



2024

LEGISLATIVE SESSION FINAL REPORT



TABLE OF CONTENTS

FAC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE3

PREEMPTIONS & MANDATES FAILED4

PREEMPTIONS & MANDATES PASSED8

AGRICULTURE & RURAL AFFAIRS PASSED12

AGRICULTURE & RURAL AFFAIRS FAILED13

COMMUNITY & URBAN AFFAIRS PASSED14

COMMUNITY & URBAN AFFAIRS FAILED 24

FINANCE, TAX, & ADMINISTRATION PASSED31

FINANCE, TAX, & ADMINISTRATION FAILED37

HEALTH, SAFETY, & JUSTICE PASSED..... 50

HEALTH, SAFETY, & JUSTICE FAILED..... 54

WATER & ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY PASSED..... 60

WATER & ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY FAILED 62

TECHNOLOGY PASSED 68

TECHNOLOGY FAILED 69

SFY 2024-25 GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT 71

COUNTY FUNDING HIGHLIGHTS.....73

FAC STAFF 78



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PREEMPTIONS & MANDATES-FAILED

COUNTY COMMISSIONER TERM LIMITS FAILS

HB 57 / SB 438 - *Term Limits* by Rep. Salzman / Sen. Ingoglia passed their respective committees in each chamber but ultimately died on the floor.

The Senate bill passed its first committee with no amendments. In Senate Community Affairs, the bill was amended to require eight-year term limits mandated by the state for all non-charter counties and all charter counties without term limits in their charts. For Broward, Polk, and Lee counties, who all have twelve-year term limits, a question was put on the ballot asking whether the county should restrict commissioner terms to eight years.

The Senate bill was then temporarily postponed twice in Senate Rules Committee, the second time after the bill was amended to establish five different groups of counties that would each be treated differently under the bill.

The Senate version that finally passed out of Senate Rules Committee contained the following provisions:

- Requires each non-charter county, each charter county without term limits, and each charter county with term limits longer than 8 consecutive years to hold a referendum election that coincides with the 2024 general election to determine if term limits will be imposed on the office of county commissioner.
- For non-charter counties and charters without term limits, the referendum question will state: Should County commissioners be prohibited from serving longer than 8 consecutive years? Followed by yes and no options for response.
- For charter counties with 12-year term limits, the referendum question will state: Currently, the (county name) County charter prohibits commissioners from serving longer than 12 consecutive years. Should the county reduce the term limits for county commissioners to 8 consecutive years? Followed by yes and no options for response.
- If voters reject the referendum required under the bill for the 2024 election, the county is authorized to call a referendum in future general elections for voters to consider county commissioner term limits.
- Clarifies that service before the 2026 general election in a county without existing term limits that adopts an 8-year term limit during the 2024

- general election does not count towards the 8-year term limit until 2026.
- Beginning November 3, 2026, a county commissioner who completes 8 years of consecutive service must sit out for 2 years before running for another county commission seat, including a different district or at-large seat.
 - A county commissioner voted into office on November 5, 2024, or who is serving in office under a county charter imposing a 12-year term limit and the voters approve an 8-year term limit at the referendum mandated in the bill, will be allowed to serve out all 12 years.
 - If a person is voted into office on or after November 5, 2024, in a charter county that moves from 12-year to 8-year term limits during the November 5, 2024, election, the newly elected commissioner is subject to the 8-year term limit.

The House Sponsor originally filed the bill as a constitutional amendment, which was subsequently withdrawn (HJR 19).

Rep. Salzman then filed a general bill calling for eight-year term limits imposed by the state for all non-charter counties and charter counties without term limits in their charter, as well as for the three charter counties that had twelve-year term limits.

That version was amended in its first committee to set twelve-year term limits for all non-charter counties and charter counties without term limits in their charter. The bill was then amended at its last committee hearing back to eight-year term limits mandated by the state for all non-charter counties and all charter counties without term limits in their charts. For Broward, Polk, and Lee counties, who all have twelve-year term limits, a question was put on the ballot asking whether the county should restrict commissioner terms to eight years.

LOCAL BUSINESS TAX CAP FAILS

HB 609 / SB 1144 – *Local Business Taxes* by Rep. Botana / Sen. DiCeglie failed this session. HB 609 passed all committee stops but was never considered on the floor, while SB 1144 was never heard in committee.

The bill provides a limitation on the amount of revenue a local government may receive from local business taxes based on the revenue the local government received in local Fiscal Year (FY) ending September 30, 2023, or September 30, 2024, whichever is greater.

If a local government receives more local business tax revenue than it did in the base year, the local government must proportionally reduce its tax rates and must issue refunds or credits to taxpayers. The bill provides guidance on how those refunds and credits must be calculated and when they must occur.

The bill requires local governments to include an affidavit in their annual financial audit report to the Auditor General attesting to compliance with the requirement to reduce rates and issue refunds, if needed. The Auditor General must follow up with any local governments not in compliance and report those local governments to the Legislative Auditing Committee if the noncompliance continues.

ADDITIONAL HURDLE TO MILLAGE INCREASES FAILS

HB 1195 / SB 1322 – *Millage Rates* by Rep. Garrison / Sen. Ingoglia failed this session. HB 1195 died in Senate messages, while SB 1322 was never heard in its last committee stop.

The bill provides that a two-thirds vote of the governing body of a county, municipality, or independent special district is required to pass any millage rate increase, except where a higher vote threshold is already required under current law.

COUNTY BUDGET OFFICER PREEMPTION FAILS

SB 1520 / HB 1553 – *County Budget Officers* by Sen. Martin / Rep. Giallombardo failed this session. Both bills were not heard this session.

This bill specifies new roles and limitations for county budget officers in Florida. The bill also contains the following provisions:

- Mandates that county budget officers report directly to the board of county commissioners.
- Prohibits county budget officers from being members of any executive branch of county government, except as specifically allowed.
- Designates the clerk of the circuit court or the county comptroller as the ex-officio budget officer, unless the board appoints someone else.
- Ensures that actions taken by the clerk of the circuit court or the county comptroller in their capacity as ex-officio budget officer do not conflict with their potential roles within the executive branch.

DREDGE AND FILL PREEMPTION FAILS AGAIN, NEVER CONSIDERED

HB 527 / SB 664 – *Land and Water Management* by Rep. Maggard / Sen. Burgess failed this session. These bills were never heard in committee.

This legislation would preempt the regulation of dredge and fill activities to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Also requires a local

government to acquire, through eminent domain, any buffer zones for which the county land or water delineations exceed delineation determinations by DEP or the water management districts.

AGRITOURISM PREEMPTION FAILS

HB 339 / SB 696 – *Agritourism* by Rep. Roth / Sen. Rodriguez failed this session. Neither bill was heard in its committee stops.

Current law preempts local governments from prohibiting or otherwise regulating agritourism practices on land classified as agricultural. This bill sought to expand the agritourism preemption by:

- Prohibiting a local government from requiring a certificate of use for agricultural facilities or agritourism venues; and sunseting existing ordinances or regulations one year after the bill's effective date.
- Prohibiting a local government from limiting any state-regulated agritourism activities, including any brewery, winery, and distillery operations on agricultural property.

MONUMENT REMOVAL RESTRICTION FAILS

HB 395 / SB 1122 – *Protection of Historical Monuments and Memorials* by Rep. Black / Sen. Martin. HB 395 was never heard in its second committee stop, while SB 1122 was never heard in its last committee stop.

Local Governments may only temporarily relocate a Historical Monument or Memorial due to the construction, expansion, or alteration of public buildings, roads, streets, highways, or any other construction or infrastructure project for up to 12 months. It must be placed back in its original spot or as close as possible if the original spot is not available. An entity may not remove a monument or memorial from public property without authorization from the owner of the monument or memorial. Any official, agent, or member of local government who directs, permits, facilitates, or votes to remove or destroy a monument or memorial is subject to a fine of up to \$1,000. An elected official acting in his or her official capacity who knowingly and willingly violates this is subject to removal from the governor. If a monument or memorial is removed, damaged, or destroyed by a local government, the local government shall be liable for restoring the monument or memorial to its original condition. If the local government does not have these funds, the state shall restore the monument or memorial and withhold from the local government all arts, culture, and historical preservation funds until the state is reimbursed. HB 395 would apply to any monuments or memorials that have been removed, damaged, or destroyed on or after 1/1/18 (retroactively), while SB 1122 applies beginning 7/1/24.

FLAG DISPLAY PREEMPTION FAILS

HB 901 / SB 1120 – *Display of Flags by Governmental Entities* by Rep. Martin / Sen. Borrero failed this session. HB 901 was never heard in its last committee stop, while SB 1120 was never heard in any of its committees.

A government entity may not display a flag that represents a political viewpoint, including, but not limited to, a politically partisan, racial, sexual orientation and gender, or political ideology viewpoint. The government entity must remain natural when representing political viewpoints in displaying a flag.

VIRTUAL OFFICE FEE LIMIT FAILS

HB 503 / SB 578 – *Limitation on Local Fees for Virtual Offices* by Rep. Fabricio / Sen. Ingoglia failed this session. HB 503 passed all committee stops but was never considered on the floor, while SB 578 was never heard in its first committee stop.

The bill prohibits counties, municipalities, or other local governmental entities from enacting or maintaining any ordinance or rule that imposes a tax, charge, fee, or any other financial obligation specifically related to the utilization of a virtual office.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE PREEMPTION FAILS

SB 972 – *Artificial Intelligence* by Sen. Gruters failed this session. SB 972 was never heard in any of its committee stops.

This bill prevents local governments from regulating the use of AI systems, outlining the Legislature’s intent to enforce a uniform policy statewide.

The bill also establishes the Artificial Intelligence Advisory Council within the Department of Management Services to oversee and guide the development and deployment of artificial intelligence (AI) in state government. The bill also contains the following provisions:

- Defines various terms related to artificial intelligence, including “algorithm,” “artificial intelligence system,” and “automated decision system.”
- Levies responsibilities on the Council to assess legislative needs, study AI’s effects on legal rights, monitor AI-related risks and benefits, and recommend actions for AI development.
- Mandates the composition and appointment deadlines for Council members, specifying staggered terms and conditions for reimbursement and removal.
- Requires the Council to meet by a certain date, hold monthly meetings thereafter, and submit quarterly reports to the Governor and the Legislature.
- Obliges each state agency to prepare a report inventorying AI systems being developed, used,

or procured by July 1, 2025, with specific details about these systems.

A similar bill, SB 1680 by Sen. Bradley, passed this session creating the Government Technology Modernization Council which does not include the preemption or strict definitions for artificial intelligence systems.

AMUSEMENT EQUIPMENT STORAGE & PARKING PREEMPTION FAILS

HB 1659 – *Location of Equipment Owned by Amusement Business Owner* by Rep. Fabricio and Rep. Botana failed this session. The bill passed its first committee of reference, but ultimately stalled in House State Affairs.

The bill prevents counties or municipalities from charging amusement business owners to use private agricultural land, with five acres or more, for placing, parking, or storing such equipment when certain circumstances exist.

PLASTIC CONTAINER PREEMPTION FAILS

SB 1126 / HB 1641 – *Regulation of Auxiliary Containers* by Sen. Martin / Rep. Black failed this session. Both bills were not heard in their second committee stops.

This bill preempts the regulation of auxiliary containers to the state. Auxiliary containers are defined by the bill as reusable or single-use bags, cups, bottles, or other packaging designed for transporting, consuming, or protecting merchandise, food, or beverages from or at a food service establishment or retailer.

FIREARMS TRAINING FACILITY ZONING PREEMPTION FAILS

HB 831 / SB 1586 – *Enhanced Firearms Training Facilities* by Rep. Yarkosky / Sen. Collins failed this session. HB 831 was not heard in its last committee stop, while SB. 1586 was not heard in any of its committees.

Exempts enhanced firearms training facilities from any local government planning and zoning or public work restrictions. Defines a “Enhanced Firearms Training Facility” as a facility located on land zoned for agricultural use or equivalent used to train people in the use of firearms and personal safety. Defines “owner” as a person who holds the title to the land and facility and holds a percentage interest in the land and facility that is equal to or greater than others who also hold the title. This bill also provides requirements to possess a license for an enhanced firearms training facility. This license must be renewed annually or until the department determines that the owner is no longer in compliance.

PUBLIC HEALTH MANDATES AND POLICIES FAILS

HB 1535 / SB 680 - *Public Health Mandates and Policies* by Rep. Plakon / Sen Gruters failed this session. Both bills were not heard this session

The bill safeguards medical freedom by introducing significant amendments to various statutes, primarily concerning immunization and discrimination based on vaccination or immunity status. It prohibits the Department of Health from mandating enrollment in the state’s immunization registry or tracking immunization status. Additionally, it forbids the department from sharing immunization records without explicit consent and prohibits business and governmental entities from demanding proof of vaccination for access to services or employment. Discrimination based on vaccination or immunity status is prohibited in healthcare, housing assistance, employment, and insurance. The bill also establishes a right of action for individuals affected by discriminatory practices and extends discrimination protection under existing civil rights legislation to include vaccination or immunity status. Furthermore, it restricts discrimination in public accommodations, educational institutions, and employment based on vaccination or immunity status.

RENT CONTROL MEASURE FAILS

HB 31 / SB 64 – *Landlords and Tenants* by Rep. Edmonds / Sen. Osgood failed this session. Neither bill was heard in their respective committees.

This bill makes significant changes to the land-lord-tenant relationship, including a cap on rent increases. The bill limits rent increases to once per year, and any rent increase is limited to 30% of the current rent. Exceptions are made for new rental agreements and situations where landlords face high unexpected costs. Additionally, landlords, excluding those of single-family homes or duplexes, must provide essential amenities like pest control, security features, garbage disposal, and basic utilities.

The bill further addresses rental agreement terminations. Landlords can terminate the agreement if rent remains unpaid for over 3 days, excluding weekends and certain holidays. Even if partial payment is made, landlords can proceed with termination unless the balance is cleared within 15 days. In cases of disputes, tenants must deposit owed rent in the court’s registry within a specified timeframe or forfeit most defenses, allowing landlords an expedited eviction process.

MUNICIPAL UTILITY RATE REFORM FAILS

HB 47 / SB 104 – *Municipal Water and Sewer Utility Rates* by Rep. Robinson / Sen. Jones failed this session. HB 47 passed all committee stops but was never heard on the floor; meanwhile, SB 104 died in its last committee stop, Senate Rules.

Current law authorizes a municipality providing water or sewer utility services to consumers outside of its municipal boundaries to charge those extra-jurisdictional consumers a surcharge of up to 25%. This bill provides an exception, requiring a municipality to charge consumers outside of its municipal boundaries the same rate it charges within its boundaries, if it uses a recipient municipality’s utility facilities while providing water and services.

DETENTION CENTER PREGNANCY RIGHTS FAILS

SB 100 / HB 237- *Pregnant Women in Custody* by Rep. Jones / Sen. Hart failed this session. These bills were never heard in committee.

Requires each municipal detention facility or county detention facility to administer a pregnancy test to women who are arrested and not released on bond 72 hours after the arrest. The facility also must let females know of their rights to request this test within the initial 72 hours and administer the test within 24 hours after the request. This bill also requires the facility to collect and report data and record it to DOC, DOC will publish this data quarterly on its public website. This data includes: the total number of pregnant women whose sentences stayed, the total number of births and stillbirths, the gestational age and birth weight of each infant at the time of birth or stillbirth, the total number of women who experience complications, and the type of complication, the total number of miscarriages, the total number of women who refuse to provide information regarding their outcome. This information published must exclude personal identifying information.

PREEMPTIONS & MANDATES-PASSED

THREE PREEMPTIONS PASS IN HB 433, IMPACTING PROCUREMENT, SCHEDULING, AND HEAT

HB 433 – *Employment Regulations* by Rep. Esposito (SB 1492 by Sen. Trumbull) passed this session.

