course of conduct with intent to defraud one or more persons, or with intent to obtain property from one or more persons by false or fraudulent pretenses, representations, or promises or willful misrepresentations of a future act.
- Current law prohibits a person from committing organized fraud by engaging in a scheme to defraud and thereby obtaining property.
- Current law also prohibits a person from committing communications fraud by engaging in a scheme to defraud and, in furtherance of that scheme, communicating with any person with intent to obtain property from that person.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Reclassifies the criminal penalty for organized fraud and communications fraud offenses that are committed against a person 65 years of age or older, a minor, or a person with a mental or physical disability to the next higher degree.
- Prohibits a person from committing organized fraud or communications fraud by utilizing false or fraudulent endorsements of nonconsenting parties.
- Creates a civil cause of action for any person whose image or likeness was used without their consent in a scheme to defraud, enabling that person to recover an amount for damages caused by the use of his or her image or likeness.



JUVENILE JUSTICE

REPRESENTATIVE
JACQUES

Ensuring public safety is one of the most important roles of government. By holding juvenile offenders who commit serious gun crimes accountable for their actions, we will better protect Florida's communities.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Provides the tools needed to hold juvenile offenders accountable and protect our communities from gun violence.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Generally, to arrest a person for a misdemeanor offense, such as possession of a firearm by a minor, the offense must occur in the officer's presence or the officer must obtain an arrest warrant. The time it takes for an officer to obtain an arrest warrant and subsequently arrest the juvenile may result in the officer being too late to prevent the juvenile from harming himself or herself, or others, or from committing another offense with the firearm.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Improves public safety by:
 - Prohibiting a juvenile charged with an offense involving the use or possession of a firearm from being issued a delinquency citation (renamed from civil citation).
 - Authorizing a law enforcement officer to make a warrantless arrest of a juvenile if the officer determines there is probable cause to believe the juvenile is unlawfully in possession of a firearm in violation of s. 790.22(3), F.S.
 - Requiring a juvenile who violates the terms of electronic monitoring to be held in secure detention until a detention hearing.
 - Authorizing a juvenile who is on probation for committing a felony firearm offense to be held in secure detention for up to 21 days if taken into custody for committing a specified violation of probation.
 - Requiring a juvenile who is adjudicated delinquent by a court for committing any offense or attempted offense involving the use of a firearm to be placed on conditional release for one year once he or she is released from a juvenile commitment program.
- Enhances the juvenile justice system by:
 - Requiring a court to consider, rather than use, the results of Department of Juvenile Justice's (DJJ) risk assessment instrument when determining whether to continue to detain a juvenile.
 - Requiring DJJ to establish a class on the consequences of committing firearm offenses.
 - Increasing the penalty for introducing contraband into a DJJ facility to a second-degree felony and prohibiting a person from introducing any currency, cigarettes, or tobacco products into a DJJ facility.
 - Providing minimum standards and requirements for conditional release.

SB 1286

(HB 485)

REPRESENTATIVES

**BRACKETT
& BARNABY**

RETURN OF WEAPONS & ARMS FOLLOWING AN ARREST



We believe in upholding the Second Amendment. SB 1286 ensures lawfully owned weapons and firearms are returned in a safe and timely manner following an arrest when the weapon or firearm is not seized as evidence or otherwise subject to forfeiture.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects the constitutional rights of all Floridians by requiring law enforcement to return any lawfully owned weapons or firearms within 30 days under certain circumstances after an arrest.
- Provides a process for Floridians to retrieve their lawfully owned weapons or firearms after an arrest when certain conditions are met.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Current law requires a law enforcement officer to take possession of any weapon or firearm found upon an arrested person and, for a weapon or firearm that is seized as evidence, provides for the return or forfeiture of such a weapon or firearm depending on the outcome of the criminal proceeding.
- However, current law is silent on how a weapon or firearm that is seized from an arrested person that is not needed as evidence should be disposed of. Thus, the procedures and requirements for the return of such weapons or firearms vary by jurisdiction.



BILL BASICS

- Repeals requirement for a sheriff or chief of police to retain custody of all weapons or firearms seized incident to an arrest until after the trial of the person arrested and requires a law enforcement agency to return any weapons or firearms which are taken from a person following an arrest, but that are not seized as evidence or seized and subject to forfeiture under the Florida Contraband Forfeiture Act upon request of the person arrested within 30 days after such request is made if he or she:
 - Has been released from detention;
 - Provides a form of government-issued photographic identification; and
 - Successfully completes a criminal history background check confirming the person is not prohibited from possessing a firearm under state or federal law, including not having any prohibition arising from an injunction, a risk protection order, or any other court order prohibiting the person from possessing a firearm.
- Prohibits a sheriff or chief of police from requiring a court order to release weapons or firearms that are not seized as evidence in a criminal proceeding unless there are competing claims of ownership of such weapons or firearms.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 110-1 SENATE 32-8 **STATUS** SIGNED BY GOVERNOR



DIGITAL VOYEURISM

REPRESENTATIVE
CASSEL

The Florida Legislature is committed to protecting Floridians and their privacy from emerging digital threats.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Allows prosecutors to charge future offenders with as many counts of digital voyeurism as they have truly committed.
- Protects the most vulnerable from those who wish to invade their privacy and exploit them.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Currently, a first video voyeurism offense, even those involving dissemination of the unlawfully captured images or recordings, is not listed on the offense severity ranking chart (OSRC), so the penalty for any first offense is the same regardless of the conduct.
- A South Florida woman's stepfather used a hidden camera inside her toilet and facing the mirror to capture the woman's most private moments. The hidden camera ultimately captured thousands of hours of footage over the course of a year. The perpetrator was only charged with one count of digital voyeurism and sentenced to less than one year in jail.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Renames "video voyeurism" to "digital voyeurism" to reflect the crime's inclusion of additional forms of media.
- Strengthens the penalties for digital voyeurism offenses, including by increasing the OSRC levels for specified offenses.
- Reclassifies the penalty for a digital voyeurism offense to the next highest felony level and OSRC level if a person is 19 years of age or older and is a family or household member of the victim or holds a position of authority or trust with the victim.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 116-0 SENATE 35-0 **▶ STATUS** PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS



REPRESENTATIVE
PLAKON

Public safety is a top priority. Driving without a license poses a significant threat to the safety of our roadways and all who use them. HB 1589 strengthens penalties on those who operate a motor vehicle without ever having obtained a valid license.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Strengthens the punishment of driving without a valid driver license to improve safety for Floridians on the road.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- In Florida, unless exempted, a person may not drive a motor vehicle on a highway unless he or she has a valid driver license.
- A person who drives without ever having been issued a valid driver license commits an offense of no valid driver license (NVDL).
- Under current law, no matter how many offenses of NVDL a person commits, the offense is only punishable as a second degree misdemeanor.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Increases the criminal penalties applicable to an offense of NVDL — under the bill, a person commits a:
 - Second degree misdemeanor, upon a first conviction.
 - First degree misdemeanor, upon a second conviction.
 - First degree misdemeanor, and must serve 10 days in jail for a third or subsequent conviction.



REPRESENTATIVE
OVERDORF

Florida has taken a strong stance against human trafficking. HB 7063 continues our fight against modern-day slavery.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Seeks to prevent Floridians from falling victim to human trafficking.
- Ensures Florida does not do business with human traffickers.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery which involves the transporting, soliciting, recruiting, harboring, providing, enticing, maintaining, purchasing, patronizing, procuring, or obtaining of another person for the purpose of exploiting that person.
- Current Florida law mandates use of the National Human Trafficking Hotline number on human trafficking awareness signs required to be posted by specified entities.
- Current law allows some entities to display either the National Human Trafficking Hotline number, a number that Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) uses to detect and stop human trafficking, or the number to a local law enforcement agency.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Extends the future repeal date of the direct-support organization for the Statewide Council on Human Trafficking.
- Revises the hotline number required to be included in human trafficking awareness signs.
- Modifies reporting procedures and awareness sign requirements to require the use of the Florida Human Trafficking Hotline number instead of the National Human Trafficking Hotline Number.
- Requires nongovernmental entities to provide an affidavit, signed under penalty of perjury, attesting that coercion is not used for labor or services when executing, renewing, or extending contracts with governmental entities.
- Prohibits owners, managers, employees, or contractors of an adult entertainment establishment from knowingly employing, contracting with, or contracting with another person to employ, or otherwise permitting a person younger than 21 years of age to work in an adult entertainment establishment.

