



HSJ-PP-03: EXTREME HEAT AND HEAT ILLNESS PREVENTION (REVISED)

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: DEFER TO LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

PROPOSED POLICY: SUPPORT State funding for the scientific research necessary for evidence-based policy decisions related to heat illness prevention policies; **SUPPORT** the establishment of state policies that encourage the Florida Department of Health to work with local health departments, healthcare professionals and industry leaders to strengthen the public health infrastructure to ensure that the health effects of extreme heat can be anticipated and responded to more efficiently; and **SUPPORT** the establishment of state policies encouraging health professionals to identify and counsel patients most at risk for extreme heat-related illness to be counseled about heat illness prevention strategies.

BACKGROUND:

Desired policy change would be for the State of Florida to acknowledge the mounting scientific research and data pertaining to the public health crisis posed by extreme heat and enact evidenced based policies related to extreme heat. Mandate State health departments to work with local health departments, healthcare professionals and industry leaders to strengthen the public health infrastructure to ensure that the health effects of extreme heat can be anticipated and responded to more efficiently.

Florida Senate Bill 732-Heat Illness Prevention (2022, Senator Rodriguez-Co=Sponsors Torres, Todeo & Ausley (Died in Health Policy Committee 3/22)

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2022/08/09/climate-change-heat-workers/>

ANALYSIS: Extreme Heat is not only a public health crisis, but it impacts all pillars of Florida's economy including but not limited to Agriculture and Tourism. Extreme Heat has a direct impact on Florida's Ports, Rivers, Highways and Railways, all vital arteries for the transport of commodities and industrial goods. In addition, extreme heat is putting pressure on Florida's already strained water supply and power Infrastructure.

FISCAL IMPACT: The economic impact of extreme heat illnesses on vital industries in Florida through workman's compensation increases, lost time on the job/productivity and high turnover in industries when labor shortages are already at an all-time high. Due to the population who are at highest risk for Extreme Heat Illness or Death, our elderly, those with pre-existing health conditions, such as high blood pressure or asthma and those that labor in a hot environment,



statistics are incomplete as many extreme heat-related illness or deaths are underreported or not reported as such.

FAC STAFF NOTES:

- FAC 2022 Policy Conference:
 - HSJ-PP-03 was recommended to be amended and deferred to legislative conference.
 - Proposing counties are working on providing more research and background for this proposal prior to the legislative conference.
- Issue:
 - Each year, more than 600 Americans die from hyperthermia, one of the nation's deadliest weather-related health outcomes. Agriculture workers die from heat-related illness at a rate 20 times greater than the general U.S. workforce. ([FDACS Website](#))
- Federal standards for extreme heat are underway but will be delayed due to time constraints in rule making:
 - "The Biden administration is moving to protect workers from heat and has directed the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, part of the Labor Department, to issue a new rule. But it takes the agency an average of seven years to write new safety standards...A heat illness prevention bill has failed three times...in recent years." (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2022/08/09/climate-change-heat-workers/>)

Statutes

- [s. 448.111, F.S.](#) — *Evidentiary standards for actions of a business during an emergency*
 - This proposal seeks to support policies that address the public health emergency of extreme heat

Fiscal Impact:

- This proposal would mandate specific businesses/employers (Including, but not limited to, agriculture, construction, and landscaping) to implement and abide by specific requirements and procedures to protect the health of their workers dependent on the climate/environment they are in
- Employers would bear the cost of providing these heat illness prevention measures such as water and shade, as well as potential lost productivity and profit. ([Staff Analysis of SB 732- Heat Illness Prevention](#))

Bills

- **2022: [SB 732](#) - Heat Illness Prevention by Sen. Rodriguez (A) - Failed**
 - Provides responsibilities for certain employees and employers relating to heat illness prevention at work. These employers include industries where employees regularly perform work in an outdoor environment, including, but not limited to,



agriculture, construction, and landscaping.; providing an exception; requiring employers to provide annual training for employees and supervisors; requiring the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, in conjunction with the Department of Health, to adopt specified rules, etc. Effective Date: 10/1/2022

- **2020: [SB 882](#) - Heat Illness Prevention by Sen. Torres Jr. – Failed**
 - The bill provides responsibilities of certain employers and employees; requiring certain employers to provide annual training for employees and supervisors; requiring the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, in conjunction with the Department of Health, to adopt specified rules, etc.

- **2019 – [HB 1285](#)/ [SB 1538](#) – Heat Illness Prevention by Rep Smith (C.) and Sen. Torres Jr. - Failed**
 - The bill provides responsibilities of certain employers and employees and requires the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to adopt rules

- Past FAC statements — N/A
- FAC does not have any established Guiding Principles in support of this proposal.

SUBMITTING COUNTY AND CONTACT: Pinellas – Janet Long
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ASSIGNED COMMITTEE: HSJ

BOARD SUPPORT: No position

UNFUNDED MANDATE: Yes

PROTECTIVE OF HOME RULE: NO