The bill enacts certain preemptions related to employment regulations. Specifically, the bill:

- Creates 218.077(2)(b) to prohibit a county, municipality and other political subdivisions from using its purchasing or contracting processes to control or affect the wages or employment benefits provided by its vendors, contractors, service providers, and other parties doing business with such political subdivisions.
- Creates 218.077(2)(c) to prohibit local governments from using evaluation factors, qualification of bidders, or otherwise award preferences on the basis of the wages or employment benefits provided by vendors, contractors, service providers, and other parties doing business with such political subdivisions.
- Repeals the authorization in s. 218.077(3)(a)2., that allows a local government to require specified employers that contract to provide the local government with goods or services, including the employers' subcontractors, to pay their employees a minimum wage other than the state or federal minimum wage, or employment benefits not otherwise required under state or federal law.
- Provides that the amendments to s. 218.077, F.S., made by the bill do not impair any contracts entered into before September 30, 2026.
- Prohibits local government 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, rule, regulation, or federal grant requirements. This section originally broadly preempted the terms of conditions of employment; this language was amended on day 60, limiting the impact to the regulation of scheduling. This provision is effective July 1, 2024.

In addition to the above, the bill also preempts the regulation of workplace heat exposure requirements. Specifically, the bill defines the following terms: "Competitive solicitation," "Heat exposure requirement," and "Political subdivision." The bill prohibits any political subdivision from establishing, mandating, or otherwise requiring an employer to meet or provide heat exposure requirements. The bill also prohibits a political subdivision from awarding a

preference in a competitive solicitation based on an employer's heat exposure requirements, and may not consider or request information about an employer's heat exposure requirements.

The bill provides that it does not:

- Limit the authority of a political subdivision to establish or provide heat exposure requirements not otherwise required by state or federal law for its direct employees.
- Apply if it is determined that compliance would prevent the distribution of federal funds to the political subdivision or would otherwise be inconsistent with federal requirements pertaining to receiving federal funds, but only to the extent necessary to allow the political subdivision to receive federal funds or to eliminate the inconsistency with federal requirements.

Effective date: Except as otherwise provided, July 1, 2024.

LOCAL PREFERENCES PREEMPTION PASSES

HB 705 – *Public Works Projects* by Rep. Shoaf (SB 742 by Sen. Grall) passed this session. For the fourth time in 8 years, the legislature has modified the definition of "public works" definition for competitively procured road, water, and other public projects further limiting local governments' ability to prescribe local preferences on bids.

The bill expands the definition of "public works project" and revises the applicability of prohibitions on restrictive bidding practices by the state or its political subdivisions.

- Under current law, a "public works project" includes construction projects funded in part or whole by state-appropriated funds. The bill revises the definition to also include projects paid for with local funding.
- Current law also preempts certain "local preferences" within the procurement phase of a public works project. This includes consideration of geographic location, wage rates, benefits, staffing levels, and recruiting or hiring from preferred sources.
- The bill would expand these preempted activities to projects involving local funds—however, a local government may still practice geographic preferences if it is the sole funding source of the project. Currently, goods, services, or work that is incidental to the public works project and other such incidental service items are excluded from this preemption.

Effective date: July 1, 2024

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT EXPANSION PASSES

SB 1628 – *Local Government Actions* by Sen. Collins (HB 1547 by Rep. McClure) passed this session. The bill provides changes to the business impact statement exceptions passed during the previous legislative session. Local governments must complete a business impact statement prior to adopting and implementing a comprehensive plan amendment or land development regulation, other than those amendments initiated by a private party.

The bill mandates that bond referenda above \$500 million by counties, districts, or municipalities must occur during general elections and updates provisions for the enactment of county and municipal ordinances.

The bill modifies the exemption in s. 125.66(3) and s. 166.041(4), F.S., relating to Part II of Chapter 163, F.S. Current law requires the preparation of a business impact statement for the enactment of certain ordinances, though growth management actions under part II of Ch. 163, F.S. were previously exempt from this requirement. The bill removes this exemption for certain growth management actions—however, the following growth-related activities remain exempt from this requirement:

- Issuance of development permits
- Comprehensive plan and land development regulation amendments initiated by a private party other than the county.

Effective date: October 1, 2024

FDACS PACKAGE PASSES WITH ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATION PREEMPTION

SB 1084 – *Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services* by Sen. Collins (HB 1071 by Rep. Alvarez) passed this session.

The bill preempts the regulation of electric vehicle charging stations to the state and prohibits local governmental entities from enacting or enforcing such regulations. The department will create rules to provide requirements for electric vehicle charging stations to allow for consistency for consumers and the industry.

This bill makes many changes to regulatory activities of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (department). Amongst many other provisions the bill:

- Prohibits and creates penalties for the manufacture for sale, sale, hold or offer for sale, or distribution of cultivated meat in this state and provides it is a violation to knowingly violate this section.
- Prohibits the willful destroying, harvesting, or selling of saw palmetto berries on private or public land without the written permission of the landowner, provides penalties for violations, and

grants rulemaking authority to the department.

- Provides criminal penalties for trespassing on land classified as commercial agricultural property.

Effective date: July 1, 2024

ENERGY RESOURCES BILL PASSES WITH NATURAL GAS PREEMPTION

HB 1645 – *Energy Resources* by Rep. Payne (SB 1624 by Sen. Collins) passed this session.

The bill includes a preemption of local government zoning of natural gas facilities. Specifically, the bill provides that a natural gas "resiliency facility" is a permitted use in all commercial, industrial, and manufacturing land use categories. The local government may still require certain setback and landscaping criteria for the facility, provided that the requirements are not more stringent than those imposed on similar uses within those land use categories.

The bill revises state energy policy moving away from climate change considerations to focus on reliability, safety, and economic growth. Additionally, the bill revises public business energy guidelines, eliminating requirements for climate-friendly products and green lodging for state contracts, and specifies conditions for mutual aid agreements between electric utilities.

Effective Date: July 1, 2024

DEMOLITION LIMITATION FOR UNSAFE STRUCTURES PASSES

SB 1526 – *Local Regulation of Nonconforming and Unsafe Structures* by Sen. Avila (HB 1647 by Rep. Roach) passed this session.

This bill creates the Resiliency and Safe Structures Act, providing that a local government may not prohibit, restrict, or prevent the demolition of the following structures for any reason other than public safety:

- Nonconforming structures
- Structures or buildings determined to be unsafe by a local building official; and
- Structures or buildings ordered to be demolished by a local government that has proper jurisdiction.

The bill provides that a local government must authorize replacement structures for qualifying buildings to be developed to the maximum height and overall building size authorized by local development regulations for a similarly situated parcel within the same zoning district. The bill prohibits a local government from imposing certain restrictions and limitations on a replacement structure to be built on the property where a qualifying structure was demolished. A local government may only administratively review an application for a demolition permit for compliance with the Florida Building Code, the Florida Fire Prevention Code, and the Life Safety Code, or local amendments thereto, and any regulation applicable to a similarly situated

parcel. The local government may not impose additional local land development regulations or public hearings on an applicant for a permit under this bill.

- The provisions of the bill do not apply to:
- Structures or buildings individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
 - Single-family homes
 - Contributing structures or buildings within a historic district which was listed in the National Register of Historic Places before January 1, 2000.
 - Structures or buildings located on a barrier island in a municipality with a population of less than 10,000 according to the most recent decennial census and which has at least six city blocks that are not located in zones V, VE, AO, or AE, as identified in the Flood Insurance Rate Map issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.
- Effective date: Upon becoming law.

LAW ENFORCEMENT COMPLAINT PREEMPTION AND SHERIFF PAY RAISE PASSES
HB 601 – *Law Enforcement and Correctional Officers* by Rep. Duggan (SB 576 by Sen. Ingoglia) passed this session.

The bill establishes the uniform handling of complaints against law enforcement and correctional officers by preempting local regulation. The bill allows a county sheriff or municipal chief of police to establish a civilian oversight board to review the policies and procedures of his or her office and its subdivisions. Boards created by the sheriff or municipal chief of police must be composed of at least three and up to seven members appointed by the sheriff, one of which shall be a retired law enforcement officer. Late floor amendments provided an additional \$5,000 base salary pay raise for sheriffs in each population category, which was recently amended in 2022 by an additional \$5,000.

Also, the bill declares the Legislature's intent for uniform application of procedures regarding the receipt, processing, and investigation of complaints against officers across the state. In addition, the bill prohibits counties, municipalities, special districts, or other political subdivisions from enacting or enforcing measures regarding the handling of officer misconduct complaints. Lastly, the bill bars local entities from creating or enforcing any rules related to civilian oversight in the investigation of officer misconduct complaints.
Effective date: July 1, 2024

FOOD DELIVERY PREEMPTION PASSES
SB 676 – *Food Delivery Platforms* by Sen. Bradley (HB 1099 by Rep. Melo) passed this session.

SB 676 expressly preempts the regulation of food delivery platforms to the state. The bill prohibits a food delivery platform from taking and arranging for the delivery or pickup of orders from a food service establishment without the express consent of that food service establishment. The food service establishment's consent must be in either a written or electronic format.

A food delivery platform must itemize and clearly disclose to the consumer the cost breakdown of each transaction. The legislation specifies the information that must be disclosed. The food delivery platform must provide the consumer with information about the delivery, including the anticipated date and time of the delivery of the order. The food delivery platform must provide a food service establishment with a method of contacting the consumer at different intervals – from preparing the order up to two hours following an order pickup from the food service establishment – and a method for responding ratings or reviews by a consumer. A food delivery platform must remove a food service establishment's listing on the platform within 10 days after the food establishment's request absent an agreement between the two parties.

The bill specifies the matters to be included in an agreement between a food delivery platform and a food service establishment, but such agreement may not include any provision requiring a food service establishment to indemnify a food delivery platform, its employees, contractors, or agents for damages or harm by acts or omissions of the platform, employees, contractors, and agents.

The bill prohibits a food delivery platform from unreasonably limiting the value or number of transactions that may be disputed by a food establishment relating to orders, goods, or delivery errors.

Finally, the bill appropriates \$287,322 in recurring and \$22,183 in nonrecurring funds, along with three positions to DBPR to implement the bill.
Effective date: Upon becoming law.

TAX COLLECTOR SALARY BUMP PASSES
SB 958 – *Local Government Employees* by Sen. Martin (HB 505 by Rep. Truenow) passed this session.

The bill raises the statutory base salary rates for tax collectors and district school superintendents by \$5,000. The bill also:

- Allows tax collector employees to be eligible for a lump-sum monetary benefit for adopting a child from the child welfare system.
- Allows county tax collectors to budget for and

pay a hiring or retention bonus to employees, if such expenditure is approved by the Department of Revenue or board of county commissioners; and

- Allows district school boards to contract with the county tax collector for a tax collector employee to administer road tests for driver licensure on school grounds at schools within the district.

Effective date: July 1, 2024

GOVERNMENT-ISSUED ID RESTRICTION PASSES
HB 1451 – *Identification Documents* by Rep. Michael (SB 1174 by Sen. Ingoglia) passed this session.

The bill prohibits a county or a municipality from accepting as identification any identification card or document that is issued by any person, entity, or organization that knowingly issues identification cards or documents to individuals who are not lawfully present in the United States. This prohibition does not extend to any documentation that is issued by or on behalf of the Federal Government.
Effective Date: July 1, 2024

PRIVATE PARKING PREEMPTION EXPANSION PASSES
HB 271 – *Motor Vehicle Parking on Private Property* by Rep. Lopez and Rep. Busatta Cabrera (SB 388 by Sen. Garcia) passed this session.

This bill clarifies the current preemption on local governments regarding the parking of motor vehicles on private property. The bill imposes additional restrictions on private parking facility owners and operators concerning signage and location of parking rules, parking charges and fees, imposition of late fees, appeal processes, prohibiting the transfer, sale, or offers to sell personal information of parking facility users to third parties, and exemptions for lodging parks, mobile home parks, and recreational vehicle parks under certain conditions.
Effective date: July 1, 2024

ELECTRIC FENCE REQUIREMENTS PASSES
HB 535 – *Low-Voltage Alarm System Projects* by Rep. Snyder (SB 496 by Sen. Perry) passed this session.

The bill clarifies that a nonelectric fence must enclose the outside perimeter of a low-voltage electric fence, which must be two feet higher than the nonelectric perimeter fence or wall. The bill specifies that a low-voltage electric fence is allowed in any area except an area zoned exclusively for single-family or multifamily residential use. An area within more than one zoning category is not considered exclusively for single-family or multifamily residential use. In addition, the bill further clarifies that counties, municipalities,

special districts, or other local governments may not provide additional requirements for the installation or maintenance of a low-voltage alarm system project pursuant to s. 553.793, F.S., or that is otherwise inconsistent with this statutory section.
Effective date: July 1, 2024

RURAL GRANT WAIVER OF LOCAL MATCH PASSES

HB 141- *Economic Development* by Rep. Abbott (SB 196 by Sen. Simon) passed this session. FAC supported this legislation as part of its 2024 FAC **Legislative Action Plan**.

The bill removes local match requirements within the Regional Rural Development Grant program. Current law requires a 25% non-state match by the recipient regional economic development organization. The bill also removes several eligibility requirements including:

- Demonstration of need by the applicant
- Proof by each respective unit of local government of financial or in-kind commitment to the regional organization
- Demonstration of private-sector involvement within the regional organization;

The final bill also authorizes Triumph Gulf Coast Inc., a Deepwater Horizon oil spill response organization, to retain interest earned on funds in its trust account for administrative or award purposes.
Effective date: July 1, 2024

AGRICULTURAL WORKER HOUSING PREEMPTION PASSES

SB 1082 – *Housing for Legally Verified Agricultural Workers* by Sen. Collins (HB 1051 by Rep. Tuck) unanimously passed this session. While the legislation sets state standards for agricultural housing siting, the guidelines passed upon local ordinances currently in effect for setback and buffer zones.

The bill precludes a government entity from restricting the construction or installation of housing for agricultural workers on land classified as agricultural. Local governments are, however, authorized to require the following of a housing site:

- Meets all federal, state, and local building standards, including Department of Health (DOH) migrant farmworker living standards
- Must be maintained in a neat, orderly, and safe manner;
- May not exceed the lesser of 1.5 percent of the property’s area or 35,000 square feet
- 50-foot setbacks on all sides
- May not be located less than 250 feet from a property zoned for residential use;
- Provide screening consisting of tree, wall, berm or fence coverage at least six feet in height, if the structure is within 500 feet of a residential-zoned parcel
- Cover access drives with dust-free material such as packed shell or gravel.

Such housing structures constructed prior to July 1, 2024 are not required to meet these requirements, unless the structure is altered or expanded. Housing structures are to be removed if agricultural operations cease for 365 days (following a 180 day notice period by the local government to resume operations) or if the DOH housing permit is revoked.
Effective date: July 1, 2024

RURAL HOSPITAL LICENSING MEASURE PASSES

SB 644 – *Rural Emergency Hospitals* by Sen. Simon (HB 309 by Rep. Shoaf) passed this session.

The bill designates “rural emergency hospitals” (REH) as a new classification of hospital license, potentially eligible for federal reimbursement and Medicare facility payments. This effort represents a response to the closure of several rural hospitals across the state, due to lower service volume and reimbursement rates. A rural emergency hospital is expected to meet the following criteria:

- Certified as an REH by the Department of Health and Human Services
- Does not provide inpatient services, with the exception of a distinctly licensed skilled nursing unit to furnish post-hospital extended care services
- Has a transfer agreement in place with a Level I or II trauma center
- An emergency department staffed 24/7
- 50 or fewer beds OR has been licensed as a “critical access hospital”

The bill also prospectively requires health plans to cover rural emergency hospital services to the same extent that they would cover general hospital services.
Effective date: July 1, 2024

FOOD RECOVERY INCENTIVE FAILS

HB 1159/SB 1422 – *Food Recovery* by Rep. Roth/Sen. Burgess failed this session. SB 1422 passed all committee stops but was never considered on the floor, while HB 1159 died in Senate messages.

The bill directs the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) to provide incentives to food producers to sell food products to food recovery entities at a discounted price. Food recovery entities may negotiate prices of fresh food products, before being reimbursed by DACS pursuant to current law.