FLORIDA HOUSE *of* REPRESENTATIVES

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

2024

STATE AFFAIRS



SB 328

(HB 1239)

REPRESENTATIVE
LOPEZ, V.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING



SB 328 updates the Live Local Act – a transformational, market-driven combination of policies to provide attainable housing options for Floridians at every income level and stage of life.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Expedites the development of affordable housing.
- Provides flexibility for local governments to incentivize affordable housing developments.
- Lowers the barrier to entry for developers to provide new affordable housing.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Live Local Act preempts certain county and municipal zoning and land use decisions to encourage development of affordable multifamily rental housing in targeted land use areas. Specifically, the act requires counties and municipalities to allow a multifamily or mixed-use residential rental development in any area zoned for commercial, industrial, or mixed-use if the development meets certain affordability requirements.
- The Hometown Hero Program is a homeownership assistance program that provides access to zero-interest rate loans to reduce the amount of down payment and closing costs for homebuyers, including those employed in certain necessary professions such as law enforcement officers, educators, healthcare professionals, active duty military, and veterans.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Modifies the parking reduction requirements for qualifying developments by requiring local governments to reduce parking requirements by 20 percent under certain circumstances.
- Modifies certain provisions pertaining to the zoning and land use preemption for approving affordable multifamily rental developments.
- Provides that nothing in the act precludes a local government from granting a bonus, variance, conditional use, or other special exception for height, density, or floor area ratio in addition to the required entitlements.
- Appropriates \$100 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund to the Florida Housing Finance Corporation to implement the Florida Hometown Hero Program.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 112-1 SENATE 40-0 **▶ STATUS** PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS



REPRESENTATIVES

**BORRERO
& GREGORY**

Florida's success is built into our state constitution. We benefit from new ideas and better government with constitutionally mandated term limits. HCR 693 affirms Florida's support for imposing constitutional term limits on Congress.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Calls for a constitutional convention to propose a constitutional amendment to limit the number of terms a member of Congress may serve.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Article V of the U.S. Constitution provides the specific process for amending the Constitution. One method allows application by the legislatures of two-thirds of the states which will require Congress to call a convention for the purpose of proposing amendments. The concurrent resolution constitutes Florida's application to Congress under Article V of the U.S. Constitution.



BILL BASICS

- Applies to Congress to call for a constitutional convention to propose a constitutional amendment to limit the number of terms a member of Congress may serve.
- Revokes the application if it is used for the purpose of calling a convention, or used in support of conducting a convention, with any agenda other than to limit the number of terms a member of Congress may serve.



REPRESENTATIVES

**SIROIS
& GREGORY**

Florida's success is built into our state constitution. Our balanced budget requirement protects our state's fiscal health. The federal government completely lacks fiscal discipline, and national financial collapse is certain unless we change direction by enacting clear, constitutional spending limits.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Calls for a constitutional convention to propose a constitutional amendment to limit federal spending to the amount of tax and other revenue the government collects.
- Ensures a balanced budget would not endanger national security by requiring a balanced budget only in the absence of a national emergency.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Article V of the U.S. Constitution provides the specific process for amending the Constitution. One method allows application by the legislatures of two-thirds of the states which will require Congress to call a convention for the purpose of proposing amendments. The concurrent resolution constitutes Florida's application to Congress under Article V of the U.S. Constitution.



BILL BASICS

- Applies to Congress to call for a constitutional convention to propose a constitutional amendment to require a balanced federal budget.
- Revokes the application if it is used for the purpose of calling a convention, or used in support of conducting a convention, with any agenda other than to require a balanced federal budget.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE USE IN POLITICAL ADVERTISING



The Florida Election Code requires certain disclaimers for political communications (e.g., who has paid for the communication) – but does not address the emerging threat of artificial intelligence (AI), which can be used to deceive voters and damage political rivals.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Sets specific requirements for a disclaimer that must be included when using AI to produce certain political media.
- Clarifies this disclaimer is in addition to any other disclaimer required for campaign finance purposes.

CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Florida Election Code requires political advertisements to have certain disclaimers, such as statements disclosing who is paying for the political advertisement, along with their address, the name of the candidate, the candidate's party affiliation, and the office sought.
- Concerns have emerged regarding the use of AI in political campaigns and election-related activities, including voter misinformation by chatbots, phishing scams on election officials through AI-generated voices, and the use of “deepfakes” in political advertising (artificially manipulated audio or video content).

BILL BASICS

- Requires a disclaimer for political communications that contain an image, a video, audio, graphic, or other digital content that was created using AI and appear to depict a real person performing an action that did not occur.
- Defines “generative artificial intelligence” as a machine-based system that can, for a given set of human-defined objectives, emulate the structure and characteristics of input data in order to generate derived synthetic content including images, videos, audio, text, and other digital content.
- States that, in addition to any civil penalties provided by law, a person identified pursuant to another disclaimer required for campaign finance purposes who is required to include the AI disclaimer and fails to do so commits a first-degree misdemeanor.



HB 1329 prioritizes veterans' needs by providing enhanced support for veterans and their families and prioritizing the historical significance of their service throughout history.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Collects and preserves the stories and experiences of Florida's veterans and military contributions throughout the nation's history with the Florida Veterans' History Program.
- Increases aid to veterans by expanding the role of the non-profit corporation Florida is for Veterans, Inc. (Veterans Florida).

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Services for veterans include:
 - The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA): Provides statewide outreach to connect veterans with services, benefits, and support. FDVA utilizes Veterans Florida to promote Florida as a veteran-friendly state and administers the Veterans Employment and Training Services Program, which connects veterans with employers.
 - The Advisory Council on Brain and Spinal Cord Injuries: Created within the Department of Health and administers the Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Program, whose purpose is to provide all eligible residents who sustain a brain or spinal cord injury with health care services.
 - The Department of State's Division of Arts and Culture: The state's arts agency and promotes access to cultural opportunities through various programs and grants.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Creates the Florida Veterans' History Program.
- Solidifies Veterans Florida's role as the state's initial point of military transition assistance for veterans and their spouses by expanding employment outreach, marketing, and support services activities of Veterans Florida and expanding its role in assisting with industry certification.
- Exempts honorably discharged disabled veterans from hunting and fishing license and permit fees.
- Requires middle and high school students to receive instruction on the history and importance of Veterans' Day and Memorial Day.



REPRESENTATIVE
YEAGER

Forced labor is a horrible and demeaning practice. Unfortunately, forced labor is used in many parts of the world and has a hand in many of the products consumed in the United States. HB 1331 takes steps to make sure Florida does not contribute to forced labor practices.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Takes a stand against forced labor practices.
- Creates a list of vendors who use forced labor to provide commodities and prohibits state government from contracting with them.



CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Department of Management Services (DMS) maintains a vendor list based on the vendor registration process, and may remove from the vendor list any source of supply that fails to fulfill any of its duties specified in a contract. DMS also maintains the following lists of disqualified, scrutinized, or removed vendors:
 - Suspended Vendor List.
 - Convicted Vendor List.
 - Discriminatory Vendor List.
 - Antitrust Violator Vendor List.
 - Scrutinized List of Prohibited Companies.



BILL BASICS

- Requires DMS to create and maintain a forced labor vendor list (List) of companies that have provided an agency with a commodity produced, in whole or in part, by forced labor.
- Prohibits vendors from submitting a bid, proposal, or reply to an agency, or entering into or renewing a contract to provide goods or services to an agency, after its placement on the List and agencies may not accept a bid, proposal, or reply from, or enter into or renew any contract with, a vendor that is on the List.

HB 1615

RESTRICTIONS ON FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION DURING EMERGENCIES



REPRESENTATIVE

GREGORY & SIROIS

HB 1615 would have protected Floridians' Second Amendment rights during an emergency.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Would have protected the constitutional rights of all Floridians by repealing prohibitions on the sale of ammunition and firearms during an emergency declared by a local government.
- Would have ensured Floridians have the ability to exercise the right to bear arms and protect themselves and families during an emergency.

CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The State Emergency Management Act authorizes counties and municipalities to declare a state of local emergency under certain conditions and to issue orders and rules having the full force and effect of the law.
- Current law also authorizes certain county and municipal officers to declare a “public disorder state of local emergency” in situations involving overt acts of violence or imminent threats thereof, within their jurisdictions provided the Governor has not declared a state of emergency. The public disorder state of local emergency remains in effect for 72 hours unless terminated earlier by the public official issuing the order, Governor, county commission, or city council. An extension beyond the 72-hour period may be granted provided certain requirements are met.
- Upon a declaration of a public disorder state of local emergency, the sale or intentional display in a store of ammunition or firearms is automatically prohibited. In addition, the intentional possession of a firearm in a public place by any person other than law enforcement is also automatically prohibited. A violation of the prohibition is punishable as a first-degree misdemeanor. The prohibition may not be construed to authorize the seizure, taking, or confiscation of firearms that are lawfully possessed, unless a person is engaged in a criminal act.

BILL BASICS

- Would have repealed prohibitions during a public disorder state of local emergency on:
 - The sale of, or offer to sell, with or without consideration, any ammunition or gun or other firearm of any size or description.
 - The intentional display, after the emergency is declared, by or in any store or shop of any ammunition or gun or other firearm of any size or description.
 - The intentional possession in a public place of a firearm by any person, except a duly authorized law enforcement official or person in military service acting in the official performance of her or his duty.

FLOOR VOTES HOUSE 86-23  **STATUS**  **PASSED HOUSE ONLY**



The Florida Way requires us to retain only what works and eliminate what does not. We should dissolve inactive special districts if they no longer serve a purpose.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Increases government efficiency by eliminating inactive special districts that no longer serve a purpose.

CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Special districts are units of local government created for a particular purpose, with jurisdiction to operate within a limited geographic boundary. Special districts are created by general law, special act, local ordinance, or rule of the Governor and Cabinet. A special district has only those powers expressly provided by, or reasonably implied from, the authority provided in the district's charter.
- The Department of Commerce must declare a special district inactive if it meets certain criteria. Declaring a special district inactive does not dissolve the district or otherwise cease its legal existence. Subsequent action is required to repeal the legal authority creating the district, whether by the Legislature or the county or municipality that created the district.

BILL BASICS

- Dissolves inactive special districts including:
 - Calhoun County Transportation Authority.
 - Dead Lakes Water Management District.
 - Highland View Water and Sewer District.
 - West Orange Airport Authority.
- Dissolves the Sunny Isles Reclamation and Water Controls Board, which was created by an outdated circuit court petition process.



The Florida Way requires us to retain only what works and eliminate what does not. The state has a vast network of special districts with the power to tax, spend, and regulate. We must ensure they are accountable, efficient, and transparent.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Increases government transparency, accountability, and efficiency by making needed reforms to special districts.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Special districts are units of local government created for a particular purpose, with jurisdiction to operate within a limited geographic boundary. Special districts are created by general law, special act, local ordinance, or rule of the Governor and Cabinet.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- STRENGTHENS ACCOUNTABILITY
 - Holds elected special district members accountable by establishing a 12-year term limit for popularly elected boards beginning November 5, 2024.
 - Ensures voters will not be held responsible for an inactive special district's debt by only allowing the use of funds to service outstanding debt and to meet the requirements of bond covenants and other contractual obligations.
 - Reduces the maximum ad valorem millage rate a mosquito control district can levy from 10 mills to 1 mill, but allows them to increase the millage rate up to a maximum of 2 mills if approved by district voters in a referendum held during a general election.
 - Requires legislative approval to change the boundaries of most types of independent special districts.
- INCREASES EFFICIENCY
 - Requires all special districts to adopt goals and objectives, as well as performance measures and standards to determine if those goals and objectives are being achieved.
 - Repeals outdated provisions that allow a special district to convert itself into a municipality without legislative approval.
- IMPROVES TRANSPARENCY
 - Ensures every volunteer firefighter has completed the required training and certifications by requiring all independent special fire control districts to annually certify whether volunteer firefighters serving the district have met certification requirements.
 - Ensures effective and efficient use of taxpayer funds by requiring mosquito control districts to submit a tentative work plan and budget, thereby maintaining eligibility to receive state funds for arthropod control.



REPRESENTATIVE
ALVAREZ

It's time for Congress to play by the same rules it imposes on the American people.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Calls for a constitutional convention to propose a constitutional amendment to prohibit Congress from excluding itself from any law it passes.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Article V of the U.S. Constitution provides the specific process for amending the Constitution. One method allows application by the legislatures of two-thirds of the states which will require Congress to call a convention for the purpose of proposing amendments. The concurrent resolution constitutes Florida's application to Congress under Article V of the U.S. Constitution.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Applies to Congress to call for a constitutional convention to propose a constitutional amendment to prohibit Congress from excluding itself from any law it passes.
- Revokes the application if it is used for the purpose of calling a convention, or used in support of conducting a convention, with any agenda other than to prohibit Congress from excluding itself from any law it passes.

LINE-ITEM VETO



REPRESENTATIVE
ALVAREZ

Limited government leads to a free and prosperous nation. A line-item veto would let the President veto wasteful pork stuffed into spending bills by Congress.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Calls for a constitutional convention to propose a constitutional amendment to give the President line-item veto authority for spending provisions.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- Article V of the U.S. Constitution provides the specific process for amending the Constitution. One method allows application by the legislatures of two-thirds of the states which will require Congress to call a convention for the purpose of proposing amendments. The concurrent resolution constitutes Florida's application to Congress under Article V of the U.S. Constitution.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Applies to Congress to call for a constitutional convention to propose a constitutional amendment to give the President line-item veto authority for spending provisions.
- Revokes the application if it is used for the purpose of calling a convention, or used in support of conducting a convention, with any agenda other than to give the President line-item veto authority for spending provisions.



REPRESENTATIVE
CARUSO

Florida is committed to protecting the state's financial interests.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Protects finances in Florida by prohibiting the State Board of Administration (SBA) from acquiring certain holdings in companies owned or controlled by Chinese government entities (Chinese companies) on behalf of the Florida Retirement System (FRS) Trust Fund.
- Ensures financial safety by mandating the board review and identify any investments in Chinese companies and develop a divestment plan.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The SBA is responsible for investing the assets of the FRS Pension Plan and administering the FRS Investment Plan.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Prohibits the SBA from acquiring, on behalf of the FRS Trust Fund, direct holdings in a Chinese company and ensures financial safety by initiating a review of all current direct holdings to determine which, if any, include securities of a Chinese company.
- Requires the SBA to develop a divestment plan consistent with its fiduciary standards for all direct holdings in Chinese companies.
- Specifies that the SBA is exempt from its typical fiduciary duty (to only invest based on pecuniary factors) when divesting from Chinese companies.

FLORIDA HOUSE *of* REPRESENTATIVES

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS 2024

WAYS & MEANS/APPROPRIATIONS



TAX HIGHLIGHTS

• CORPORATE INCOME TAX

- **Creates** a corporate income tax credit for corporations that hire persons with disabilities— 3 years/\$5m per year
- **Modifies** the timing for applications for a tax credit for certain short line railroads

• INSURANCE PREMIUM TAX

- **Provides** a deduction from premiums for residential property insurance policies; provides a corresponding tax credit to insurers

• DOCUMENTARY STAMP TAX

- **Limits** documentary stamp tax assessments for reverse mortgages
- **Provides** a temporary exemption on certain notes and obligations issued by an alarm system contractor

MULTI-TAX CREDITS

- **Increases** the cap for the Strong Families Tax Credit from \$20 million to \$40 million annually
- **Creates** a tax credit for businesses that operate a child care facility or pay for childcare at other child care facilities on behalf of employees

• OTHER

- **Provides** automatic return filing extensions for sales tax and corporate income tax in certain emergencies
- **Creates** a \$30 million distribution of General Revenue for 30 years to cancer centers at the University of Miami and the Mayo Clinic and cancer and neurological disease centers at the University of Florida (10m each per year)
- **Provides** a one-year rate reduction for a natural gas fuel tax slated to become effective January 1, 2026
- **Modifies** several provisions related to the Department of Revenue and tax administration



SALES TAX HOLIDAYS

• **BACK TO SCHOOL**

14 DAYS (JULY/AUGUST)

- Clothing Items priced \$100 or less
- School Supplies priced \$50 or less
- Computers and Related Accessories priced \$1,500 or less
- Learning Aids and Puzzles priced \$30 or less

• **DISASTER PREPAREDNESS**

14 DAYS JUNE & 14 DAYS AUGUST/SEPTEMBER

For specified disaster preparedness supplies for families and their pets

• **FREEDOM MONTH**

ALL OF JULY

For specified recreational items and activities

• **TOOLS FOR SKILLED WORKERS**

7 DAYS

- Tools Used In Trades—Power Tools, Tool Belts and Boxes, etc.



