



CAPITOL UPDATE

October 25, 2019

Welcome to Committee Week 3

The Legislature met for the third time this week prior to the official start of the Legislative Session in January 2020. Looking ahead, the Legislature will break for one week before coming back for the fourth committee week, starting November 4.

Check out the below committee updates regarding relevant legislation considered this week!



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Community, **Health** & Safety

This FAC Committee meets November 21 at 10:00 AM! [Register now!](#)

Senate Criminal Justice Committee

[SB 194 \(Correctional Education Program\)](#) by Senator Taddeo would institute workforce training programs in correctional institutes to prepare inmates for a trade after release. The program would provide instruction and credit hours that count toward eventual licensure. In its first committee stop, the bill passed unanimously.

House Health Quality Subcommittee

[HB 177 \(Prescription Drug Donation Repository Program\)](#) by Representatives Duran and Yarborough was heard in its first committee. The bill facilitates the donation of unused prescription drugs and supplies as well as expands Florida's existing model from only cancer related drugs and delineates which facilities may operate as repositories. The bill passed unanimously.

House Children, Families, & Seniors Subcommittee and Senate Children, Family & Elder Affairs Committee

Two pieces of legislation on homelessness were passed unanimously in their first committees of reference this week. [HB 163 \(Homelessness\)](#) by Representative Altman, would redefine the roles and

requirements for continuum of care agencies, their catchment areas, and other provisions regarding homelessness to better address current issues and bring them in line with federal law. [SB 68 \(Homelessness\)](#) by Senator Book has similar provisions but would also dedicate \$10 million annually in dedicated funding to Homelessness Challenge Grants from the Sadowski Affordable Housing Trust Funds.

FAC Contact:

For additional information, please contact Tonnelle Graham at tgraham@flcounties.com.



Growth, Agriculture, Transportation, & Environment

This FAC Committee meets November 21 at 1:30 PM! [Register now!](#)

House Local, Federal, & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee

[HB 133 \(Towing and Immobilizing Vehicles and Vessels\)](#) by Representative McClain was heard in its first committee. The bill extends all relevant towing ordinances to include vessels and prevents local governments from enacting or enforcing fees or charges on authorized wrecker operators and towing businesses contracted with the county. Exemptions exist for certain charter counties as well as business taxes and administrative fees. The bill passed nine votes in favor to five votes against.

[HB 203 \(Growth Management\)](#) by Representative McClain would require local government comprehensive plans to include a new mandatory private property rights element. Local governments would be required to adopt the new element at their next proposed plan amendment or by July 1, 2019, whichever occurs earlier. The bill contains model language, although a local government could adopt its own language provided it doesn't otherwise conflict with the model language. Similar bills have been filed for the past several years but have seen little movement in the Senate. The bill passed nine votes in favor to five votes against.

FAC Contact:

For additional information, please contact Susan Harbin at sharbin@flcounties.com.



Finance, Tax, & Administration

This FAC Committee meets November 21 at 3:00 PM! [Register now!](#)

House Local, Federal, & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee

[HB 223 \(Homestead Exemptions\)](#) by Representative Buchanan was heard in its first committee. The bill prevents a person or "family unit" from claiming a homestead exemption from ad valorem taxation in Florida if they're receiving or claiming the benefit in another state. The bill may have an indeterminate negative impact on local governments. The bill passed unanimously.

House Oversight, Transparency, & Public Management Subcommittee

[HB 195 \(Public Records\)](#) by Representative Ray Rodrigues was heard in its first committee. The bill prohibits a state agency or local government from filing a civil action against an individual or entity requesting a public record. The bill passed unanimously.

Senate Children, Families, & Elder Affairs Committee

[SB 192 \(Sales Tax Exemption/Independent Living\)](#) by Senator Berman exempts sales tax on specific items relating to independent living needs when purchased for personal use. Items include bed transfer handles, bed rails, grab bars, shower seats. The bill passed unanimously.

FAC Contact:

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FAC Data Point

State Hemp Program



What is Hemp?

Industrial hemp is a fiber and grain crop that has been cultivated for 10,000 years. Hemp is a cannabis sativa plant that has applications for fiber, building materials, forages and pain relief as a topical oil. Hemp is not considered to be marijuana as it contains less than 0.3 Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) percent per dry weight. THC is the psychoactive chemical that at higher levels defines marijuana.

Hemp can be used as source material for wood and paper; one acre of hemp can produce as much paper a year as four acres of trees.

Background:

In 2019, the Florida Legislature created the State Hemp Program ([SB 1020 - 2019](#)) and established the statutory guidance to regulate the cultivation of hemp in the state. Under the direction of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), Commissioner Nikki Fried appointed Holly Bell to serve as the state's first Director of Cannabis.

Currently, FDACS is undergoing rule development and review and expects the program to be implemented by the end of 2019 with the first harvest during Spring 2020 with or without federal approval. Other states have active programs that await federal guidance on hemp-cultivation regulations via United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

FDACS has several implementation priorities including: education and workforce development, automation of the permitting process, collaboration with Florida Department of Law Enforcement, development of Best Management Practices (BMPs), and "Fresh From Florida" membership.

Implementation Workshops:

FDACS has established two committees to assist in development of the program: the Industrial Hemp Advisory Council and the Hemp Advisory Committee. The Industrial Hemp Advisory Council was established to provide advice and expertise to the department with respect to plans, policies, and procedures applicable to the administration of the program. FDACS' Hemp Advisory Committee provides guidance and recommendations on the growing, processing, manufacturing, testing, education and retail sales of hemp.

For more information on the oversight and rulemaking, please [click here](#).

FAC Contact:

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