ANTI-TRESPASSING BILL FAILS BUT ADDED TO FDACS PACKAGE

SB 188 / HB 119 – *Trespass on Commercial Agricultural Property* by Sen. Brodeur / Rep. Melo failed this session.

SB 188 was never heard in its second committee stop, while HB 119 was withdrawn prior to introduction.
Note: While this bill failed to pass in standalone form, the language was substantially incorporated into the FDACS package, SB 1084 (Collins), which did pass.

The bill establishes trespassing on designated commercial agricultural property as a third-degree felony. The bill would have applied to an offender who entered a property with criminal intent. The bill required the property’s agricultural status to be clearly advertised under the bill’s signage requirements.

HEALTHY FOOD FINANCING INITIATIVE PROGRAM FAILS

SB 112 – *Healthy Food Financing Initiative Program* by Sen. Jones was never heard this session.

The bill amends and expands the Healthy Food Financing Initiative program, focusing on improving access to nutritious food in underserved communities. This includes the following provisions:

- Redefines “underserved community” to low-income communities with limited supermarket access, updating criteria for identifying these areas.
- Revises program administration features, allowing grants and loans for independent grocery stores, supermarkets, and community facilities to increase access to affordable fresh produce in underserved areas.
- Specifies eligibility requirements for nonprofits and community development financial institutions, emphasizing experience in healthy food financing and financial risk management.
- Outlines duties for the Department of Agriculture

- or third-party administrators, including program guidelines, funding allocations, and project compliance monitoring.
- Sets project eligibility criteria, focusing on construction, renovation, and expansion of food retail outlets in underserved communities to improve fresh produce availability.
 - Mandates annual performance review by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability, focusing on economic impact and health outcomes, with a report due by July 1, 2032.
 - Clarifies funding is contingent on annual appropriations, and details permissible uses for project funding, including construction, workforce training, and initial inventory costs.
 - Requires rule adoption by the department for program administration.

URBAN AGRICULTURE PILOT PROGRAM FAILS

HB 397 / SB 404 – *Urban Agriculture Pilot Projects* by Rep. Cross/Sen. Rouson failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committees of reference.

The bill expands the definition of “urban agriculture” in Florida to include both commercial and noncommercial agricultural uses within specified urban areas, amending related statutes on farm equipment and structures. It redefines “urban agriculture” to include new commercial agricultural uses, in addition to noncommercial uses, on land specified under dense urban land area that is not primarily zoned or classified for agricultural purposes but designated for urban agricultural pilot projects. This excludes vegetable gardens for personal consumption on residential properties.

PUBLIC CAMPING RESTRICTIONS PASS

HB 1365 – *Unauthorized Public Camping and Public Sleeping* by Rep. Garrison (SB 1530 by Sen. Martin) passed this session. The bill is a legislative priority of the Governor to address the impacts of homelessness and communities. The bill’s intent is to prevent widespread homelessness, or tent cities.

This bill creates s. 125.0231, F.S., to prohibit a county or municipality from authorizing or otherwise allowing any person from regularly engaging in public camping or sleeping on any public property, public building, or public right-of-way under the counties or municipality’s jurisdiction, unless the county designates property for such purposes. As passed, the bill:

- Defines the terms “Department,” and “Public camping and sleeping.”
- Prohibits a county or municipality from authorizing or otherwise allowing any person to regularly engage in public camping or sleeping overnight on public property including, but not limited to, public buildings, its grounds, and any public right of way under the jurisdiction of the county or municipality.
- By a majority vote of the county’s governing body may approve a designated area of public property to be used for purposes of public camping or sleeping for a continuous period of no longer than one year. If the designated property is within the boundaries of a municipality, this approval is contingent upon the consent of the municipality by a majority vote of its governing body.
- A county designation is not effective until the department certifies the designation. In order to obtain this certification, a county must submit a request to the secretary of the department certifying and providing documents proving the following:
 - There are not sufficient open beds in homeless shelters in the county for the homeless population.
 - The designated property is not contiguous to a property designed 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 of existing residential property, commercial property, or children within the county or municipality.
 - The county has developed a plan to satisfy the minimum standards and procedures that a designated property must comply with under the bill.

- Upon receiving a county request to certify a designation, the department shall notify the county of the date of receiving the request and of any omission or error within 10 days. Within 45 days of a complete application submission, they shall certify the designation; if the department takes no action, the application is deemed certified on the 45th day.
- If a county designated county or municipal property to be used for public camping or sleeping, it must maintain the minimum standards:
 - Ensure the safety and security of the designated property.
 - Maintain sanitation: at a minimum, providing access to clean and operable restrooms and running water.
 - Coordinate with the regional managing entity to provide access to behavioral health services which must include substance abuse and mental health treatments.
 - Prohibit and enforce illegal substance use and alcohol use within the property.
- Requires the governmental entity to post on its publicly accessible website the minimum standards and procedures governing the public property within 30 days of receiving the certification.
- The department may inspect the property at any time and the DCF Secretary may send notice recommending the designated property’s closure if standards are not being met. If a notice of closure is received, the notice must be published on the counties and municipality’s public accessible website within 5 business days of receipt.
- Exempts fiscally constrained counties or municipalities from having to comply with specified minimum standards and procedures required under the bill.
- A resident of the county, an owner of a business located in the county, or the Attorney General may bring a civil action in any court of competent jurisdiction against the county or applicable municipality for violating the prohibition on public camping or sleeping on public property. A prevailing resident or business owner in a civil action may recover reasonable expenses incurred in bringing the civil action, including court costs, reasonable attorney fees, investigative costs, witness fees, and deposition costs.
- Requires that a person who applies for an injunction must provide an affidavit attesting that he or she:
 - Has provided notice of such a violation to the county or municipality.
 - The county or municipality failed to cure the

violation within five business days.

- The county or municipality has failed to take all reasonable actions within the limits of its governmental authority to cure the alleged violation within five business days of receiving written notice.
- The bill does not apply when the governor or the county has declared a state of emergency.
- Determines and declares the bill fulfills an important state interest ensuring the health, safety, welfare, quality of life, and aesthetics of Florida communities while simultaneously making adequate provision for the homeless population of the state.

Effective date: October 1, 2024, except that s. 125.0231(4), F.S., the injunction action provision, takes effect on January 1, 2025 and applies to causes of action accruing on or after such date.

BUILDING PERMIT REVIEW LEGISLATION PASSES

HB 267 – *Building Regulation* by Rep. Esposito (SB 684 by Sen. DiCeglie) passed this session. FAC staff worked with proponents to make numerous changes to the filed bill to streamline the permitting process and ensure appropriate review of the relevant technical and public safety aspects.

The bill provides the statutory framework for the approval of building permits. While the bill shortens the existing timeframes, or “shot clocks,” for building permit review, the bill allows flexibility for local governments in requesting additional information of the applicant to ensure compliance with the building code and provide a consistent framework for application “curing”. Local governments are able to establish the review procedure within this shot clock that best fits its department’s needs by publishing the requirements on its website. This will lead to a better customer-service relationship between the building departments and the applicants they serve. The bill includes an additional use of carry-forward funds for technology, such as artificial intelligence, that has the potential to greatly reduce the timeframes for review to help achieve the reductions in shot clocks.

Specifically, the bill provides a number of revisions to current law pertaining to the standards and timeframes for local governments to follow for the issuance of building permits. Specifically, the bill requires local governments to approve, approve with conditions, or deny a complete and sufficient permit application within the following timeframes:

- 30 business days for the following permits for structures that are less than 7,500 square feet: single-family residential unit or dwelling, accessory structure, alarm, electrical, irrigation, landscaping, mechanism, plumbing, or roofing.
- 60 business days for the above-mentioned permits for structures more than 7,500 square feet.

- 60 business days for signs and nonresidential buildings less than 25,000 square feet.
- 60 business days for multifamily residential not exceeding 50 units, certain site-plan approvals and subdivision plats, and lot grading and site alteration.
- 12 business days for master building permits for site-specific building permits.
- 10 business days for plans that have been approved by a private provider who is a licensed architect or engineer affixes his or her professional seal to the affidavit.
- 10 business days for single-family dwellings utilizing the Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery Program.

The bill establishes a new “Curing Process” for insufficient applications and provides a framework for responding to insufficient application within 10 business days. The curing process will provide 10 days for applicant to respond and final 10 days for local government approve or deny the permit.

The bill modifies provisions requiring local governments to refund permit fees. Along with modifications to the permit process timeframes, the bill also amends other portions of the Florida Building Code including:

- Expanding the examination eligibility requirements for a person seeking licensure as a building code inspector or plans examiner.
- Simplifying the process for installing replacement windows, doors, and garage doors by exempting the need for sealed drawings by design professionals.
- Requiring local governments to adopt standard operating audit procedures regarding private provider audits.

Effective date: January 1, 2025

ADVANCED COMMUNITY CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM PASSES

SB 812 – *Expedited Approval of Residential Building Permits* by Sen. Ingoglia (HB 665 by Rep. McClain) passed this session. The bill requires certain counties to establish a development program for subdivisions and planned communities with a two-step process for obtaining a preliminary and final plat. The program allows developers to obtain building permits and begin the construction process prior to the issuance of final plat. The bill provides numerous protections for local governments as it relates to indemnification and performance bonds to hold the developers accountable. Several jurisdictions in Florida currently operate similar programs.

By October 1, 2024, the bill requires a governing body of a county that has 75,000 residents or more and any governing body of a municipality that has 25 acres or more of contiguous land that is designated in its comprehensive plan and future land use map as land

that is agricultural or to be developed for residential purposes, to create a program to expedite the process for issuing building permits for residential subdivisions or planned communities before a final plat is recorded with the clerk of the circuit court. The bill specifies that by December 31, 2027, these programs must be updated to allow for up to 75% of planned homes or building permits. A county subject to the designation of the Florida Keys as an area of critical state concern in s. 380.0552, F.S., which is Monroe County, is exempt from the act.

The bill requires the governing body of certain municipalities and counties to create:

- A two-step application process for the adoption of a preliminary plat and for a final plat in order to expedite the issuance of building permits related to such plats. The application must allow an applicant to identify the percentage of planned homes that the governing body must issue, but not less than 50 percent of the applicable building permits for the residential subdivision or planned community indicated in the preliminary plat. The governing body must maximize its administrative processes to expedite the review and approval of applications, plats, and plans.
- A master building permit process consistent with existing master building permit application requirements for applicants seeking multiple building permits for residential subdivisions or planned communities. The bill provides that a master building permit issued pursuant to this requirement is valid for three consecutive years after its issuance or until the adoption of a new Building Code, whichever is earlier. After a new Florida Building Code is adopted, the applicant may apply for a new master building permit, which, upon approval, is valid for three consecutive years.

The bill allows an applicant to use a private provider to expedite the application process for building permits after a preliminary plat is approved under the provisions of the bill. Additionally, the bill requires a governing body to establish a registry of at least three “qualified contractors,” as defined in the bill, whom the local government may use to supplement staff resources in ways determined by the governing body for processing and expediting the review of an application for a preliminary plat or related plans. Such qualified contractor may not have a conflict of interest with the applicant.

The bill allows a governing body to work with appropriate local government agencies to issue an address and a temporary parcel identification number for lot lines and lot sizes based on the metes and bounds of the plat contained in an application. The bill allows an applicant to contract to sell, but not transfer

ownership of, a residential structure or building located in the residential subdivision or planned community until the final plat is approved by the county’s or municipality’s governing body and recorded in the public records by the clerk of the circuit court. The bill provides that an applicant for a building permit may not obtain a temporary or final certificate of occupancy for each residential structure or building until the final plat is approved by the governing body and recorded in the public records.

The bill requires an applicant to indemnify and hold harmless the governing body and its agents and employees from damages accruing and directly related to the issuance of a building permit for a residential building or structure located in the residential subdivision or planned community before the approval and recording of the final plat by the governing body. This includes damage resulting from fire, flood, construction defects, and bodily injury. However, such indemnification does not extend to governmental actions that infringe on the applicant’s vested rights.

An applicant has a vested right in a preliminary plat that has been approved with conditions by a governing entity, if all of the following conditions are met:

- The applicant relies in good faith on the approved preliminary plat; and
- The applicant incurs obligations and expenses, commences construction of the residential subdivision or planned community, and is continuing in good faith with the development of the property.

Upon the establishment of an applicant’s vested rights a governing body may not make substantive changes to the preliminary plat without the applicant’s written consent. The bill defines other terms used in the act including “Applicant,” “Final plat,” “Local building official,” “Plans,” and Preliminary plat.” Effective date: Upon becoming law.

“LIVE LOCAL” AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOLLOW-UP PASSES

SB 328 – *Affordable Housing* by Sen. Calatayud (HB 1239 by Rep. Lopez) passed this session. This bill amends various provisions of the Live Local Act (act), passed during the 2023 Regular Session, which made substantial changes and additions to affordable housing-related programs and policies at both the state and local levels.

As it pertains to the act’s preemption of certain local zoning and land use regulations to expedite the development of affordable housing, the bill:

- Prohibits local governments from restricting the intensity of a proposed development below 150 percent of the highest currently allowed FAR

under the local government’s land development regulations.

- Revises the prohibition on restricting the height of a qualifying development when the development is adjacent to a single-family residential use to 150 percent of the tallest building on any property adjacent to the proposed development, the highest currently allowed height for the property, or three stories, whichever is higher.
- Prohibits qualifying developments within one-quarter mile of a military installation from utilizing the act’s administrative approval process and exempts certain airport impacted areas from the act’s provisions.
- Clarifies that a local government’s “currently allowed” density, height, and floor area ratio does not include any bonuses, variances, or other special exceptions provided in their regulations.
- Requires developments authorized under the act to be treated as a conforming use even after expiration of the development’s affordability period and after the expiration of the applicable statutes.
- Modifies parking reduction requirements for qualifying developments located near certain transportation facilities.
- Requires local governments to publish on its website a policy containing procedures and expectations for the administrative approval of qualifying developments.
- Clarifies that only the affordable units in a qualifying development must be rental units.
- Requires a qualifying development within a transit-oriented development or area to be mixed-use residential.
- Clarifies provisions concerning local government bonuses for height, density, and floor area ratio for qualifying developments. As it pertains to the act’s ad valorem tax exemptions for newly constructed multifamily developments, the bill makes the following changes:
 - Requires 10 units, rather than 70 units, to be set aside for income-limited persons and families in Florida Keys to qualify for the exemption.
 - Clarifies that the Florida Housing Finance Corporation’s (FHFC) duties are ministerial in certifying eligibility for exemption, while local property appraisers maintain authority to grant tax exemptions.
 - Outlines the method for property appraisers to determine the values of tax-exempt units.

The bill also aligns certain provisions of the local option property tax exemption with the exemption for newly constructed developments for consist application of the law. Finally, the bill appropriates \$100 million in non-recurring funds from the General Revenue Fund to the FHFC to administer the Florida Hometown Hero Program and makes one programmatic change and

expands the authority for the FHFC to preclude developers from participating in its programs for certain violations. Effective date: Upon becoming a law.

OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING TEMPORARY FIX PASSES

SB 1142 – *Occupational Licensing* by Sen. Hooper (HB 1579 by Rep. Mooney) passed this session. A late amendment provided an extension of the occupational licensing preemption for an additional year to July 1, 2025. The Construction Industry Licensing Board (CILB) will have an additional year to provide state requirements for the issuance of certain specialty construction contracting licenses. FAC supported this legislation through the inclusion in the 2024 FAC **Legislative Action Plan**.

This bill amends s. 489.117, F.S., relating to the registration of specialty contractors, to authorize registered contractors in good standing who have been registered with a local jurisdiction during calendar years 2021, 2022, or 2023, to qualify for a registration when the local jurisdiction has determined not to continue issuing local licenses or exercising disciplinary oversight over such licensees. The bill requires the CILB to issue licenses to eligible applicants in the circumstances specified in the bill and pushes the grandfathering date for voluntary licensure to July 1, 2025.