TAX HIGHLIGHTS

SALES TAX

- **Allows** Duval County to levy an indigent care sales surtax if approved by voters
- **Allows** a leasing company to pay tax on its purchase of a motor vehicle, instead of collecting and remitting tax on the lease or rental of the vehicle to customers
- **Makes permanent** a sales tax distribution for horsebreeding and racing promotion
- **Creates** a mechanism for the disposition of local optionsales surtaxes when collected under a provision laterfound to be unconstitutional

PROPERTY TAX

- **Expands** the ad valorem tax assessment limitations for renewable energy source devices to include facilities used to capture and convert biogas to renewable natural gas
- **Clarifies** when tangible personal property constructed by an electric utility is deemed substantially completed
- **Extends** the time in which a property owner may begin rebuilding homestead property and continue to maintain homestead property tax benefits from 3 years to 5 years
- **Relieves** homestead property tax taxpayers from owing back taxes under certain circumstances
- **Allows** Monroe County to exempt smaller affordable housing projects than the Live Local Act originally allowed and clarifies what is considered a part of a unit's value
- **Allows** taxing authorities to “opt-out” of providing a property tax exemption to certain aordable housing units if that area has sucient aordable housing
- **Provides** a new exemption for certain long-term affordable housing projects
- **Provides** a reimbursement to fiscally constrained counties that issue refunds of property taxes for homeowners who were out of their homes for more than 30 days due to a hurricane





MILLAGE RATES

REPRESENTATIVE
GARRISON

HB 1195 would have provided that any millage rate increase must be agreed to by a two-thirds vote.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Would have protected Floridians from higher taxes.

CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The governing body of a county, a municipality, or an independent special district votes to adopt the yearly millage rates. By a majority vote, a governing board can adopt the maximum millage rate calculated using the formula outlined in the Florida Constitution.

BILL BASICS

- Would have required that any millage rate increase be agreed to by at least a two-thirds vote by the governing body responsible for setting rates.



HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION

REPRESENTATIVE
BUCHANAN

Home values and property taxes are on the rise, and the Florida Legislature is committed to addressing runaway inflation and housing affordability.

MAJOR MESSAGES

- Builds on our commitment to affordable housing and protects Floridians from future inflation by giving voters an opportunity to cut property taxes.

★ CRUCIAL CONTEXT

- The Florida Constitution requires all property to be assessed at just value (fair market value) as of January 1 of each year for purposes of ad valorem taxation. The taxable value against which local governments levy tax rates each year reflects the just value as reduced by any applicable exemptions allowed by the Florida Constitution. One such exemption is on the assessed value between \$50,000 and \$75,000 which is exempt from all ad valorem taxes other than school district taxes.

🔍 BILL BASICS

- Proposes an amendment to the Florida Constitution requiring the \$25,000 of assessed value amount between \$50,000 and \$75,000, which is exempt from all ad valorem taxes other than school district taxes, be adjusted annually for positive inflation growth.
- Ensures the homestead exemption cannot decrease by applying an adjustment only when inflation increases.

BUDGET OVERVIEW & STATEWIDE ISSUES

FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025



The Florida Legislature's balanced budget includes investment in critical infrastructure needs, paying off state debts early, funding education options for all Florida students, and improving healthcare access and affordability. As Florida's economy continues to expand and grow, we must be fiscally conservative to ensure our state is prepared for the next catastrophic event. **Florida's economic strength is built on a generation of not spending more than we take in** and making sound, strategic investments toward long-term resilience and growth.

This budget makes critical investments in our environment, infrastructure, education, public safety, and long-term growth.

☆ — Indicates important or historic investment

OVERVIEW

The budget totals \$117.5 billion (\$49.4 billion General Revenue, \$30.2 billion State Trust Funds, and \$37.9 billion Federal Trust Funds) and includes funding for 113,630 authorized positions.

The overall budget is a decrease of \$1.6 billion (1.4%) from the current year budget. General Revenue spending is increased by \$1.8 billion (3.7%) over the current year. **The total recurring General Revenue budget is considerably less than the available recurring revenues to ensure a structurally balanced spending plan.**

SUMMARY

- ☆ • **The budget maintains planned reserves totaling \$10 billion.**
 - General Revenue Fund Unallocated = \$5.1 billion.
 - Budget Stabilization Fund (BSF) = \$4.4 billion including a transfer of \$300 million from the General Revenue Fund.
 - Emergency Preparedness and Response Fund = \$500 million.
- ☆ • **The budget provides \$500 million to the State Board of Administration to retire state debt early.**
- **The budget provides \$450 million for the Toll Relief Program.**
- **The budget repurposes a portion of previously appropriated federal American Rescue Plan State Fiscal Recovery Funds to ensure funds will be obligated by the federal deadline of December 31, 2024. The repurposed funds are appropriated for the following:**
 - \$100 million for the Hometown Hero Program (SB 328).
 - \$77.8 million to sustain and expand mental health forensic bed capacity.

BUDGET OVERVIEW & STATEWIDE ISSUES

FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025



- \$41.8 million for construction cost increases for Special Facility Construction projects for Calhoun, Jackson, and Okeechobee school districts.
- \$20 million to purchase generators for eligible fiscally constrained counties to ensure they can provide air-conditioned emergency sheltering for their citizens.

ADMINISTERED FUNDS

- **Salary Increases \$272.4 M (\$143.5 M GR)**

- Increases salaries for all state employees by 3% or at least \$1,000 (\$261 M).
- Increases salaries to assist with recruitment and retention for the Agency for Health Care Administration (\$6.7 M); Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (\$3 M); and the Department of Law Enforcement (\$1.5 M).
- Increases salaries for Florida National Guard members on full-time military duty (\$0.2 M).

- ☆ • **Florida Retirement System (FRS) Benefits \$5.3 M (\$3.2 M GR)**

- Allows FRS members who retire or complete DROP to return to work after six months, without any penalty.
- Closes the Preservation of Benefits Plan to new members after July 1, 2026. The Plan provides additional benefits to retirees whose maximum benefit exceeds federal IRS limitations.

- **State Employees Health Insurance \$539.6 M (\$485.4 M GR)**

- Increases employer-paid premiums by approximately 10%; employee and retiree premiums are not increased (\$109.6 M).
- Allows Florida College System institutions to participate in the State Group Health Insurance program (\$80 M).
- Transfers \$350 M nonrecurring from General Revenue to the State Employees' Health Insurance Trust Fund to maintain a positive balance in the trust fund.
- Continues the administrative health assessment that agencies pay for vacant positions and again directs reverted agency salaries and benefits funds from the General Revenue Fund to the State Employees' Health Insurance Trust Fund at the end of the fiscal year.

- **State Matching Funds for FEMA Disaster Grants \$376.4 M GR** – provides state matching funds based on the most recent quarterly report from the Division of Emergency Management.

- **Domestic Security Projects \$55.2 M TF** – provides budget authority for federal grants.

BUDGET OVERVIEW & STATEWIDE ISSUES

FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025



EDUCATION FIXED CAPITAL OUTLAY

TOTAL BUDGET for FY 2024-25: \$2 B (\$268 M GR)

REDUCTION ISSUES

- **Reduced Debt Service Payment Requirements \$186.7 M TF** – associated with the retirement of previous bond issues.

SUMMARY

- **PECO Maintenance and Projects Funding \$1.2 B (\$268 M GR)** – Funds provided from PECO cash estimates and General Revenue. No new bonding is authorized.
- ① - **Charter School Capital Outlay \$230.8 M TF** – Provides state funds for charter school capital outlay.
- **Special Facilities Construction \$193.2 M TF** – Continues funding for projects in Gadsden, Glades, and Putnam counties, including construction cost increases, and starts new projects in Gilchrist, Hendry, and Wakulla counties.
- **State University Projects \$616.2 M (\$186.2 M GR)** – Provides funds for capital outlay projects at 11 state universities.
- **Florida College Projects \$133.6 M (\$61.4 M GR)** – Provides funds for capital outlay projects at 19 Florida colleges.
- **Public Schools and Workforce Projects \$28.4 M (\$19.2 M GR)** – Provides funds for capital outlay projects in 13 school districts.
- **Other PECO Projects \$29.7 M TF** – Funds capital outlay projects for the Developmental Research (Laboratory) Schools and FCS/SUS Charter Schools millage equivalent (\$9.2 M); Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind (\$13.5 M); Public Broadcasting Stations (\$6.3 M); and Division of Blind Services (\$0.6 M).
- **State University Capital Improvement Fee Projects \$50.5 M TF** – Authorizes fixed capital outlay projects from student capital improvement fee revenues.
- **Capital Outlay and Debt Service Projects \$6 M** – Increases authority for fixed capital outlay projects from revenues received from motor vehicle license tax revenues by school districts and Florida colleges.