To be eligible for registration under these circumstances, an applicant must provide:

- Evidence of the prior local registration during 2021, 2022, or 2023.
- Evidence that the local jurisdiction does not have a license type available for the category of work for which the applicant was issued a certificate of registration or local license during 2021, 2022, or 2023, which may include a notification on the website of the local jurisdiction or an e-mail or letter from the local building department.
- The required application fee; and
- Compliance with the insurance and financial responsibility requirements for contractors under current law.

Effective date: July 1, 2024

MONROE COUNTY TDT LIMITED AUTHORIZATION FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

SB 1456 - *Counties Designated as Areas of Critical State Concern* by Sen. Rodriguez (HB 1297 by Rep. Mooney) passed this session. FAC supported this legislation through the inclusion in the 2024 FAC **Legislative Action Plan**.

SB 1456 focuses on amendments to current law, specifically addressing the Florida Keys and the City of Key West Areas of Critical State Concern. The bill:

- Revises criteria for hurricane evacuation clearance times.
- Allows land authorities to enforce income limitations on land conveyed for affordable housing, ensuring compliance through perpetual deed restrictions.
- Grants exemptions to counties or municipalities designated as areas of critical state concern within the past five years, from certain requirements regarding local housing assistance trust funds.
- Permits counties designated as areas of critical state concern, levying tourist development and tourist impact taxes, to use surplus funds accumulated until September 30, 2024, for affordable housing initiatives. The usage is capped at \$35 million and requires approval by the county commissioners. Affordable housing must cater to private sector tourism-related employees and remain available for a minimum of 99 years.

Effective date: July 1, 2024

VACATION RENTAL PREEMPTION PASSES

SB 280 – *Vacation Rentals* by Sen. DiCeglie (HB 1537 by Rep. Griffiths) passed this session.

This bill implements regulations for vacation rentals, including registration, inspection, and operation guidelines, and mandates advertising platforms to collect and remit taxes on rentals. These regulations include:

- Requires Advertising Platforms to collect and remit tax.
- Requires counties that Self-Administer Tourist Development Taxes to allow advertising platforms register, collect and remit the tax.
- Allows for ordinances adopted prior to June 1, 2011, to be amended to be less restrictive.
- Provides for new requirements for local registration of Vacation Rentals
- Allows local government to require registration of vacations rentals.
- Allows for reasonable fees per unit to process or renew a registration.
- As part of the registration, a local government may require:
 - Identifying information about the owner and the operator of the vacation rental and designate and maintain at all times a responsible contact available 24 hours a day.
 - Proof of license issued by DBPR and that all required tax registration has been obtained.
 - Payment in full all outstanding code liens
 - Maximum occupancy not to exceed two persons per bedroom plus an additional two persons per common area.
 - These requirements do not apply to a county that had adopted an ordinance prior to January 1, 2016

- Allows for the fining and suspension of a local registration under certain conditions.

Effective date: July 1, 2024

TRANSIT SPENDING CAP PASSES IN TRANSPORTATION PACKAGE

HB 287 – *Transportation* by Rep. Esposito (SB 266 by Sen. Hooper) passed this session.

The bill addresses changes to current laws related to transportation. Specifically, the bill:

- Provides the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) may not annually commit more than 20 percent of the revenues derived from state fuel taxes and motor vehicle license-related fees deposited into the State Transportation Trust Fund to public transit projects. However, FDOT may annually exceed this 20 percent revenue threshold for any of the following:
 - A public transit project that uses revenues derived from state fuel taxes and motor vehicle license-related fees to match funds made available by the Federal government.
 - A public transit project included in the transportation improvement program adopted pursuant to s. 339.175(8), F.S., and approved by a supermajority vote of the board of county commissioners or the governing board of a consolidated county and city government where the project is located.
 - A bus rapid transit or rail project that would result in maintaining or enhancing the level of service of the state highway system along the corridor of the project, provided state funds do not exceed 50 percent of the nonfederal cost-share and the percentage of the local share.
- Increases from five to eight the number of Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV)-approved Basic Driver Improvement course elections that are allowed in a lifetime for a person without a commercial driver license or commercial learner's permit who is cited for a noncriminal moving violation while driving a noncommercial motor vehicle.
- Requires DHSMV to annually review changes made to major traffic laws of this state and to require course content for certain driving courses to be modified accordingly.
- Amends the law relating to public-private transportation facilities and partnerships to align with industry terms and practices and to improve current processes.
- Revises a provision in current law relating to the use of reclaimed asphalt pavement material.
- Adds phased design-build contracts to the requirements that FDOT receive at least three

letters of interest in order to proceed with a request for proposals and that FDOT requests proposals from no fewer than three of the firms submitting letters of interest.

- Amends the surety bond requirement for phased design-build contracts.
- Provides in law, rather than as a requirement in an FDOT contract, that a motor vehicle used for the performance of road or bridge construction or maintenance work on an FDOT project must be registered in compliance with Chapter 320, F.S.
- Shortens the deadline for a claimant to institute an action, except an action for recovery of retainage, against the contractor or surety to within 365 days after performance of the labor or completion of delivery of the materials or supplies, rather than within 365 days after the final acceptance of the contract work by FDOT.
- Amends provisions relating to the limitation on liability of FDOT and its contractors.
- Amends provisions relating to the previous property owner's right of first refusal for property that FDOT acquired but subsequently determined is no longer needed for a transportation facility.
- Amends provisions relating to funding the fire station at mile marker 63 on the Alligator Alley toll road.
- Codifies the Local Agency Program (LAP) within FDOT.
- Modifies DOT, contractor, or design engineer immunity to liability in a civil action.

Effective date: July 1, 2024

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION REFORM PASSES

HB 1301 – *Department of Transportation* by Rep. Abbott and Rep. Berfield (SB 1226 by Sen. DiCeglie) passed this session.

The bill addresses matters related to the Florida Department of Transportation. Specifically, the bill:

- Revises the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) areas of program responsibility.
- Removes obsolete language that requires the FDOT secretary to appoint FDOT's inspector general.
- Changes the time period a prepaid toll account can remain dormant from three years to ten.
- Provides a new restriction that FDOT may not expend any state funds to support a project or program of a public transit provider, authority, public-use airport, or a port if that entity violates s. 381.00316 relating to health care requirements.
- Provides that the remainder of the revenues deposited into the State Transportation Trust Fund (STTF) derived from the registration of motor vehicles must first be available for appropriation for payments under a service contract entered into with the Florida Department of Transportation Financing Corporation to fund

arterial highway projects.

- Allows FDOT to enter into a service contract with the Florida Department of Transportation Financing Corporation to finance projects identified in the Moving Florida Forward Infrastructure Initiative in the Work Program.
- Requires that any lane elimination or lane repurposing, recommendation, or application relating to public transit projects must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the transit authority board in a public meeting with a 30-day public notice and that any action of eminent domain for acquisition of public transit facilities carried out by a public transit provider must be discussed by the public transit provider at a public meeting with a 30-day public notice.
- Provides that the remaining unallocated New Starts Transit Program funds as of June 30 of each fiscal year, must be reallocated for the purpose of the Strategic Intermodal System.
- Provides that each public transit provider, by November 1, 2024, during a public meeting must annually certify that its budgeted and general administration costs are not greater than 20 percent above the annual state average of administrative costs for its respective tier; present a line-item budget report of its budgeted and actual general administration costs; and disclose all salaried executive and management level employees' total compensation packages, ridership performance and metrics, and any gift accepted in exchange for contracts.
- Provides requirements for marketing and advertising by a public transit provider.
- Provides infractions for a person cycling, walking, or driving a vehicle approaching a railroad-highway who violates the regulation provided in the bill.

Effective date: July 1, 2024

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AGENCY PACKAGE PASSES

SB 1420 – *Department of Commerce* by Sen. Burgess (HB 1419 by Rep. Tuck) passed this session.

The bill predominantly changes statutes impacting the Department of Commerce (DCM). However, a late amendment provided a restriction on certain citizen-led county charter amendments. The bill provides that a citizen-led county charter amendment that is not required to be approved by the board of county commissioners preempting any development order, land development regulation, comprehensive plan, or voluntary annexation is prohibited unless expressly authorized in a county charter that was lawful and in effect on January 1, 2024. This bill makes the following changes that impact the DCM:

- Specifies that a citizen-led county charter amendment that is not required to be approved

- by the board of county commissioners preempting any development order, land development regulation, comprehensive plan, or voluntary annexation is prohibited unless expressly authorized in a county charter that was lawful and in effect on January 1, 2024.
- Provides that if the local government doesn't hold a second public hearing and adopt a comprehensive plan amendment within 180 days after the DCM provides comments, the amendment is deemed withdrawn; and provides that comprehensive plan amendments are deemed withdrawn if the local government fails to transmit the comprehensive plan amendment to the DCM within 10 working days after the final adoption hearing.
 - Deletes an outdated requirement that the Florida Sports Foundation must continue amateur sports programs previously conducted by the Florida Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Amateur Sports.
 - Extends the repayment period of the Local Government Emergency Revolving Bridge Loan Program from 5 to 10 years and directs the DCM to amend existing loans executed before Feb. 1, 2024, in order to increase the loan term to a total of 10 years from the original date of execution.
 - Requires the DCM to establish a direct-support organization (DSO); renames the Florida Defense Support Task Force; provides for organizational composition; revises the mission of the DSO; requires the DSO to operate under a contract with the DCM; revises the due date for the annual report; and provides a repeal date of October 1, 2029.
 - Creates a Supply Chain Innovation Grant Program within the DCM; requires the DCM to jointly select grants with the Florida Department of Transportation; requires the Office of Economic and Demographic Research and the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability to review the program by January 1, 2027, and every three years thereafter; and provides the program expires June 30, 2034.
 - Revises the term "businesses" to include healthcare facilities and allied healthcare opportunities and revises the funding priority purposes to provide that healthcare facilities, in addition to hospitals, operated by nonprofit or local government entities that provide opportunities in healthcare, are eligible for the funding under the Incumbent Worker Training Program.
 - Specifies that board members of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act are voting members of the state workforce development board.
 - Specifies that a homeowner's association's proposed revived declaration of covenants and articles of incorporation and bylaws must be

submitted to the DCM within 60 days after obtaining valid written consent from a majority of the affected parcel owners or within 60 days after the date the documents are approved by affected parcel owners by a vote at a meeting.
Effective date: July 1, 2024

TRAFFIC INFRACTION DEVICE REFORM PASSES

SB 1464 – *Traffic Enforcement* by Sen. Calatayud (HB 1363 by Rep. Busatta Cabrera) passed this session.

This bill creates additional requirements governing the installation and use of traffic infraction detectors, commonly known as red light cameras and including school zone cameras. Specifically, the bill provides:

- A county or municipality must enact an ordinance in order to authorize the placement or installation of, or to authorize contracting with a vendor for the placement or installation of, one or more traffic infraction detectors installed on or after July 1, 2025.
- A county or municipality operating traffic infraction detectors must annually report the results of all traffic infraction detectors within the county's or municipality's jurisdiction.
- Before a county or municipality contracts or renews a contract to place or install traffic infraction detectors, the county or municipality must approve the contract or contract renewal at a regular or special meeting of the county's or municipality's governing body.
- The bill provides requirements for the public hearing on a proposed ordinance and the annual reporting relating to traffic infraction detectors.
- The compliance or sufficiency of compliance with the above reporting requirement may not be raised in a proceeding challenging specified traffic violations enforced by a traffic infraction detector.

Additionally, the bill provides that a county or municipality that does not comply with the specified reporting requirements are suspended from operating traffic infraction detectors until such noncompliance is corrected. The bill requires municipalities and counties operating traffic infraction detectors to report specified information to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV). DHSMV must publish each of these reports on its website. The bill prohibits counties or municipalities from using a contract procured with a governmental entity outside this state for any camera system used to detect traffic infractions.

The bill prohibits a governmental entity from knowingly entering into or renewing a contract for a camera to enforce traffic infractions where the contracting vendor is owned by the government of a foreign country of concern, or a foreign country of

concern has a controlling interest in the contracting vendor.
Effective date: July 1, 2024

MAXIMUM TOWING AND STORAGE RATES PASSES

HB 179 – *Towing and Storage* by Rep. Bell (SB 774 by Sen. Perry) passed this session.

The bill makes the following changes to the laws relating to towing-storage operators:

- Amends provisions related to maximum rates set by counties, and cities.
- Allows the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) to set rates and fees related to towing in areas where no maximum rate has been established.
- Requires such rates to be posted online and requires counties, cities, and FHP to establish a process for investigating and resolving complaints regarding fees charged in excess of such rates.
- Defines the term "towing-storage operator" and makes conforming changes.
- Specifies the existing fees which a towing-storage operator may charge for specified services.
- Clarifies the process provided in current law for law enforcement's search for information on a towed vehicle or vessel.
- Modifies timelines relating to the sending of a notice of lien by a towing -storage operator.
- Increases the minimum number of days that must pass before an unclaimed newer model vehicle or vessel may be sold.
- Lowers the number of days over which a towing-storage operator may not charge a person if the towing- storage operator failed to provide notice to a lender or other lienholder on a vehicle or vessel.
- Specifies documents that may be presented as evidence of a person's interest in a vehicle or vessel.
- Amends provisions relating to inspection or release of a vehicle, vessel, or personal property.
- Amends provisions relating to challenging a wrongful taking or withholding of a vehicle or vessel and relating to posting a bond for the release of the vehicle or vessel.
- Increases the minimum number of days that must pass from the notice of the public sale to the date of the public sale.
- Replaces the requirement that notice of the public sale be made in a newspaper of general circulation with the requirement that notice of the public sale be made on the publicly available website maintained by an approved third-party service.
- Requires a towing-storage operator to accept specified forms of payment methods.
- Provides requirements for record retention and for a towing-storage operator rate sheet and

- itemized invoice.
- Authorizes a towing-storage operator to enter a vehicle or vessel for purposes of recovering, removing, or storing such vehicle or vessel.
 - Prohibits FHP from excluding a wrecker operator from the wrecker operator system based solely on a prior felony conviction unless such conviction is for a forcible felony.
 - Requires an investigating agency or other specified persons to take possession of a vehicle within 30 days.

Effective date: July 1, 2024

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE TAMPERING PENALTIES INCREASED
HB 275 – *Offenses Involving Critical Infrastructure* by Rep. Canady (SB 340 by Sen. Yarborough) passed this session.

This bill creates new criminal offenses involving critical infrastructure tampering. Individuals cannot 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. The offense includes provisions on trespass, computer-related tampering, or unauthorized physical access. The offenses range from second to third degree felonies. Critical infrastructure facilities include, any linear asset, water and electric utilities, natural gas facilities, ports, communications facilities, and other manufacturing facilities.

A person who is found in a civil action to have improperly tampered with critical infrastructure based on a conviction is civilly liable to the owner or operator in an amount equal to three times the amount of the actual damage sustained by the owner or operator, or three times any claim the owner or operator was required to pay, whichever is greater, for any personal injury, wrongful death, or property damage caused by the act. Effective date: July 1, 2024

VEHICLE-FOR-HIRE LICENSING PREEMPTION PASSES
HB 377 – *License or Permit to Operate a Vehicle for Hire* by Rep. Borrero (SB 648 by Sen. DiCeglie) passed this session.

- As passed, the bill specifically:
- Prohibits a county or municipality from requiring a person to obtain an additional license from such county or municipality when that person holds a valid, active license or permit to operate a vehicle for hire in any other county or municipality if the person:
 - Holds a valid, active license or permit to operate a vehicle for-hire in the county municipality in which the person permanently resides.

- Has not had a license or permit to operate a vehicle for hire suspended or revoked within the preceding 5 years.
 - Provides that public-use airports are exempted from the provisions of the bill.
 - Provides that certain persons who hold a valid, active license or permit to operate a vehicle-for-hire are exempted from the provisions of the bill when such person provides transportation of persons:
 - While on stretchers or wheelchairs; or
 - Whose handicap, illness, other incapacitation makes it impractical to be transported by a regular common carrier such as a bus, taxi, non-taxi, limousine, or other vehicle-for-hire.
- Effective date: July 1, 2024

DOMESTIC IRON AND STEEL PROTECTION PASSES

SB 674 – United States – *Produced Iron and Steel in Public Works Projects* by Sen. Boyd (HB 779 by Rep. Griffiths, Jr.) passed this session.