OVERVIEW

The PreK-12 Appropriations Subcommittee overall budget totals \$21 billion (\$15.7 billion General Revenue and \$5.3 billion Trust Funds). Includes funding for 1,046 authorized positions.

There is a 1.8% increase in the total spending and a 6.2% increase in general revenue funds over the current fiscal year appropriation.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ☆ ⬆ • **Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP)** - \$28.4 B (\$15.5 B State Funds and \$12.9 B Local Funds) – Provides an increase in total FEFP funds of \$1.8 B (6.73% increase) over current year. Provides an increase of \$240.01 (2.75%) for a total funds per student of \$8,958.59.
 - **Base FEFP Funding \$1.3 B** – Provides an increase in the Base FEFP to help offset the additional operating costs associated with items such as payroll and retirement changes.
- ☆ - **Classroom Teachers and Other Instructional Personnel Salary Increases \$201.8 M** – Increases the base FEFP funding by \$201.8 M with proviso that states these funds are provided for school districts and charter schools to provide salary increases to full-time classroom teachers and certified prekindergarten teachers funded in the FEFP and other instructional personnel.
 - **Required Local Effort (RLE)** – Maintains the fiscal year 2023-2024 statewide average millage rate of 3.189 and increases the aggregate RLE by \$483.4 M.
- ⬆ • **Voluntary Prekindergarten Program (VPK)** – Provides a 3% increase in the base student allocation (BSA) for the VPK program; \$88 increase for the regular school year and \$75 increase for the summer program.
- ☆ • **School Readiness Program Allocation** – Provides \$46.4 M in additional School Readiness Program funds to implement the statutorily-established provider reimbursement rates for Fiscal Year 2024-2025.
- ☆ • **School Readiness Hold Harmless Funds** – Provides \$60 M to assist early learning coalitions in the transition to the new allocation methodology for the School Readiness Program fund for Fiscal Year 2024-2025.
- **Gold Seal Quality Care Program Allocation \$70 M** – Restores funds for the Gold Seal Quality Care Allocation for school readiness providers.
- ☆ • **School Hardening Grants \$42 M** – Provides funds for school hardening grants for school districts to address security risk issues.

PREK-12

FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 | Rep. Tomkow



- ☆ • **Security for Jewish Day Schools** – Provides a total of \$20 M to fund operational costs associated with school security and fixed capital outlay costs associated with school hardening to improve school security.
- ↑ ☆ • **New World Scholarship Accounts** – Provides \$20 M to fund the increase in the amount of the reading and math scholarship award to \$1,200 and to fund VPK students who are determined eligible for the scholarship.
- **Florida Civics Seal of Excellence** – Provides \$10 M to fund a \$3,000 stipend to classroom teachers who earn a civics certificate or endorsement.
- ☆ • **Transportation Stipend** – Provides \$14 M to fund the new transportation stipend for parents of kindergarten through grade 8 students who choose a Florida nonvirtual public school for their child/children to attend instead of the assigned public school.
- NEW ☆ • **VPK Summer Bridge Program** – Provides \$4.1 M for the new VPK Summer Bridge Program for VPK students who score below the 10th percentile on the final administration of the coordinated progress monitoring system.
- **SAT and ACT Exam Administration** – Provides \$8 M to the Department of Education to provide free college entrance exams to approximately 200,000 grade 11 public school students.
- NEW ☆ • **Menstrual Hygiene Products Grant Program** – Provides \$6.4 M for a grant program for school districts providing menstrual hygiene products pursuant to current law.
- NEW ☆ • **School Safety Inspection Bonus Program** – Provides \$3.8 M to provide a \$1,000 bonus to each public school principal and charter school director who complies with all school safety requirements established in law or rule.

HEALTH CARE

FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 | Rep. Garrison



OVERVIEW

The Health Care Appropriations Subcommittee overall budget totals \$46.5 billion (\$16.2 billion General Revenue and \$30.3 billion Trust Funds). Includes funding for 31,130 authorized positions.

There is a 1.9% decrease in the total spending and a 5.9% increase in general revenue funds over the current fiscal year appropriation including a net increase of 70.5 FTE.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Medicaid Price Level and Workload Adjustment \$804.6 M (\$465.7 M GR)** – Funding for Medicaid caseloads and price level adjustments for the 2024-2025 fiscal year as agreed upon by the January 2024 Social Service Estimating Conference for an anticipated 4,793,628 Medicaid beneficiaries.
- ☆ • **Florida KidCare Enrollment \$223.8 M (\$81.5 M GR)** – Funds the KidCare program for the 2024-2025 fiscal year as agreed upon at the December 2023 Social Services Estimating Conference to serve an anticipated 242,382 children.
- ☆ Ⓢ • **Nursing Home Reimbursement Rates \$247.8 M (\$105.6 M GR)** – Provides funding for an 8% Medicaid reimbursement rate increase for nursing homes.
- ☆ • **Pediatric Physician Rate Increase \$43.1 M (\$18.4 M GR)** – Provides funds to increase Medicaid reimbursement rates for pediatric physicians to amounts at or above Medicare rates.
- ☆ • **Integrated Plan for Persons with Developmental Disabilities Pilot Program \$38.4 M (16.4 M GR)** – Provides funding to support capitation payments for individuals enrolled in the pilot program for individuals with developmental disabilities pursuant to s. 409.9855, F.S.
- **Federally Qualified Health Centers & Rural Health Clinic Rate Increase \$19 M (\$8.1 M GR)** – Provides funding to increase the Medicaid reimbursement rates for Federally Qualified Health Centers and Rural Clinics, that are currently reimbursed at a rate below the 2023 State Prospective Payment System rate average.
- **Graduate Medical Education Program \$10.5 M TF** – Additional funding for hospitals participating in the Graduate Medical Education Program to train physicians to ensure an adequate and appropriate supply of well-trained physicians to meet Florida’s future health needs.

HEALTH CARE

FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 | Rep. Garrison



- **Collaborative Care for Behavioral Health \$8.3 M (\$3.5 M GR)** – Provides funding to implement a tiered reimbursement model for the Statewide Inpatient Psychiatric Program to incentivize in-state providers to expand capacity by increasing reimbursement for the more difficult to treat individuals and to reimburse providers who provide collaborative care between primary care and behavioral health care.
- **Medicaid Enrollee Health Outcomes and Spending Data Study \$3.1 M TF** – Provides funding for AHCA to competitively procure a private sector provider to review Medicaid enrollment data to identify opportunities to improve enrollee health care outcomes and reduce health care costs in the Statewide Medicaid Managed Care Program.
- **Assistive Care Services Rate Increase \$1.3 M (\$0.5 M GR)** – Provides a 10 percent Medicaid reimbursement rate increase for Assistive Care Service providers.
- **PACE Expansion \$29.7 M (\$12.6 M GR)** – Provides funding for additional 800 PACE slots: Broward County (50 slots); Citrus County (100 slots); Charlotte County (100 slots); Hillsborough County (100 slots); Marion County (50 slots); Miami-Dade County (50 slots); Palm Beach County (100 slots); Pinellas County (100 slots); Polk County (50 slots); Flagler, Seminole, and Volusia counties (50 slots); and Escambia, Okaloosa, and Santa Rosa counties (50 slots).
- **Serve Additional Clients from the Pre-enrollment to Waiver List \$64.8 M (\$27.6 M GR)** – Additional funds to support services to individuals on the pre-enrollment waitlist and to bring additional clients off the pre-enrollment waitlist.
- **Serve Sibling Groups from the Pre-enrollment to Waiver List \$16.9 M (\$7.2 M GR)** – Provides funds to enroll the siblings of a client in category 6 who have a sibling in categories 3, 4, 5, or 6.
- **Dually Diagnosed Program \$6.5 M (\$3.3 M GR)** – Nonrecurring funds to continue a pilot program that utilizes a mobile response team model providing services to individuals with co-occurring mental health and developmentally disabled issues when experiencing a behavioral crisis.
- **State Mental Health Treatment Facilities \$5.8 M GR** – Funds anti-ligature improvements as required by federal regulations (\$1.5 M); safety and security system upgrades (\$3.2 M); and upgraded medical equipment (\$1.2 M).
- ① • **Mental Health Treatment Beds \$ 77.8 M GR** – Continues funding to support additional forensic beds to mitigate the waitlists for admission at the State Mental Health Treatment Facilities.

HEALTH CARE

FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 | Rep. Garrison



- ☆ • **Human Trafficking \$6 M GR, 9 FTE** – Funds to increase emergency bed capacity of 48 beds for adult safe homes serving survivors of human trafficking and resources to expand the department’s operational anti-trafficking efforts.
- ☆ • **Domestic Violence \$18.5 M (\$10.5 M GR)** – Funding to address the waitlist for domestic violence services by providing additional resources to the domestic violence centers for transitional and long-term housing needs and grant funding to develop and strengthen the criminal justice system’s response to violence against women.
- **Services for Mental Health Disorders \$45.4 M (\$17.7 M GR)** – Supports various prevention and treatment services for individuals in a community-based environment due to an increase to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Block Grant (\$17.9 M); grant funding to expand and enhance the 988 Suicide and Crisis Hotline (\$13.1 M); funding to continue implementing integrated behavioral health care for individuals and families with behavioral health conditions (\$7 M); expand Central Receiving Facilities (\$4.3 M); and funds Qualified Behavioral Residential Treatment Programs (\$5.7 M)
- ☆ • **Resources to Combat the Opioid Epidemic \$120.5 M** – Funding for an array of prevention and treatment services that address the opioid epidemic, including an additional installment of the State Opioid Response Grant (\$3.6 M) and Opioid Settlement funding for research, medication assisted treatment, naloxone, treatment and recovery services, and other supports (\$116.9 M).
- **Child and Family Welfare Services \$57.9 M (\$27.3 M GR)** – Funding for the Local Prevention Grant Program to award grants to local communities to prevent high-risk families from entering the child welfare system (\$6.7 M); foster parent cost of living adjustment (\$2.3 M); continues funding Hope Line call agents (\$1.4 M); continues funding for behavioral health consultants to advise in child protective investigations (\$1.6 M); expands eligibility for the Independent Living Program (\$8.1 M); expands adoption incentive award eligibility and amounts (\$9.8 M); providing an increase of Maintenance Adoption Subsidies for an anticipated growth of new adoptions (\$13.5 M); funding growth in the Guardianship Assistance Program (\$10.1 M); resources for the Healthy Families program (\$2 M).
- **Resources to Support Public Benefits and Address Homelessness \$50.4 M (\$32.1 M GR)** – Additional funding to support Call Center operations (\$12.3 M); to cover the costs to enhance client notifications during case processing (\$1.5 M); increase of the Personal Needs Allowance (\$6.7 M); automated employment and income verification (\$9.7 M); and expands the Challenge Grant Program to address homelessness (\$10 M).
- **Older Americans Act Grants \$52.8 M TF** – Provides budget authority to align with grant award totals for the Older Americans Act (OAA) grants.

HEALTH CARE

FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 | Rep. Garrison



- ⬆ • **Alzheimer’s Disease, Community Care, and Home Care for the Elderly Initiatives \$17 M GR**
– Provides funding to reduce the waitlist by 418 individuals for Alzheimer’s respite services, 898 individuals for the Community Care for the Elderly program, and 540 individuals for the Home Care for the Elderly program.
- **State Veterans Nursing Home Collier County \$10 M NR GR** – To support the development and construction of a new State Veterans Nursing Home and Adult Day Health Care Center.
- **Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs, Florida Is for Veterans, Inc. \$2 M NR GR**
– Provides funding to support a network of universities to offer job training, mentorship, and entrepreneurship opportunities to service members, veterans, and their spouses.
- ★ • **Veterans Dental Care Grant Program \$1 M NR GR** – Expands access to dental care for veterans through a network of nonprofit organizations.

INFRASTRUCTURE & TOURISM

FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 | Rep. Andrade



OVERVIEW

The Infrastructure & Tourism Appropriations Subcommittee's budget totals **\$20.4 billion** (\$930 million in general revenue funds and \$19.4 billion in trust funds). This includes funding for **12,975 positions**.

There is an **7% decrease** in total spending under the current fiscal year appropriation.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ ⬆️ • **Transportation Work Program \$14.2 B** – Provides full funding for the department's 5-year Transportation Work Program.
- **Federally Declared Disaster Funding \$1.2 B** – Provides federal budget authority for the Division of Emergency Management to manage and continue public assistance and mitigation programs for the state and communities for disasters throughout the state.
- ★ • **Affordable Housing \$408 M** – Provides \$174 M for State Housing Initiatives Partnership program (SHIP); and \$234 M for State Apartment Incentive Loan program (SAIL).
- ★ • **Moving Florida Forward \$370 M** – Provides funding to supplement the work program and accelerate the completion of selected road projects to provide traffic congestion relief in Florida.
- **Economic Development \$277.7 M (\$152.2 M GR, \$105.4 M TF)**
 - Provides \$24 M (\$7.3 M GR, \$16.8 M TF) for audited performance payments under the economic incentive programs (Brownfield Redevelopment, Qualified Target Industry, High Impact Business Performance Incentives, e.g.). Payments are based on the state's contractual obligations under existing agreements.
 - Provides \$130.4 M (\$97 M GR, \$33.4 M TF) for economic development activities (Job Growth Grant Fund, Quick Response Training, Defense Support Task Force, Hispanic Business Initiative Outreach Program, Black Business Loan Program, Military Base Protection, Defense/Rural Infrastructure, Select Florida, and Sports Foundation).
 - Provides \$103.5 M TF for the economic development partnerships.
 - Provides \$80 M for Visit Florida to promote our state's tourism industry.
 - Provides \$23.5 M for aerospace industry development funding through Space Florida.
- **State Small Business Credit Initiative \$175.2 M** – Provides federal budget authority to allow expanded access to capital and credit to small businesses in the state, specifically minority, women, and/or veteran-owned businesses.
- **Emergency Management Warehouse Storage Facility \$116 M** – Provides funding to build out a state-owned warehouse hub facility for the storage and movement of supplies during emergency response activities.
- **Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) Program \$100 M** – Provides federal

INFRASTRUCTURE & TOURISM

FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 | Rep. Andrade



budget authority to allow the state to expand high speed internet access by funding, planning, infrastructure deployment, and adoption programs.

- **Department of State Cultural and Historic Grant Lists \$47.3 M** – Provides \$32 M for cultural and museum grants, and \$9.9 M for historic preservation grants.
- **Camp Blanding Fixed Capital Enhancements \$40.5 M** – Provides funding to support construction projects at the Camp Blanding Readiness Center needed to retain the Level II National Guard Facility status.
- **Florida State Guard \$19.9 M GR** – Provides funding to reestablish the State Guard to protect and defend Floridians and augment state and local agencies with a force of up to 1,500 volunteers. Unspent funding from last year is additionally reappropriated for training and recruitment, travel, compensation, personnel equipment, maritime and aviation equipment, and fixed capital outlay for equipment storage and operational requirements.
- **Libraries \$19.3 M** – Maintains full funding for state aid to libraries at \$17.3 M and \$2 M for library cooperatives.
- **State Emergency Operations Center Technology Infrastructure \$17.8 M** – Provides funding to procure, design, configure, and install the information technology footprint supporting the new State EOC facility.
- **Law Enforcement Recruitment Bonus Program \$17 M** – Provides funding to recruit new law enforcement officers in the state.
- **Motorist Modernization Phase II \$13.2 M** – Provides continued authority for a multi-year information technology initiative to modernize the DHSMV motor vehicle issuance systems. Phase II focuses on consolidating drivers license and motor vehicle information into a single database and enhancing online options for customers utilizing the MyDMV portal.
- ★ **Non-profit Security Grant Program \$10 M** – Provides funding to support nonprofit organizations, including houses of worship and community centers, that are at high risk for violent attacks or hate crimes.
- **Historic Preservation Fixed Capital \$7.1 M** – Provides funding for lead-based paint abatement on historic properties.
- **National Guard Tuition Assistance \$5.2 M** – Provides financial assistance for postsecondary educational opportunities to qualifying Florida National Guard service members.