This bill requires a governmental entity entering into a contract for a public works project or for the purchase of materials for a public works project must include in the contract a requirement that any iron or steel product permanently incorporated in the project be produced in the United States. The bill waives the contract requirement when a government entity administering the funds, or the purchase of the materials determines the following:

- Iron and Steel produced in the United States are not of sufficient quantities, reasonably available, or of satisfactory quality.
- Iron and Steel products produced by the United States will increase total cost by 20 percent; or
- Compliance is inconsistent with the public interest.

The bill permits the minimal use of foreign steel and iron materials if such materials are incidental or ancillary to the primary product, the materials are not separately identified in the project specifications, and the cost of such materials does not exceed one-tenth of one percent of the total contract cost or \$2,500, whichever is greater. Additionally, the bill provides that electrical components, equipment, systems, and appurtenances, including supports, covers, shielding, and other appurtenances related to an electrical system, necessary for operation or concealment, except transmission and distribution poles, are not considered iron or steel products and are exempt from the bill's requirements.

Effective date: July 1, 2024

PROPERTY RIGHTS LITIGATION REFORM PASSES

SB 702 – *Attorney Fees and Cost* by Sen. Martin (HB 1167 by Rep. Yarkosky) passed this session. In a civil action brought against the owner of a parcel

of real property to resolve a property rights dispute, the court may award reasonable attorney fees and costs to the prevailing defendant if the improvements made to the property by the defendant property owner were made in substantial compliance with, or in reliance on, environmental or regulatory approvals or permits issued by a political subdivision of the state or a state agency. For purposes of the bill, the term “property rights” includes, but is not limited to, use rights, ingress and egress rights, and those rights incident to land bordering upon navigable waters as described in the riparian rights statute.

Effective date: July 1, 2024

MILITARY BASE LOCAL COOPERATION LEGISLATION PASSES

SB 1720 – *Marine Encroachment* on Military Operations by Sen. Rodriguez (HB 1407 by Rep Altman) passed this session. The bill expands requirements for local governments to collaborate with military installations and ranges to ensure land use compatibility and introduces technical amendments. The bill requires cooperation between local governments and certain major military installations and ranges to promote compatible land use, addressing potential compatibility and coordination issues.

The bill identifies specific major military installations and ranges, including Avon Park Air Force Range, Camp Blanding, Eglin Air Force Base, Hurlburt Field, and others, along with their associated local governments. Additionally, the bill specifies new areas under the Naval Air Station Key West, expanding the list of installations to include various annexes across Boca Chica Key and Key West, and the Fleming Bay/ Patton Water Drop Zone training range used by the Army Special Forces Underwater Operations School.

Effective date: July 1, 2024

LOCAL UTILITY MEASURE PASSES EXTENDING PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTION SUNSET DATE

SB 7006 – OGSR / *Utility Owned or Operated by a Unit of Local Government* by Sen. Hooper (HB 7047 by Rep. Porras) passed this session.

This bill saves from repeal the current public records exemptions making exempt from public inspection and copying requirements the following information held by a local government-owned or operated utility:

- Information related to the security of the technology, processes, or practices that are designed to protect the utility's networks, computers, programs, and data from attack, damage, or unauthorized access, which information, if disclosed, would facilitate the alteration, disclosure, or destruction of such data or information technology resources
-

- Information related to the security of existing or proposed information technology systems or industrial control technology systems, which, if disclosed, would facilitate unauthorized access to, and alteration or destruction of, such systems in a manner that would adversely impact the safe and reliable operation of the systems and the utility.
- Customer meter-derived data and billing information in increments less than one billing cycle.

The bill also saves from repeal the current public meetings exemption for any portion of a meeting that would reveal the information described above. The exemptions are necessary to protect the security of business and residential municipal utility customers, and to protect sensitive information regarding security measures in place to protect technologies, processes, and practices designed to secure data, information technology systems, and industrial control technology systems.

Effective date: October 1, 2024

“URBAN SPRAWL” AND DEVELOPMENT RESTRICTIONS LEGISLATION FAILS

HB 1221 / SB 1184 – *Land Use and Development Regulations* by Rep. McClain / Sen. Ingoglia failed this session. HB 1221 was never heard on the House floor, while SB 1184 was never heard in committee.

The bill:

- Revises definitions within the Community Planning Act.
- Provides requirements for self-storage facility expansions.
- Establishes criteria for approval of infill residential developments.
- Revises data sources used in consideration of the comprehensive plan and plan amendments.
- Requires land development regulations adopted by a local government to establish minimum lot sizes consistent with the maximum density authorized by the comprehensive plan and to provide standards for infill residential development.
- Prohibits optional elements of a comprehensive plan from restricting the density or intensity established in the future land use element.
- Requires applications for infill development to be administratively approved in certain circumstances.
- Revises the procedure for adoption of small-scale comprehensive plan amendments.
- Allows a final order or decision regarding historically significant property made by a local historic preservation board or commission to be appealed to the applicable board of county commissioners.

LAND DEVELOPMENT REFORM FAILS

SB 1110 / HB 1177 – *Land Development* by Sen. DiCeglie / Rep. Duggan failed this session. SB 1110 was never heard in any of its committee stops, while HB 1177 passed its committee stops but was never heard on the House floor.

This bill makes the following changes to future development and growth:

- Requires local governments implementing transportation concurrency to credit the fair market value of any land dedicated and provides that fees may be based on a cumulative analysis of trips from a previous stage or phase that were not analyzed.
- Revises application of credits against local impacts for DRIs.
- Revises review requirements for changes to DRIs and clarifies the application of vested

rights in DRIs.

- Provides counties with the power to hear final decisions made by municipal historic preservation boards.
- Prohibits local governments from requiring certain approvals or fees before allowing the alteration or removal of a tree on property used for the construction of a healthcare facility for veterans.

MPO REFORM OMNIBUS FAILS

SB 1032 / HB 7049 – *Transportation* by Sen. Gruters / Rep. McFarland failed this session. SB 1032 was never heard in its last committee stop, while HB 7049 died in Senate Appropriations. The bill would have severely impacted existing operations of Metropolitan Planning Organizations.

Specifically, the bill:

- Requires a specified working group to develop performance and production measures used by the Florida Transportation Commission and expands the commission.
- Amends laws relating to railroad-crossing offenses and increases penalties for such offenses.
- Provides express authority for local governments to impose minimum age requirements, require possession of a government-issued photographic identification, and provide training relating to electric bicycles, motorized scooters, and micromobility devices.
- Amends requirements relating to Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) landscaping expenditures.
- Revises requirements for advisory board membership of the Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) and the Implementing Solutions from Transportation Research and Evaluating Emerging Technologies Living Lab (I-STREET) and requires specified reports from CUTR and I-STREET.
- Repeals the Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council and requires FDOT to, at least annually, convene M.P.O.s of similar size for the purpose of exchanging best practices.
- Requires that training for new M.P.O. governing board members be provided by FDOT and by either CUTR or I-STREET.
- Allows greater voting membership for M.P.O.’s that merge.
- Revises transportation planning processes for M.P.O.’s.
- Allows each M.P.O. to execute with FDOT a

written agreement that clearly establishes the cooperative relationship essential to accomplish the transportation planning requirements of state and federal law.

- Requires FDOT to establish M.P.O. quality performance metrics, evaluate M.P.O. reports relating to meeting its target for the performance measure, and post on FDOT’s website whether each M.P.O. has made significant progress toward its target for the applicable reporting period.
- Requires, by February 2025, the M.P.O.s serving Lee and Collier counties to submit a report considering the feasibility of consolidation into a single M.P.O.
- Requires, by October 31, 2024, FDOT to submit a report to the Governor and Legislature that provides a comprehensive review of the boundaries of each of FDOT’s districts.
- Requires, by October 1, 2024, the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles to begin implementation of a redesigned standard state license plate.

MUNICIPAL UTILITY RATE REFORM FAILS

HB 777 / SB 1088 – *Municipal Water or Sewer Utility Rates, Fees, and Charges* by Rep. Brackett / Sen. Martin failed this session. HB 777 was never heard in its second committee stop, while SB 1088 was never heard in committee.

The bill requires a municipality providing water or sewer service to consumers outside of the municipality’s boundaries to charge those consumers rates, fees, and charges that are just and equitable and are the same rates, fees, and charges for consumers inside of the municipal boundaries. The bill requires a public hearing prior to the municipality fixing any rates, fees, or charges for consumers outside of the municipal boundaries. Each affected municipality must conduct a rate study prior to January 1, 2027, and every seven years thereafter. The bill eliminates the ability of a municipality providing water or sewer service outside of its boundaries to charge any surcharge.

TOWING PRICE CEILING PROMPTLY WITHDRAWN

SB 110 – *Price Controls* by Sen. Jones failed this session. SB 110 was withdrawn prior to introduction.

This bill strips counties and municipalities of general law authority to set the maximum rates for the towing of vehicles and vessels from a wrecker service.

TREES TRIMMING PREEMPTION REPEAL FAILS

SB 122 – *Trees on Residential Property* by Sen. Stewart failed this session. SB 122 was never heard in any of its committee stops.

This bill repeals s. 163.045, F.S., preempting local governments from regulating the trimming, pruning, and removal of trees on residential properties.

ELECTRIC VEHICLE WRECKER-OPERATOR GUIDELINES FAIL

SB 332 / HB 661 - *Wrecker Operator* by Sen. Burgess / Rep. Caruso failed this session. SB 332 was never heard in its second committee stop, while HB 661 was never heard in any of its committees.

This bill requires counties to establish maximum rates that may be charged by a wrecker operator for the storage of electric vehicles that is at least three times the rate that is charged for the cost of a vehicle stored that is powered by gasoline or diesel. If a vehicle is stored for more than 30 days, the person, entity, or agency that required it to be held at the storage facility is financially responsible for the daily cost of storing the vehicle after 30 days. A wrecker operator may charge fair and reasonable fees plus 10 percent for the cleanup, containment, and disposal of pollution and hazardous materials. This bill also clarifies the duties of recovery, towing, or storing of vehicles and vessels by adding governmental entities in addition to law enforcement.

NEW AFFORDABLE HOUSING PARKING REQUIREMENTS FAIL, PASSES AS PART OF SB 328

SB 386 – *Affordable Housing Parking Requirements* by Sen. Osgood failed this session. SB 386 was never heard in committee.

This bill requires counties to reduce parking requirements for a proposed development when 75 percent of the proposed development is considered affordable housing and is located within half a mile of a major transportation hub and is accessible from the development. A major transportation hub is considered a bus, train, or light rail station that contains mixed-use development and multi-transportation fully integrated within such station. Revisions to parking requirements related to affordable housing did pass in SB 328.

CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER MEASURE FAILS

SB 506 – *Code Enforcement Officers* by Sen. Wright failed this session. The bill was never heard in committee. The bill:

- Defines “code enforcement officer” in line with s. 162.21, including a “code inspector” as in s. 162.04.
- Reclassifies assault or battery committed against code enforcement officers, among others, while on duty, elevating the severity of charges:
 - Assault charges are increased from a second-degree misdemeanor to a first-degree misdemeanor.
 - Battery charges are elevated from a first-degree misdemeanor to a third-degree

- felony, with a minimum six-month imprisonment for battery committed in furtherance of a riot.
- Aggravated assault is reclassified from a third-degree felony to a second-degree felony, imposing a minimum three-year imprisonment.
 - Aggravated battery charges are raised from a second-degree felony to a first-degree felony, with a minimum five-year imprisonment for those convicted.

PRIVATE PROVIDER PLANS REVIEW AUTHORIZATION FAILS

HB 579 – *Use of Private Providers for Plans Review and Inspections* by Rep. Griffiths Jr. failed this session. HB 579 was never heard in any of its committee stops. Some provisions of this legislation were included in HB 267. Private provider permit fee reductions did not pass this session.

This bill defines the term “private provider firm” to mean a business organization, including a corporation, partner, business trust, or other legal entity that offers services under this chapter to the public through licenses who are acting as agents, employees, officers, or partners of the firm. This provision was included in HB 267 which passed this session.

The bill requires local jurisdictions to reduce permit fees for owners who use private provider firms for building inspections or plan reviews. If the local jurisdiction does not reduce the fees, the fee owner may file a complaint with the Department of Commerce.

When a private provider is used, the local jurisdiction may also not conduct its own plans review or send an inspector to the building or structure to conduct an inspection. If the private provider is a licensed engineer or architect and affixes his or her industry seal to the affidavit, the local jurisdiction must issue the permit or respond with specific plan features that do not comply with applicable codes within 12 business days. If the licensed engineer or architect does not affix his or her industry seal to the affidavit, the local jurisdiction must issue the permit or respond with specific plan features that do not comply with applicable codes within 20 business days. Similar provisions were included in HB 267.

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT TIMEFRAME REFORM FAILS

HB 791 / SB 1150 – *Development Permit and Orders* by Rep. Overdorf and Rep. Esposito / SB 1150 by Sen. Perry failed this session. HB 791 passed all committee stops but was never heard on the House floor, while SB 1150 was never heard in its second committee stop.

The bill revises procedures for counties and

- municipalities to issue development permits and orders by requiring counties and municipalities to:
- Specify in writing the minimum information that must be submitted in certain development applications.
 - Confirm receipt of an application within five business days.
 - Issue a refund of application fees if certain deadlines are not met.

The bill provides timeframes for processing an application for a development permit or order restart if the applicant makes a substantive change. The bill requires any extension of deadlines for processing an application for a development permit or order be in writing. A county or municipality is not required to issue a refund of application fees if the parties have agreed to an extension of time, the delay in meeting the deadline is caused by the applicant, or the delay is attributable to a force majeure or other extraordinary circumstance.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY MEASURE FAILS

SB 980 – *Traffic and Pedestrian Safety* by Sen. Perry failed this session. The bill was never heard in any of its committees.

Requires that all plans submitted on or after July 1, 2024, for the construction of a pedestrian crosswalk on a public highway, street, or road which is located at any point other than an intersection with another public highway, street, or road must include coordinated traffic control signal devices. By October 1, 2028, the entity with jurisdiction over a public highway, street, or road with a crosswalk shall either ensure that the crosswalk is controlled by coordinated traffic control signals and pedestrian control signals or remove the crosswalk.

STATE BUILDING CODE REFORM FAILS

SB 1130 / HB 1185 – *Florida Building Code* by Sen. Martin/Rep. Griffiths failed this session. SB 1130 was never heard in any of its committee stops, while HB 1185 stalled in its last committee stop.

This bill creates new specifications for unvented attics and enclosed rafters relating to the Florida Building Code.

CODE ENFORCEMENT FEE EXPANSION FAILS

SB 1200 / HB 1507 – *Enforcement of Florida Building Code* by Sen. Rodriguez / Rep. Chambliss failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committees.

This bill allows for local government to use the fees collected to carry out the local government’s enforcement of the Florida Building Code, including

any process or enforcement relating to obtaining and finalizing a building permit. This also includes funds being used for planning, zoning, or other general government activities if the work is related to obtaining a building permit.

MUNICIPAL UTILITIES PACKAGE FAILS

HB 1277 / SB 1510 – *Municipal Utilities* by Rep. Busatta Cabrera / Sen. Brodeur failed this session. HB 1277 passed its committee stops but was not considered on the House floor, while SB 1510 was never heard in any of its committee stops.

Under the bill, a municipality that intends to offer utility service under a new, extended, renewed, or materially amended agreement must, in conjunction with the local government of the area to be served, conduct a public meeting within the area to be served. The bill also requires municipalities that provide such service to conduct an annual customer meeting in the areas served outside the municipal boundaries. The bill limits the portion of municipal utility revenues earned from services provided outside the municipal boundaries that may be used to fund or finance the municipality’s non-utility-related general government functions. The bill requires each municipality which provides utility service outside of its municipal boundaries to report annually certain information to the Florida Public Service Commission (PSC) for each type of utility service it provides and requires the PSC to compile and report this data to the Legislature and the Governor.

The bill limits the rates, fees, and charges that a municipal water or sewer utility may impose on consumers outside its boundaries to no more than 25 percent above the total amount the municipal water or sewer utility charges consumers within the municipal boundaries, provided rates for outside consumers are set in a public hearing using the same methods as rates for other consumers. The bill prohibits a municipal water or sewer utility that serves consumers within the boundaries of a separate municipality, using a water treatment plant or sewer treatment plant located within the boundaries of that separate municipality, from imposing rates, fees, and charges higher than those imposed on consumers inside its own municipal boundaries.

HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT MEASURE FAILS

HB 1307 / SB 1552 – *Housing Development* by Rep. Redondo / Sen. Gruters failed this session. HB 1307 was never heard in its second committee stop, while SB 1552 was never heard in any of its committee stops.

The bill amends the definition of “urban infill” in the Community Planning Act to include the development or redevelopment of mobile home parks and manufactured home communities that otherwise

meet the criteria to be considered urban infill.

The bill revises eligibility criteria for grants under the Resilient Florida Grant Program and the Statewide Flooding and Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan to allow community development districts that were authorized to fund the construction or reconstruction of critical assets, either in the enabling ordinance that created the district or by a county or municipal development order, to be added to the list of governmental entities eligible for grants.

The bill makes the following changes to affordable housing programs:

- Amends the definition of “moderate income persons” to include households with incomes up to the greater of 140 percent of the statewide median income or area median income in counties with a population in excess of 1,000,000.
- Requires FHFC to review certain projects based on plans presented by the developer which includes factors related to existing or proposed zoning, financing, and the housing supply needs of the county in which the project is located.
- Provides that projects funded under the Live Local Program and general revenue service charge funds redirected to the SAIL program may not be required to use federal low-income housing tax credits or tax-exempt bond financing as part of the financing structure for the project; and
- Revises eligibility for the property tax exemption for the use of property in certain multifamily projects as affordable housing to apply to properties used for moderate-income housing.

WIND ENERGY PROHIBITION FAILS

HB 1493 / SB 1718 – *Wind Energy Facility Siting* by Rep. Altman / Sen. Collins failed this session. However, the prohibition on wind energy was included in HB 1645.

The bill prohibits the construction, operation, or expansion of wind energy facilities in the state, and provides for injunctive relief by the Department of Environmental Protection.

INCLUSIONARY HOUSING MEASURE FAILS

HB 1603 / SB 1742 – *Affordable Housing Inclusionary Housing Ordinances* by Rep. Gantt / Sen. Jones failed this session. Neither bills was heard in any of their respective committee stops.

The bill requires developers who participate in an inclusionary housing ordinance to provide a specific number or percentage of affordable housing units to be included in a development. Removes provisions allowing developers to contribute to a housing fund or alternative affordable housing options in lieu of building affordable housing within their developments.

HISTORIC DEMOLITION PENALTY FAILS

HB 1621 – *Unauthorized Demolition of Historical Structures* by Rep. Beltran. The bill passed all its committee stops but was never heard on the Senate floor.

The bill authorizes code enforcement boards to impose an enhanced fine for the demolition of a structure individually listed on, or contributing to, the National Register of Historic Places. A code enforcement board or special magistrate must make specific findings based on competent, substantial evidence that the demolition of the historic structure was not permitted and was not the result of a natural disaster to impose the fine. The enhanced fine may not exceed 20 percent of the fair market value of the property, as identified in the property appraiser’s evaluation.

PARKING EXEMPTION FAILS

HB 1629 – *Mandatory Minimum Parking Space Requirements* by Rep. Campbell failed this session. HB 1629 was never heard in any of its committee stops.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, a parking lot or other parking facility in this state is exempt from mandatory minimum parking space requirements if:

- The parking lot or other parking facility is located within one-half mile of a point of access to public transit.
- Such public transit arrives at the point of access at least every 30 minutes during peak travel hours.

Note: While this bill failed to pass in standalone form, the language was substantially incorporated into the Live Local Affordable Housing bill, SB 328 (Calatayud), which did pass.

TERMINATION OF EASEMENTS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT FAILS

HB 1229 – *Termination of Easements and Related Rights or Interest for Affordable Housing Development* by Rep. Porras failed this session. HB 1229 passed its first committee but died in its second committee stop, Infrastructure Strategies.

This bill requires a Local Housing Assistance Program to authorize the termination of recorded and unrecorded easements or rights, or servitudes in the nature of easements, for use of or access to a lake with respect to up to no more than one-third of the area of such lake and its upland banks for purposes of redeveloping the land to create affordable housing under the State Housing Strategy Act and s. 196.1978, F.S. (providing an ad valorem tax exemption for affordable housing development). Under the bill:

- The termination of such interests must be achieved through the filing of a quiet title action.
- Notice of such an action must be recorded in the public records where the land lies.
- Any final order issued in such action must be recorded in the public records where the land lies, along with an instrument describing all extinguished interests and providing a legal description of the newly- established boundaries of the lake.

MARKETABLE RECORD TITLE TO REAL PROPERTY FAILS

SB 1068 – *Marketable Record Title to Real Property* by Rodriguez failed this session. SB 1068 was never heard in any of its committees.

This bill revises provisions for marketable record titles to real property, focusing on affordable housing development on certain lake areas and extinguishing specific rights. Specific provisions include:

- Exempts estates, interests, easements, and restrictions disclosed by muniments of title from being affected by marketable record title, unless specified criteria for preservation are met.
- Allows certain rights and easements related to public or other non-governmental entities around lakes to be extinguished for affordable housing projects, with a formal recorded instrument by the owner.
- Enables parcel owners to seek judicial determination within one year regarding the potential unconstitutional deprivation of rights due to extinguishment under the new guidelines.
- Prohibits revitalizing lapsed covenants or restrictions for properties used in affordable housing development in designated counties.
- Specifies a method for serving process in quiet title actions or other actions confirming the extinguishment of rights detailed in this act, using certified mail with return receipt requested.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING TAX CREDITS FOR REDEVELOPMENT LEGISLATION FAILS

HB 1467 / SB 1504 – *Affordable Housing* by Rep. Driskell / Sen. Davis failed this session. Neither bill was heard in any of their committees.

This bill establishes programs to foster affordable housing development, empower municipalities to create community land bank programs, and offer tax credits for specific housing and redevelopment projects. Specific provisions include:

- Authorizes municipalities to establish community land bank programs to manage and transfer unimproved real property for affordable housing.
- It requires municipalities with such programs to annually adopt a community land bank plan, considering existing housing plans. The plan

requirements include right of first refusal for qualified organizations and plans for property development.

- Mandates public hearings and notice for proposed community land bank plans, and sets conditions for property sales to land banks, including sales at less than market value under certain circumstances.
- Introduces deed restrictions on properties sold by land banks to ensure they serve low-income households, with detailed requirements for both sale and rental developments.
- Specifies record-keeping, auditing, and reporting requirements for land banks, including annual performance reports to municipalities.
- Creates the Retail-to-residence Tax Credit Program, offering tax credits for projects that redevelop shopping centers into affordable workforce housing.
- Initiates the Affordable Housing Construction Loan Program to provide loans for the construction of affordable homes for low-to-moderate income first-time homebuyers.

ENERGY PERMITTING LEGISLATION FAILS

SB 1548 – *Energy* by Sen. Gruters failed this session. SB 1548 was never heard in any of its committees.

This bill enhances Florida’s energy policy and infrastructure through several key provisions aimed at utility permitting, relocation, storm reserve requirements, assistance for low-income households, and the exploration of small modular nuclear reactors. The bill also contains the following provisions:

- Prohibits the Department of Transportation from transferring permitting rights for third-party projects without legislative approval.
- Restricts authorities from mandating utility relocation for third-party or governmental projects.
- Requires the Public Service Commission to set targeted storm reserve amounts for utilities, funded by base rate increases, effective January 1, 2025.
- Expands eligibility for the low-income home energy assistance program to include individuals enrolled in federal disability programs, mandating a process for automatic payments to eligible households.
- Mandates a feasibility study on using small modular nuclear reactors in Florida, focusing on legal, economic, safety, taxation, employment, reliability, local permitting, and recommending potential administrative or legislative actions.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXACTIONS AND IMPACTS FEES BILL FAILS, NEVER HEARD

HB 1635 / SB 1796 – *Local Government Impact Fees and Exactions* by Rep. Steele / Sen. Burgess failed this session. Neither bill was heard in any of their committee stops.

The bill establishes requirements for local governments in Florida regarding nonmonetary exactions and impact fees. The bill also contains the following provisions:

- Requires local governments imposing nonmonetary exactions to provide compensation equal to the fair market value of the exaction.
- Mandates local governments to collect impact fees only if the property receives or will receive within a spending period the service for which the fee is assessed.
- Requires the establishment of impact fee zones or districts for expending fees to alleviate impacts from new construction.
- Sets maximum rates for impact fees on various developments including single-family residences, apartment complexes, mobile homes, and more, with fees ranging from \$3.23 to \$58.18 per square foot, among other specific rates.
- Prohibits local governments from adopting both impact fees and mobility fees for specific types of developments like master planned unit developments and planned home developments.

STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT PLAN LEGISLATION FAILS

SB 1506 - *Strategic Infrastructure Investment Plan* by Sen. DiCeglie failed this session. SB 1506 was never heard in any of its committee stops.

This bill requires the Department of Transportation to create a 10-year strategic infrastructure investment plan focused on freight mobility infrastructure, updated biennially, and submitted to the Governor and Legislature. Specific provisions include:

- Development collaboration: Must develop the plan in cooperation with metropolitan planning organizations, local governments, and other transportation stakeholders, including the transportation sector and large employers.
- Assessment requirements: Involves completing an assessment on existing transportation plans, intermodal logistic centers, state lands for construction, alternative fuel sources, advanced air mobility services, and projected population growth.
- Plan components: Requires the plan to include strategies for a sustainable logistics transportation network, staged improvements for freight mobility, mitigation of environmental impacts, recommendations on seaports and infrastructure financing, and to pursue multimodal freight systems that bolster

- economic growth.
- Recommendations: Outlines recommendations for infrastructure investment, including asset management, investment optimization, and long-term system maintenance.
- Finance plan inclusion: Must contain a finance plan for each strategic investment, identifying funding shortfalls and including performance metrics and legislative guidance on financial investment.
- Fund utilization: Authorizes the department to use funds from the State Transportation Trust Fund to cover the cost of projects identified in the plan.

STRATEGIC TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT PLAN LEGISLATION FAILS

HB 1275 - *Strategic Transportation Infrastructure Investment* by Rep. Berfield failed this session. HB 1275 was not heard in any of its committee stops.

This bill requires the Florida Department of Transportation to develop a Strategic Infrastructure Investment Plan focusing on freight mobility and economic enhancement. The bill also contains the following provisions:

- Mandates consultation with stakeholders from various transportation modes, businesses, and government entities during plan development.
- Specifies the plan should integrate existing transportation plans, conduct strategic reviews of seaports, assess intermodal logistics centers, and consider alternative transportation fuels among other aspects.
- Outlines the plan to include strategies for sustainable logistics networks, recommend improvements for competitiveness, and suggest environmental mitigation measures.
- Stipulates a biennial review and update of the plan, with a 10-year outlook and performance metrics.
- Requires the Secretary of Transportation to submit the plan and a report detailing finances, funding shortfalls, and strategic investments to the Governor and Legislature every two years.
- Amends distribution of proceeds, allocating \$150 million annually to the State Transportation Trust Fund to support plan projects from July 1, 2025.

TRAFFIC INFRACTION DETECTOR CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT FAILS

HJR 805 / SJR 1042 – *Traffic Infraction Detectors* by Rep. Borrero / Sen. Garcia failed this session. Both bills were never heard in any of their committee stops.

This bill proposes a constitutional amendment to prohibit the use of traffic infraction detectors to monitor traffic signal violations, except in school speed zones. The bill also contains the following provisions:

- Prohibits state or any political subdivision from placing and operating traffic infraction detectors for detecting motor vehicle drivers failing to stop at traffic signals.
- Exempts the operation of such detectors in school speed zones from the prohibition.
- Requires this amendment to be submitted to electors for approval or rejection at the next general election or an earlier special election.

TENANT RIGHTS LEGISLATION FAILS

HB 985 / SB 1244 - *Housing* by Rep. Eskamani / Sen. Torres failed this session. Neither bill was heard in any of their committee stops.

This bill addresses various housing and tenant rights in Florida. These provisions include:

- Creates the Department of Housing and Tenant Rights to formulate policies and strategies to combat housing issues and ensure land-lord-tenant harmony.
- Implements definitions and requirements for rental agreements, emphasizing landlords providing copies of agreements, dictating allowable charges, and elaborating tenants' rights.
- Outlines strict guidelines for landlords regarding notice for rent increases, declaring certain rental agreement provisions void, and setting limitations on security deposits.
- Includes provisions for landlord transparency and accountability in dwelling unit inspections, safeguarding tenants' credit reports, and revising grounds for termination of rental agreements.
- Details the process for sealing eviction records to protect tenants' future housing opportunities.
- Prohibits landlord discrimination based on various personal characteristics, and outlines tenant protections and rights in cases of domestic violence, including early termination rights and lock change requirements.
- Empowers local governments to adopt impact fees on developers causing displacement due to gentrification, with collected fees supporting affordable housing.
- Mandates a specific documentary stamp tax on properties purchased by private equity firms, directing revenue to the Florida Affordable Housing Trust Fund, with exceptions for nonprofit organizations and government entities.

FINANCE, TAX, & ADMINISTRATION-PASSED

MOBILITY FEE REFORM PASSES

HB 479 – *Alternative Mobility Funding System* by Rep. Robinson (SB 688 by Sen. Martin) passed this session. The bill affects the following mobility fee, impact fee and concurrency provisions:

- The bill mandates that local governments use recent and localized data for determination of impact fees in the authorizing study.
- Projects can proceed after fulfilling their contribution or proportionate share requirements.
- The bill requires coordination of transportation impact fee calculations and collections among local governments where a city and a county impose fees on a development:
 - Requires an interlocal agreement to be in place and establishes certain required elements of the agreement.
 - Outlines collection and distribution methods, including penalties for noncompliance with interlocal agreements.
 - Exempts the requirement where an interlocal agreement is already in place between the city and county.
 - Exempts Miami-Dade County
- Additionally, holders of transportation or road impact fee credits predating a mobility fee system are entitled to the full benefit of prepaid intensity and density.

FAC worked with the sponsors and other interested parties to significantly limit the impact of the legislation and reduce the number of interlocal agreements that are required under the bill.

Effective date: July 1, 2024

PACE PROGRAM CLARIFICATION PASSES

SB 770 - *Improvements to Real Property* by Sen. Martin (HB 927 by Rep. Trabulsy) passed this session. FAC supported this legislation through the inclusion in the 2024 FAC **Legislative Action Plan**.

The bill clarifies that a PACE program administrator may only offer residential financing within the jurisdiction of a county or municipality that has authorized the program by ordinance or resolution. Without this clarification, rogue program administrators may be emboldened to operate statewide with little oversight or approval by a board of county commissioners to operate within the jurisdiction.

The bills also expand the eligible uses of the program to include advanced wastewater treatment and flood mitigation but remove solar energy as an eligible use. Lastly, the bill tightens the consumer protections surrounding the program, including additional disclosure

requirements and greater financial scrutiny on a property owner's ability to repay.

Additional protections and requirements for PACE programs include:

- Sets requirements for program administrators including meeting certain standards, entering into agreements with counties/municipalities, and allowing for the deauthorization of a program administrator through specific measures.
- Establishes conditions under which a property owner can apply for financing, including requirements for program administrators to make specific findings and ascertain financial information from the property owner before entering a financing agreement.
- Specifies the process and criteria for entering into financing agreements, including prohibited agreements, required disclosures, advisory notices for certain improvements, compensation for tax collectors, and provisions for change orders.
- Requires program administrators to post an annual report on their website with specific information about the program's operations and mandates an operational audit of each program administrator by the Auditor General every 3 years.
- Ensures that existing contracts or agreements prior to the act's effect must be amended to comply with the new provisions.