REDUCTIONS

- Eliminates 263 vacant positions.
- Reduces \$16 M of trust fund budget authority based on historical reversions.

AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 | Rep. Altman



OVERVIEW

The Agriculture and Natural Resources Appropriation Subcommittee overall budget totals \$7 billion (\$1.5 billion General Revenue and \$5.5 billion Trust Funds). Includes funding for 9,113.25 authorized positions.

There is a 5.5% decrease in the total spending and a 1% decrease in general revenue funds compared to the current fiscal year appropriation.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ ↑ • **Everglades Restoration and Protection of Florida's Water Resources over \$1.7 B (\$885.9 M GR)**
- ★ ↑ - **Everglades Restoration \$845.5 M (\$210 M GR)** – Provides \$550 M for the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP), \$64 M for the Everglades Agricultural Area reservoir, \$76.5 M for the Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program (NEEPP), \$100 M for the C-51 Reservoir, \$50 M for the Lake Okeechobee Watershed Restoration Project and \$5 M for agricultural nutrient reduction and water retention projects in Lake Okeechobee.
- **Water Quality Improvement Grant Program \$135 M TF** – Provides grant funding to assist communities across Florida with reducing the amount of nutrients entering a waterway by connecting onsite septic disposal systems to central sewer facilities, upgrading wastewater treatment facilities, and repairing, upgrading, expanding or constructing stormwater treatment facilities.
- **Water Projects \$410.4 M GR** – Provides funds for stormwater treatment, wastewater treatment, and water supply projects in local communities.
- **Indian River Lagoon Protection Program \$75 M GR** – Provides funding to address excess nutrients entering the Indian River Lagoon and adversely impacting the water quality.
- ★ - **Springs Restoration \$55 M (\$5 M GR)** – Provides funding for springs restoration, protection, and preservation.
- **Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) \$25 M GR** – Provides funds for grants to local governments for stormwater quality restoration projects and nonpoint source best management practices as part of the plans set forth in adopted Basin Management Action Plans (BMAPs).
- ★ - **Alternative Water Supply \$55 M GR** – Provides funds for the alternative water supply grant program which helps communities plan for and implement water conservation, reuse,

AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 | Rep. Altman



and other water supply, and water resource development projects.

- **Caloosahatchee River Water Quality Improvements \$25 M GR** – Provides funding to address major sources of nutrient pollution in the Caloosahatchee River Watershed.
- **Biscayne Bay Water Quality Improvements \$20 M GR** – Provides funds for water quality improvements and coral reef restoration in Biscayne Bay.
- **Innovative Technologies for Harmful Algal Blooms \$25 M GR** – Provides funds for innovative technologies and short-term solutions to mitigate and address harmful algal blooms and nutrient pollution of Florida’s waters.
- **Water Quality Enhancement and Accountability \$10.8 M GR** – Provides funds for water quality improvements, increased water quality monitoring, maintenance of a water quality public information portal, and support for the Blue Green Algae Task Force.
- **Red Tide Research \$9.6 M (\$7.2 M GR)** – Provides continuation funding for the Center for Red Tide Research in the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.
- **Coral Reef Protection and Restoration \$21 M (\$17.5 M GR)** – Provides funds to help protect, restore, and monitor coral reefs which provide food and habitat for other marine life as well as shoreline protection.



- **Drinking Water and Wastewater Revolving Loan Programs \$1.3 B (\$29.7 M GR)** – Provides low-interest loans for the construction of drinking water systems, wastewater treatment, and stormwater management systems.

- **Grove Land Reservoir \$400 M GR** – Provides funding for the St. Johns River Water Management District to acquire lands within the Grove Land Reservoir and Storm Water Treatment Area.



- **Florida Forever Programs \$229.3 M (\$17 M GR)** – Provides \$200 M in recurring funds for Florida’s premier conservation and recreation lands acquisition programs which includes an additional \$100 M in recurring funds for the Rural and Family Lands Protection Program, \$15 M for Florida Communities Trust (FCT), and \$14.3 M for the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP) with a continued goal to acquire critical lands within the wildlife corridor.



- **Resilient Florida Program \$145 M TF** – Provides \$125 M in funding for resiliency projects (years 1 and 2) included in the Statewide Flooding and Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan submitted December 1, 2023 and \$20 M in Resilient Florida planning grants.

- **Waste Cleanup Programs \$237 M TF** – Provides \$220 M for the cleanup of contaminated petroleum sites, \$10 M for dry cleaning site cleanup, \$4 M for hazardous waste site cleanup, and \$3 M for the Solid Waste Management Program.



- **Beach Restoration Projects \$50 M TF** – Provides continuation funds for financial assistance to local governments for beach and dune restoration, nourishment, and inlet management.

AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 | Rep. Altman



- **State Park and Aquatic Preserve Improvements \$20.9 M TF** – Provides \$15 M for maintenance and repair projects in state parks and \$5.9 M for projects located in coastal and aquatic managed areas.
- **Florida Keys Area of Critical State Concern \$20 M GR** – Provides funds for local governments in the Florida Keys Area of Critical State Concern or the City of Key West Area of Critical State Concern to finance or refinance the cost of wastewater, stormwater, or water quality improvement projects, or for land acquisition.
- **Wetlands Restoration and Protection \$20 M (\$10 M GR)** – Provides funding for a matching grant program to support public-private partnerships for wetlands restoration and protection projects.
- **Citrus Greening Response \$29.8 M (\$14 M GR)** – Provides \$7.8 M to continue funding for the Citrus Health Response Program; \$18 M to fund citrus research and field trials; and \$4 M for citrus crop decline supplemental funding.
- **Conner Complex \$80 M GR** – Provides funding for the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to begin construction of the consolidated headquarters facility at the Conner Complex located in Tallahassee.
- **Wildfire Suppression Equipment \$12.4 M TF** – Provides funding to replace critical wildfire suppression equipment.
- **Forestry Land Management \$9.4 M TF** – Provides funds for maintenance and repair of roads, bridges, culverts, low water crossings, state forest facilities, and the relocation of the Orlando district office.
- **Protection of Critical Wildlife Habitat \$9.8 M (\$9.3 M GR)** – Provides funding for restoration and enhancement of lakes, rivers springs, removal of hydrilla, upland invasive plant management, and support for wildlife management areas.
- **Boating Improvement Projects \$7 M TF** – Provides funds to support programs that help improve state and local boating access including maintenance, repair, and construction projects.
- **Lake Apopka \$5 M TF** – Provides funding to address water quality in Lake Apopka.
- **Reforestation \$4 M TF** – Provides funds for Florida’s Future Forest Program to aid private landowners, nonprofit entities, and local governments with targeted tree planting on understocked forestland to keep Florida’s forests healthy.

HIGHER EDUCATION

FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 | Rep. Shoaf



OVERVIEW

The Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee overall budget totals **\$9.1 Billion** (\$6.9 billion General Revenue; \$1.8 billion Lottery; \$0.4 billion Trust Funds). Includes funding for **1,242.75** authorized positions.

There is a **7.9%** increase in funds over the current fiscal year appropriations.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ☆ • **State University Performance Based Funding \$350 M GR** – Restores the performance-based incentive funding to State University System institutions to award excellence and incentivize continuous improvement.
- **State University Performance Based Recruitment and Retention Incentive \$100 M GR** – Restores the performance-based recruitment and retention funding to State University System institutions.
- **Preeminent State Research Universities Funding \$100 M GR** – Provides funds to reward performance on key metrics for national excellence.
- **Prepping Institutions, Programs, Employers, and Learners Through Incentives for Nursing Education (PIPELINE) Fund \$100 M GR** – Maintains performance-based incentive funding to school districts, Florida College System, and State University System institutions to award and incentivize continuous improvement of nursing program completion and licensure rates, as specified in s. 1009.897, F.S.
- ⬆ • **University of Florida Lastinger Center for Learning \$58.2 M GR** – Provides recurring funding to the Lastinger Center for Learning to support the development and implementation of statewide initiatives to improve student achievement in reading and mathematics.
- **University of South Florida Cybersecurity Initiative \$25 M GR** – Provides funds to the Florida Center for Cybersecurity established in s. 1004.444, F.S.
- **Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) Fund \$25 M GR** – Maintains funds 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 private nonprofit colleges and universities.