Effective date: July 1, 2024

ANNUAL TAX PACKAGE PASSES

HB 7073 - *Taxation* by Rep. McClain (SB 7074 by Senate Committee) passed this session.

The bill:

- Revises the "Missing Middle" Property Tax / Exemption authorized in s. 197.1978(3) to allow a taxing authority to opt out of the exemption for its levy by a two-thirds vote if:
 - A finding is made by a taxing authority that the most recently published Shimberg Center for Housing Studies Annual Report identifies that a county that is part of the jurisdiction the taxing authority is within a Metropolitan Statistical area or region where the number of affordable and available units is greater than the number of renter households for the category entitled "0 -120 percent AMI".
- The opt out is good for two years and may be reenacted if the above conditions are again met.

- Any property that has received the exemption prior to a local government opting out will continue to receive the exemption.
- Creates a new Property Tax Exemption for Affordable Housing Properties (s. 197.1978 (4)). The exemption is available to properties that all the following conditions:
 - Properties that contain 70 or more units
 - Subject to a land use restriction requiring the units are to provide affordable housing to persons or families meeting the extremely low, very low or low income for a period of 99 years.
 - Must be substantially completed within 2 years of the date of application.
 - Must be composed of an improvement to land where no previous improvement existed, or an old improvement was removed.
- Redefines “Construction Work in Progress” with regard to certain electric utility constructed or installed Tangible Personal Property
- Revises the conditions under which back taxes, penalty and interest are due for certain improperly received exemption or assessment limitations.
- Adds certain equipment used for Biogas to the list that may be assessed as Renewable Energy Source Devices
- Extends the period within which a homestead property must be rebuilt following a disaster to retain the Save our Homes differential from 3 years to 5 years.
- Expands the Indigent Care and Trauma Center Surtax (s. 212.055(4)) to allow Jacksonville-Duval County to impose the surtax but removes the ability to enact the tax with an extraordinary vote.
- Provides for two 14-day Disaster Preparedness Holidays; a 14-day Back to School Sales Tax Holiday, a 7-day Tool Time Holiday, and a Freedom Month Holiday where sales tax will not be due on certain admissions or outdoor recreational items for the month of July 2024
- Contains provisions impacting Hillsborough County regarding their Transit Surtax that was struck by the courts.

The final bill passed by the House and Senate does not include:

- 6-year Repeal and Reauthorization of Tourist Development Taxes
- 10-year Repeal and Reauthorization of Local Option Sales Taxes

Effective date: July 1, 2024

FLORIDA RETIREMENT SYSTEM PACKAGE PASSES WITHOUT COLA CHANGE
 HB 151- *Florida Retirement System* by Rep. Busatta-Cabrera (SB 7024 by Senate Governmental Oversight and Accountability Committee) passed this session.

The bill adjusts the employer contribution rates and unfunded actuarial liability rates for the FRS. For the adjusted rates, please see the FAC 2024 Appropriations Report.

The bill initially provided for an annual cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for FRS beneficiaries, last provided in 2011. This language, however, was ultimately not included in the final bill.
 Effective date: July 1, 2024

HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION INDEXING HEADS TO BALLOT
 HJR 7017 – *Annual Adjustment to Homestead Exemption Value* by Rep. Buchanan passed this session, along with its implementing bill, HB 7019.

HJR 7017 places a Constitutional Amendment on the general election ballot, providing for annual adjustment of the second homestead exemption for inflation by indexing it to the Consumer Price Index. Specifically, the value of the exemption would be updated each January 1st based on the percentage change reported by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics. This annual increase in the exemption would apply to either the existing \$25,000 increased exemption, or the increase exemption proposed in HB 7015, if adopted. HB 7019 provides for statutory implementation, should the joint resolution be passed on the ballot.
 Effective date: July 1, 2025.

BILL RAISING THE CONTINUING CONTRACT CEILING PASSES
 HB 149 - *Continuing Contracts* by Rep. Alvarez (SB 656 by Sen. DiCeglie) passed this session. FAC supported this legislation through the inclusion in the 2024 FAC **Legislative Action Plan**.

The bill increases the maximum limit for continuing contracts covered by the CCNA from an estimated per project construction cost of \$4 million to \$7.5 million plus an annual increase based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI).
 Effective date: July 1, 2024

PUBLIC RECORD EXEMPTION FOR COUNTY AND CITY ATTORNEYS PASSES
 HB 103 - Public Records/County and City Attorneys by Rep. Arrington (SB 712 by Sen. Powell) passed this session. FAC supported this legislation through the inclusion in the 2024 FAC **Legislative Action Plan**.

The bill establishes a public records exemption for certain personal information of current county and city attorneys, as well as their spouses and children. This includes home addresses, phone numbers,

employment details, photographs, and dates of birth. The exemption doesn’t apply if the attorney is a candidate for public office. The bill contains a statement of public necessity as required by the State Constitution and is subject to review before repeal on October 2, 2029.
 Effective date: July 1, 2024.

MINOR CURFEW AND EMPLOYMENT MEASURE PASSES
 HB 49 – *Employment* by Rep. Chaney (SB 1596 by Sen. Burgess) passed this session.

The bill clarifies that workers 15 or younger may not work longer than 15 hours a week when school is session. With respect to 16- and 17-year-olds, the bill clarifies that such minors may not work after 11:00 p.m. when school is scheduled the next day, work more than 8 hours a day except when the workday is a holiday or Sunday, and except when such minor’s parent, custodian, or school superintendent or designee waives the limitation, work longer than 30 hours a week when school is in session. Provides workers 15 or younger may not work longer than 6 consecutive days in any one week. Provides that workers 15 and younger are entitled to a 30-minute interval for a meal period after more than 4 hours of continuous work. Provides that workers aged 16 or 17 are entitled to a 30-minute break after four hours if they are to work eight hours or longer.

The bill expands the exemptions from the work restrictions for 16- and 17-year-olds who are in a home education program or enrolled an approved virtual instruction program. The bill further allows the Department of Business and Professional Regulation to waive the work restrictions on minors and clarifies applicable punishment for employers that violate the work restrictions of minors.
 Effective date: July 1, 2024.

BILL DISSOLVING CERTAIN INACTIVE SPECIAL DISTRICTS PASSES
 HB 7011 - *Inactive Special Districts* by Rep. Maney (SB 1052 by Sen. Hutson) passed this session.

The bill dissolves several inactive special districts in Florida and repeal their enabling laws, including the Sunny Isles Reclamation and Water Control Board. Specifically, it dissolves the Calhoun County Transportation Authority, the Dead Lakes Water Management District, the Highland View Water and Sewer District, and the West Orange Airport Authority. Additionally, it repeals Decree 66C-7402, which dissolved the Sunny Isles Reclamation and Water Control Board, overriding section 189.072(3) of the Florida Statutes.
 Effective date: July 1, 2024

TAX COLLECTOR LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE PASSES
 HB 113 - *Tax Collections and Sales* by Rep. Maney (SB 216 Sen. Hooper) passed this session.

The bill removes a \$10 processing fee associated with partial payment of current year taxes and requires that tax collectors include properties subject to federal bankruptcies, properties in which the taxes are below the minimum tax bill, and properties assigned to the list of lands available for taxes in their report on tax collections submitted annually to the board of county commissioners. These bills also clarify the status of a tax certificate following cancellation of a tax deed application.
 Effective date: July 1, 2024

PROSPECTIVE BIDDERS RECORDS EXEMPTION PASSES
 HB 379 - *Pub. Rec./Financial Information Regarding Competitive Bidding* by Rep. Truenow (SB 320 by Sen. Wright) passed this session.

The bill establishes an exemption for financial information required from prospective bidders to prequalify for road or public works projects, shielding it from public disclosure. This exemption is subject to review under the Open Government Sunset Review Act and is set to expire on October 2, 2029, unless renewed by the Legislature. The bill includes a statement of public necessity and takes effect on July 1, 2024, with potential indeterminate fiscal impacts on both state government and the private sector.
 Effective date: July 1, 2024

SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY FOR PROFESSIONAL FIRMS PASSES
 HB 619 - *Sovereign Immunity for Professional Firms* by Rep. Tuck (SB 1534 by Sen. Bradley) passed this session.

This bill amends s. 768.28(10)(e), F.S., to expand the scope of the sovereign immunity protections granted to a professional firm and its employees under that paragraph. Specifically, the bill provides that a professional firm that provides monitoring and inspection services of the work required for state roadway, bridge, or other transportation facility construction projects, or any of the firm’s employees performing such services, is an agent of FDOT while acting within the scope of the firm’s contract to ensure that the project is constructed in conformity with the project’s plans, specifications, and contract provisions. Further, the bill specifies that, in this context, sovereign immunity applies to both a professional firm that is in direct contract with FDOT and to a professional firm providing monitoring and inspection services as a consultant to the professional firm that is in direct contract with FDOT.
 Effective date: July 1, 2024.

COMPREHENSIVE CONSUMER PROTECTION PACKAGE PASSES

HB 939 – *Consumer Protection* by Rep. Griffiths (SB 1066 by Sen. Burton) passed this session.

The bill makes changes related to consumer protection, including:

- News source and public figure blacklisting: an agency or local governmental entity may not use, or allow a contractor to use, the list of ratings of an entity that develops new source blacklisting or public figure blacklisting to decide which new source, or which public figure receives information from the agency or local government entity for further distribution to the public.
- Form 1099-K Reporting Requirements: third-party settlement organizations, like PayPal or Apple Pay, that conduct transactions involving a payee with a Florida address must create a method for payees to identify transactions for goods and services and report that information to the Florida Department of Revenue.
- Bad Faith Termination of Account Access by Financial Institutions: allows a customer or member of a financial institution who reasonably believes a financial institution has restricted account access in bad faith to file a complaint with the Office of Financial Regulation.
- Protection of Specified Adults: allows a financial institution to delay a disbursement or transaction from an account of a vulnerable adult for a specified time period if the financial institution suspects financial exploitation of such vulnerable adult.
- Contracts for Roof Repairs Following Emergencies: requires that a contractor that enters into a contract to replace or repair the roof of residential property during a declared state of emergency by the Governor include specific language in the contract that allows the property owner to cancel the contract by the earlier of ten days following execution or the official start date that the work on the roof will commence; the property owner must send notice of cancellation by certified mail or another form that provides proof of mailing.
- Depository Institutions: expands the definition of depository institution in commercial financing disclosure law.
- Continuing Education Requirements for Certified Public Accountants: requires that the certified public accountant (CPA) that prepares the audit that an insurer submits to the Office of Insurance Regulation as part of its annual report must have completed at least four hours of insurance -related continuing education during each two-year continuing education cycle.
- Public Adjusters: requires that public adjusters' contracts for property and casualty claims contain the license numbers of the public adjusting firms by which they are employed.

- Notice of Change in Policy Terms: requires that the renewal notice sent to the named insured containing changes in policy terms must be presented in a bold typeface of not less than 14 points.
- Short-term Health Insurance: updates the disclosures that must be provided to a purchaser of a short-term plan; also requires that purchasers of short-term plans receive the required disclosures in writing or electronically and sign them.
- Loss Assessment Coverage: establishes that a notice of a claim for loss assessment coverage may not occur later than 3 years after the date of loss and must be provided to the insurer no later than certain dates specified in the bill.
- Fireworks Safety Standards: updates the state standards for outdoor display of fireworks to the current edition of the National Fire Protection Association 1123, Code for Fireworks Displays.

Effective date: July 1, 2024

JUDGMENT LIENS REFORM PASSES

SB 984 – *Judgment Liens* by Sen. Rouson (HB 175 by Rep. Benjamin) passed this session.

The bill is a glitch bill that makes several changes to legislation relating to judgment liens enacted during the 2023 Legislative Session. These changes:

- Clarify that a judgment lien in payment intangibles and accounts only applies to property interests that are located in the state,
- Allow filing of a corrective judgment lien certificate,
- Provide that the Uniform Commercial Code lien priority law prevails over the lien priority of the statute on judgments, and
- Authorize an account debtor to pay a judgment creditor in lieu of paying the judgment debtor pursuant to a settlement agreement between the judgment creditor and judgment debtor without the need for a final order or judgment directing payment.

Effective date: July 1, 2024.

VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION PASSES

HB 1161 - *Verification of Eligibility for Homestead Exemption* by Rep. Arrington / (SB 172 by Sen. Polsky) passed this session.

The bill requires the Department of Revenue to create a form that a property appraiser may use to provide a person with tentative verification of that person's eligibility to receive an exemption related to the applicant's status as a disabled veteran after the purchase of homestead property.

Effective date: July 1, 2024

ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE STRATEGY PASSES

HB 1267 - *Economic Self- Sufficiency* by Rep. Anderson (SB 7052 by Senate Children, Families, and Elder Affairs Committee) passed.

This bill revises various components of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (TANF) also known as Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The bill creates case management as a transitional benefit for families transitioning from TCA. Requires CareerSource Florida to use a tool to demonstrate future financial impacts of changes to benefits and income and local workforce boards to administer, analyze, and use data from intake and exit surveys of TCA recipients. Requires the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to expand mandatory SNAP Employment and Training participation to include adults ages 18-59, who do not have children under age 18 in the home, or otherwise qualify for an exemption. The bill also creates the School Readiness Plus Program that provides a child-care subsidy for families deemed ineligible on redetermination for the SR program but have income between 85 and 100 percent of the state median income.

Effective date: July 1, 2024

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING REFORM PASSES

SB 1746 - *Public Employees* by Sen. Ingoglia (HB 1471 by Rep. Black) passed this session.

Modifies requirements for employee organizations and bargaining units to maintain registration and certification. It clarifies that the Public Employee Relations Commission's (PERC) authority regarding dues deductions for mass transit employees, requires employees to submit membership authorization forms to the bargaining agent, and exempts certain bargaining units from form requirements. It expands eligible occupations for dues deductions and adjusts information submission requirements to PERC, replacing "audited" financial statements with those "prepared" by a CPA. It also alters timelines for recertification petitions and circumstances for PERC to revoke registration or certification.

Effective date: Upon becoming law.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING LEGISLATION PASSES

HB 5005 - *Collective Bargaining* by House Appropriation Committee Staff, Rep. Leek (SB 2504 Senate Committee Staff) passed this session.

This bill addresses collective bargaining issues at impasse for the 2024-2025 fiscal year between the State of Florida and the Florida State Fire Association – Fire Service Bargaining Unit by adopting the state's proposals for Article 29 "Health and Welfare." For all other mandatory collective bargaining issues not addressed in this act or the General Appropriations

Act, resolution will follow the personnel rules effective on March 5, 2024, and maintain the status quo under the current collective bargaining agreement's language.

Effective date: July 1, 2024

SPECIAL DISTRICT RESTRICTIONS PASSES

HB 7013 - *Special Districts* by Rep. Maney (SB 1058 by Sen. Hutson) passed this session.

This bill revises regulations concerning special districts, which are local government units created for specific purposes within limited geographical areas. The bill introduces several changes, including implementing a 12-year consecutive term limit for elected members of governing bodies in most independent special districts. It stipulates that only the Legislature can alter boundaries of independent special districts, except under certain circumstances. Additionally, it eliminates provisions allowing special districts to become municipalities without legislative approval. Other amendments include adding criteria for declaring special districts inactive, adjusting notice and procedures for such declarations, and requiring special districts to adopt goals, objectives, and performance measures. Furthermore, it mandates reporting for independent special fire control districts, reduces the maximum ad valorem millage rate for mosquito control districts, and sets conditions for their participation in state programs. The bill also prohibits the creation of new safe neighborhood improvement districts and mandates a performance review of existing ones by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability. The fiscal impact on state government is expected to be minor, while its effect on local governments is uncertain.

Effective date: July 1, 2024

ETHICS REFORM PASSES MODIFYING COMPLAINT PROCESS

SB 7014 *Ethics* by Sen. Burgess/Senate Ethics and Elections (HB 1597 by Rep. Brackett) passed this session.

This bill creates timeframes for completion of investigations of alleged ethics violations conducted by the Commission on Ethics (commission) and relatedly:

- Creates a harmless error standard for failure to meet the deadlines; and
- Tolls the timeframes until resolution of any related criminal cases.