HIGHER EDUCATION

FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 | Rep. Shoaf



- **Workforce Development Capitalization Incentive Grant Program \$100 M GR** – Restores nonrecurring funding for the grant program for school districts and Florida College System institutions to fund costs associated with the creation or expansion of career and technical education workforce development programs.
- **Workforce Development Workload Funding \$24.6 M GR** – Provides a \$22.8 M increase in recurring funding and \$1.8 M in nonrecurring funding for school district career and technical centers.
-  **Graduation Alternative to Traditional Education (GATE) Program \$12 M GR** – Provides recurring funding to public postsecondary institutions in providing the new GATE program that allows certain individuals who have discontinued enrollment in traditional high school programs to concurrently earn a high school diploma or equivalent and a workforce credential.
-  **EASE Plus \$9.6 M GR** – Provides an increased award amount for students enrolled in specified programs at the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida (ICUF) institutions.
-  **Student Financial Aid Increases \$35.3 M** – Fully funds the Bright Futures Scholarship Program for an anticipated 126,562 students, Benacquisto Scholarship Program for an anticipated 2,043 students, and Children and Spouses of Deceased or Disabled Veterans for an anticipated 5,034 students.
-  **Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Hardening Grants \$20 M (\$15 M GR; \$5 M TF)** – Provides funds to each HBCU for facility hardening grants.
-  **NO** tuition increases.



OVERVIEW

The State Administration & Technology Appropriations Subcommittee overall budget totals **\$2.9 billion** (\$678.4 million General Revenue and \$2.2 billion Trust Funds). Includes funding 11,327.50 authorized positions.

There is a **6.10%** decrease in total spending and a **31.54%** decrease in General Revenue funds under the current fiscal year appropriation and the same number of authorized positions.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ☆ • **My Safe Florida Home Program \$200 M NR GR** – Funding for grants to harden Floridian’s homes that qualify under My Safe Florida Home (s. 215.5586 F.S.) (Funding included in SB 7028).
- **My Safe Florida Home Condominium Pilot Program \$30 M NR GR** – Funding for grants to harden Floridian’s condominiums that qualify under HB 1029, or similar legislation.
- ☆ • **Fixed Capital Outlay \$91.2 M NR** – Provides Fixed Capital Outlay and repair and maintenance of state buildings, security, and code compliance. Additionally, provides funding for the following:
 - \$7.1 M for the State Fire College
 - \$2.1 M for Life, Safety, and ADA Code Compliance
 - \$1.5 M for FDLE office space renovation
 - \$0.8 M for Capitol Complex Memorials
 - \$400 K - Memorial for the 241 members of the Armed Forces killed in Beirut
 - \$400 K - Florida Space Exploration Memorial
- ☆ ↑ • **Fiscally Constrained Counties \$72.4 M GR** – Provides for distributions to fiscally constrained counties.
- **FLAIR Replacement/PALM \$66.4 M** – Funding for replacement of the state’s accounting and treasury systems.
- **Law Enforcement Radio System \$15.4 M (\$6.6 M Recurring GR, \$7 M NR GR, \$1.8 M TF)** – Provides funding for tower construction/relocation, tower maintenance and insurance, tower mitigation, and IV&V services.
- **E-911 - Revenue Distribution to Counties \$25.2 M TF** – Provides a funding increase for

STATE ADMINISTRATION & TECHNOLOGY

FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 | Rep. Busatta Cabrera



distribution of grants to counties for E911 operations. Also, begins implementing the upgrade of all 911 public safety answering points to allow emergency call transfers statewide pursuant to Ch. 2023-55, L.O.F.

- **Department of Revenue – Cybersecurity and Information Technology \$62.4 M** – Provides funding for the Child Support Automated Management System (CAMS) transition to SAP S/4, SUNTAX upgrades, and other Information Technology (IT) and cybersecurity initiatives.
- **Electroencephalogram Combined Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation Treatment \$10 M NR GR** – Funding for a pilot program for veteran/first responders to receive treatment that administers transcranial magnetic stimulation frequency pulses.
- **Local Fire Stations and Equipment \$81.6 M NR** – Provides funding for local fire station buildings and equipment.

REDUCTIONS

- **Reductions for Efficiency Savings, Unfunded Budget, and 109.5 Vacant FTE \$19.9 M (\$1 M GR, \$18.9 TF)** – Reduces recurring budget authority based on efficiency savings, contract savings, unfunded budget, and reductions offered in agency LBRs.



OVERVIEW

The Justice Appropriations Subcommittee overall budget totals \$7.3 billion (\$6.3 billion general revenue funds and \$1 billion trust funds). Includes funding for 45,507 authorized positions.

There is an increase of 3.6% in total funding and a 4.6% increase in general revenue funds over the current fiscal year appropriation, including a total net decrease of 115 FTE.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **FDC Correctional Fixed Capital Outlay \$102.5 M (\$100 M GR, \$2.5 M NR TF)** – Provides recurring funding to construct additional dormitories to increase inmate capacity at eligible facilities, provide for standard repair and maintenance, renovation of inmate wellness and program space, environmental deficiency corrections, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) updates at state-operated correctional facilities.
- ☆ • **Agency-wide Information Technology Improvements \$38.7 M (\$21.8 M NR)** – Provides funding for various IT improvements across multiple agencies to include:
 - **FDC** – Enhancement and expansion of network infrastructure, updates to legacy applications, and continued replacement of the Offender Based Information System (OBIS);
 - **FDLE** – Increased bandwidth, upgrades to the statewide emergency alert application, expansion of the Florida Fusion Center network, and maintenance of the statewide sexual assault-kit tracking system;
 - **DLA** – Modernization of IT applications within the Attorney Generals’ office; and,
 - **PALM** – Integration of agency IT applications with the Florida Palm system within FDC, FDLE, DJJ, DLA, and JAC.
- **DJJ Expansion of Capacity \$32.4 M (\$27.2 M NR GR)** – Provides funding to replace the Hillsborough County detention facility and increase the capacity of non-secure residential facilities.
- ☆ Ⓢ • **FDLE Local Law Enforcement Support Grants \$20.5 M (\$16 M GR, \$4.5 M TF)** – Provides pass-through funding and local support grants for local law enforcement agencies to:
 - Support drug trafficking prevention and investigations through the State Assistance for Fentanyl Eradication (S.A.F.E.) in Florida program;
 - Conduct site security assessments of private schools, contingent on the passage of HB 1473, or similar legislation;
 - Award grants to local law enforcement agencies in support of increased online sting operations targeting online predators; and
 - Purchase replacement body armor for local law enforcement officers.



- **FDC Private Prison Operations \$20.7 M GR** – Provides funding for pay parity increases similar to funding provided to FDC correctional officers in fiscal year 2023-2024 and for facility contract renewals.
- **DJJ Florida Scholars Academy \$12.8 M GR** – Provides funding for the remaining operational costs relating to the Florida Scholars Academy, as codified in s. 985.619, F.S.
- **FDC Education Program Expansion and Career Readiness Assessments \$11.7 M (\$8.4 M GR; \$3.3 M TF)** – Provides funding and positions to expand traditional education, career, and technical education programs within FDC.
- **FDC Operation New Hope Re-Entry Initiatives \$11 M GR (\$2.8 M NR)** – Provides funding for pre- and post-release reentry services provided to inmates by Operation New Hope.
- **DLA Statewide Prosecution Workload \$10.9 M GR** – Provides funding and positions to create three regional specialized units tasked with handling complex cases focused on gang activity, violent crime, drug activity, and human trafficking.
- ☆ • **Courts Case Processing, Court Reporting, and Due Process Resources \$8.6 M GR** – Provides funding and positions for additional case managers to address workload associated with increased filings, additional trial court reporting resources, and due process resources including court interpreter services, expert witness fees, and senior judge days.
- **Community Outreach and Engagement Initiatives \$8.5 M NR GR** – Provides funding to combat and prevent crime through various outlets, including:
 - A Duval County local engagement and outreach initiative to address economic development growth, affordable housing assistance, and food insecurity issues within the community;
 - An Ybor City crime prevention initiative through community engagement and outreach; and
 - A Community Violence and Intervention grant program that will work through cooperation agreements with local law enforcement agencies, state attorneys, public defenders, and community partners to serve communities disproportionately impacted by violence.
- **DLA Children’s Advocacy Centers \$5.3 M GR (\$4.9 M NR)** – Provides funding to the statewide network of children’s advocacy centers to offset projected decreases in federal grant awards.
- **Certification of Additional Judgeships \$3.7 M GR** – Provides funding and positions associated with the certification of two new circuit court judges and seven new county court judges.