The bill also:

- Makes uniform for complaints and referrals the requirements for beginning an investigation.
- Conforms the maximum civil penalty for a violation of the constitutional prohibition against lobbying by a public officer to those for other

- violations of ethics laws.
- Provides that terms of commission members are limited to two total, rather than two
- Successive.
- Adds candidates for public office to the categories of persons authorized to recover costs and attorney fees for defending against a maliciously filed ethics complaint.
- Requires a vote of six commission members to reject or deviate from a recommendation of counsel to the commission.
- Removes the commission's ability to conduct a formal hearing to determine disputed material facts.
- Makes technical changes, clarifying terminology and removing obsolete language.

Effective date: upon becoming a law.

FINANCE, TAX, & ADMINISTRATION-FAILED

SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY FAILS

SB 472 / HB 569 – *Suits Against the Government* by Sen. Brodeur / Rep. McFarland failed this session. SB 472 passed all committee stops but was never heard on the Senate floor, while HB 569 stalled in its last committee stop.

This bill increases the cap on the payment of judgments against government entities from \$200,000 to \$300,000 per individual, and from \$300,000 to \$500,000 per instance. The bill provides for the annual adjustment of the cap to reflect changes in the Consumer Price Index, beginning on July 1, 2029, recalculated every five years thereafter, and is not to exceed three percent for any adjustment.

Allows local government entities to settle a claim in any amount without the approval of a claim bill by the Legislature. If a state agency agrees to settle a claim or has a judgment rendered against it, the State agency may pay the amount in excess of the waiver of sovereign immunity and any insurance coverage only by seeking excess payment from the Legislature through a claim bill.

The bill reduces from 3 years to 18 months the time allotted for pre-suit notice to the state, its agency, or a subdivision thereof, and also reduces the duration that the entity has to review the notice from 6 months to 4 months. Removes the statute of limitations and statute of repose for civil actions against state entities where the plaintiff in a sexual battery matter was younger than 16 years old at the time of the injury. The bill also reduces the statute of limitations for a negligence claim against the State, its agency, or a subdivision from 4 years to 2 years.

HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION INCREASE FAILS IN HOUSE

HJR 7015 - *Homestead Exemption Increase* by Rep. Buchanan failed this session. The bill was proposed and heard as a committee bill in House Ways and Means, but ultimately stalled in its next committee, State Affairs.

The bill proposes a constitutional amendment that would double the second homestead exemption, exempting the assessed value between \$50,000 and \$100,000 (currently it exempts the taxable value between \$50,000 and \$75,000). The new maximum exemption for the second homestead exemption would be \$50,000. The Revenue Estimating Conference adopted a local impact estimate of

more than \$1.0 billion.

TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY EXEMPTION FAILS

HJR 7075 / HB 7077 - *Tangible Personal Property Tax Exemption* by Rep. Alvarez / House Committee failed. Both bills died in their Senate Committee.

HJR 7075 increases the exemption on the assessed value of tangible personal property from \$25,000 to \$50,000, pending approval by 60% of voters during the 2024 general election.

HB 7077 serves as the implementing bill for HB 7075, and it also outlines a plan to provide financial assistance to certain counties that would experience a reduction in ad valorem tax revenue due to changes in the State Constitution requiring the Legislature to allocate funds to offset revenue losses for “fiscally constrained counties”. These funds would be distributed among eligible counties based on the proportion of their total revenue reduction.

TIMESHARE VALUATION REVISION FAILS

HB 471 / SB 886 - *Valuation of Time Share Units* by Rep. Fine / Sen. Gruters failed this session. The House bill passed the full House, while the Senate bill died in its last committee.

The bill revises the methodology for valuing timeshare units for ad valorem taxation. Current law directs a property appraiser to look to the resale market to determine the valuation of a property. If the Property Appraiser determines there is an insufficient number of resales, they may use the original sale price minus the administrative costs of the sale. In this bill the property appraiser is directed to defer to the property owner regarding the methodology for valuation—whether the resale market or the original purchase price. It is important to note that valuations from the resale market range from 40-75% lower than those of the purchase price valuation. This is likely due to the number of “distressed sales” arising from timeshare properties—as property owners seek to get out of often rigid timeshare contracts. The revised methodology would result in a \$171 million local impact for FY 2024-25.

ELECTRIC VEHICLE LICENSE TAX FAILS

SB 28 / HB 107- *License Taxes* by Sen. Hooper / Rep. Esposito failed this session. Both bills were never heard on the floor.

The Senate bill would impose additional annual

registration fees of \$200 for electric vehicles (EVs) and \$50 for plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs), rising to \$250 and \$100 in 2029. 36% of the associated revenues are allocated to counties for transportation-related expenses. This represents an effort to replace lost revenue from local fuel taxes with more non-fuel vehicles on the road. FAC supported the Senate language as part of its 2024 **Legislative Action Plan**.

The House bill directs the Revenue Estimating Conference to conduct a Special Estimating Session to determine the General Revenue impact resulting from the sales tax on electricity used for charging electric vehicles. One-twelfth of this revenue estimate is to be distributed monthly to the State Transportation Trust Fund—no money will be allocated to counties or municipalities. The bill directs the Office of Economic and Demographic Research to conduct a study on the long-term fiscal impacts of continued EV and PHEV adoption to the State Transportation Trust Fund and sales tax/gross receipts revenues.

AGRICULTURAL TPP EXEMPTION STALLS

HJR 1251 / SJR 1560 - *Tangible Personal Property Tax Exemption* by Rep. Alvarez / Sen. Collins failed this session. SB 1560 passed the Senate, but ultimately died in House Messages. The House version was never heard.

The bill proposes an amendment to the Florida Constitution to provide an ad valorem tax exemption for tangible personal property on agricultural land, used on such property in the production of agricultural products or for agritourism activities, and owned by the landowner or leaseholder of the land.

PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTION FOR COUNTY ADMINISTRATORS AND CITY MANAGERS FAILS

HB 811 / SB 862 – *Public Records exception for County and City Administrators and Managers* by Rep. Gottlieb and Rep. Daley / Sen. Jones failed this session. SB 862 was heard in one committee stop, while HB 811 was not considered this session. FAC supported this legislation as part of its 2024 FAC Legislative Action Plan.

Provides a public records exemption for the personal identifying and location information of current and former county administrators, assistant county administrators, deputy county administrators, city managers, assistant city managers, deputy city administrators, and the spouses and children of such.

CASH PAYMENT REQUIREMENT FAILS

HB 35 / SB 106 - *Acceptance of Cash Payments* by Businesses by Rep. Rudman / Sen. Jones failed this session. Both bills died during their respective committee process. FAC supported this legislation as part of its 2024 FAC Legislative Action Plan.

This bill requires any business that operates at permanent or temporary physical premises, or from a vehicle or other mobile space, to accept an offer of payment in cash by a customer physically present. Cash is defined as the coin and currency of the United States. The bill also prohibits a business from charging a fee or placing a condition on its acceptance of cash and gives rulemaking and enforcement authority to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Violations of the cash acceptance provisions will be subject to civil fines.

LOCAL LOBBYING RESTRICTIONS FAILS

SB 734 / HB 735 – *Government Accountability* by Sen. Ingoglia / Rep. Andrade failed this session. SB 734 was never heard in its last committee stop, while HB 735 died on final passage on the House floor.

This bill makes various changes related to ethics regulations for local governments. Specifically, the bill:

- Prohibits certain state and local officials from soliciting or accepting anything of value from a foreign country of concern.
- Establishes requirements for lobbyist registration for individuals lobbying local governments by:
 - Requiring a person to register as a lobbyist solely with the State Commission on Ethics if he or she wishes to lobby a county, municipality, or special district.
 - Making the State Commission on Ethics solely responsible for naming persons registered to lobby a county, municipality, or special district in a public database and requiring the State Commission on Ethics to publish registrations of such persons on its website.
 - Mandating that all required documentation and information involving the filing, amending, or canceling of a registration to become a lobbyist to lobby a county, municipality, or special district be filed with the State Commission on Ethics.
 - Requiring that the State Commission on Ethics be the entity to receive and investigate all complaints involving violations of the lobbying registration requirements to lobby a county, municipality, or special district.
 - Requiring that the State Commission on Ethics report its findings and recommendations from its investigations of complaints to the

chief executive officer of the applicable county or municipality, or the governing body of the special district.

- Allowing the chief executive officer of the county or municipality, or the governing body of the special district, to enforce the State Commission on Ethics’ findings and recommendations involving complaints.
- Making the bill provisions preempt and supersede any ordinary charter provision that establishes a lobbyist registration program adopted before July 1, 2024.
- Provides that certain local government employee contracts shall not be renewed, extended, or renegotiated within 8 months of a general election for members of the applicable governing body.

TAX EXEMPTION FOR SURVIVING SPOUSE OF QUADRIPELGICS FAILS

HJR 53/ HB 55 / SB 616 / SJR 618 - *Ad Valorem Property Tax Exemption for the Surviving Spouse of Quadriplegics* by Rep. Tant / Sen. Simon failed this session. The House bills were never heard on the floor and the Senate bill died in its final committee stop.

These bills were Joint Resolution proposed as an amendment to the state Constitution and its implementing bill, enabling the Legislature to offer a homestead property tax exemption for surviving spouses of quadriplegics. It extends existing tax relief measures that currently benefit certain veterans with combat-related disabilities and their spouses. The resolution defines “first responder” to encompass roles like law enforcement officers and firefighters.

Micromobility Sales Tax Holiday Fails
SB 58 / HB 475 - Sales Tax Holiday for Micromobility Vehicles and Related Personal Safety Equipment by Sen. Stewart / Rep. Killebrew failed this session. SB 58 died in its last committee stop whereas HB 475 was not considered on the floor.

The bill creates a sales tax holiday for Micromobility Vehicles and Related Personal Safety Equipment. Micromobility Vehicles are defined as human or electric-powered transportation devices, including bikes, scooters, or other related vehicles, that weigh less than 500 pounds, are less than 3 feet wide, and have a max speed of 35 miles per hour. Personal safety equipment includes helmets, knee pads, elbow pads etc.

SCHOOL LEVY HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION REFERENDUM FAILS

HJR 69 / HB 71 - *Homestead Tax Exemptions for School District Levies Title* by Rep. Garcia (A) were both withdrawn this session.

This bill places a Constitutional amendment on the ballot applying the second Homestead exemption to school levies. Under current law, Florida offers up to a \$25,000 second homestead exemption on any assessed value between \$50,000 and \$75,000, for all non-school levies. This Constitutional amendment, if passed, would include school district levies within the exemption. HB 71 serves as an implementing bill for the Constitutional amendment.

MUNICIPAL REMOTE MEETINGS AUTHORIZATION FAILS

HB 157 / SB 894 – *Governing Body Meeting* by Rep. Caruso / Sen. Bradley failed. HB 157 died on the floor, while SB 894 stalled in its last committee stop.

This bill allows a municipality’s governing body to convene meetings and conduct official business via teleconferencing or other technological means two times per calendar year if such meetings meet all the requirements of public notice, public access, and public participation.

MEDICAL MARIJUANA PATIENT PROTECTION FAILS

SB 166 - *Protections for Public Employees Who Use Medical Marijuana as Qualified Patients* by Sen. Polsky failed. SB 166 was never heard in its first committee stop.

This bill prohibits a public employer from taking adverse action against an employee or applicant who is qualified for a job when they are a qualified patient using medical marijuana.

EVENT TICKET REFORM FAILS

HB 177 / SB 204 – *Competition for the Sale of Event Tickets* by Rep. Andrade / Sen. Brodeur failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

This bill prohibits live performance venues from entering sole-sourced contracts for the sale of tickets and licenses to events. The live performance venue may not distribute, sell or transfer tickets or licenses for compensation greater than the ticket’s amount. A live performance venue may not require an artist to market, sell or distribute tickets to an event on a specific platform, this bill also allows the artist to choose what platforms they would like their tickets sold on.

ELECTION SECURITY REQUIREMENT FAILS

SB 190 / HB 671 – *Ballot Boxes* by Sen. Garcia (I) / Rep. Borrero failed this session. Both bills were never heard in their first committee stops.

The key provisions of this bill include requiring a law enforcement officer to transport ballot boxes or ballot transfer containers from a supervisor of

elections to a precinct. Additionally, it mandates continuous supervision by a law enforcement officer for all ballot boxes and transfer containers. The bill extends this requirement to the transportation of various election-related items, including ballots, ballot stubs, memoranda, and papers.

PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES OF VETERANS FAILS
SB 218 / HB 239 - *Property Tax Exemption for Spouses of Veterans* by Sen. Wright / Rep. Killebrew failed this session. SB 218 was not heard in its first committee stop, whereas HB 239 was withdrawn.

This bill allows property tax exemption for surviving spouses of Veterans by authorizing a surviving spouse to produce a letter before the property appraiser if the veteran predeceased the issuance of a certain letter from the Federal Government. This exemption applies beginning with the 2025 tax roll.

SERVICE PROVIDER RECORDS EXEMPTION FAILS
SB 290 / SB 292 – *Public Records/Service Providers* by Sen. Wright failed this session. Both bills were never heard in committee.

This bill defines the term “service provider” as well as incorporating service providers in the s. 119.0701 F.S. language, holding them under the same regulatory procedures and public record stipulations that contractors are held to as already defined in this statute.

LIMITATIONS ON PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENTS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT LEVIES FAILS
HB 331 / HB 333 *Limitations on Property Tax Assessments* by Rep. Garcia (A) failed. Both bills died in their first committee stop.

The bill extends the constitutional 10% limitation on real property assessment increases on specified non-homestead real property to school district levies. The amendment takes effect January 1, 2025. HB 333 serves as an implementing bill for the Constitutional amendment.

TAX EXEMPTION FOR HOMES FOR THE AGED FAILS
SB 220 / HB 689 – *Ad Valorem Tax Exemption for Nonprofit Homes for the Aged* by Sen. Wright / Rep. Smith failed this session. The Senate bill died in its second committee whereas the House version was never heard on the floor.

The bill revises eligibility for the ad valorem tax exemption for property used as a home for the aged by nonprofit corporations to include property owned by a Florida limited partnership where an entity not licensed under Chapter 429, F.S., and wholly owned by a corporation not-for-profit under Chapter 617,

F.S., is the sole general partner. The changes made by the bill will first apply to the 2025 ad valorem tax roll.

MOTOR VEHICLE SALES TAX REFORM FAILS
HB 337 – *Sales Tax on Motor Vehicles Lease and Rentals* by Rep. Roth failed this session. HB 337 stalled in its second committee.

The bill allows motor vehicle leasing companies to pay sales tax on the original purchase of vehicles, in lieu of collecting sales tax on rental or lease payments when the vehicle is later subject to a lease for a period of not less than 12 months and the renter or lessee will use the motor vehicle in their trade or business.

VIRTUAL CURRENCY SALES TAX HOLIDAY FAILS
SB 352 / HB 369 - *Virtual Currency Sales Tax Holiday* by Sen. Brodeur / Rep. Barnaby failed this session. The Senate bill died in its second committee whereas the House companion bill was never heard.

These bills provide exemptions from sales tax for a two-month period from June 1, 2025, through July 31, 2025, on the retail sale of tangible personal property and taxable services made by the following establishments if payment is made in virtual currency: Retail service stations that sells motor fuels or special fuels to the public; Food service establishments; Public food service establishments; Grocery stores; Convenience stores; Cosmetology salons or specialty salons; Spas; Barbershops; and Bars or nightclubs.

COMPETITIVE SOLICITATION RECORDS EXEMPTION FAILS
SB 286 / HB 375 – *Pub. Rec./Competitive Solicitation Sealed Bids, Proposals, and Replies* by Sen. Wright / Rep. Alvarez. The Senate bill was not heard in its first committee stop, whereas the House companion was withdrawn before the committee process.

The bill establishes exemptions under the Open Government Sunset Review Act for sealed bids, proposals, or replies received through competitive solicitations. It ensures confidentiality until 72 hours after an agency's notice of intended decision or the final decision in case of protests, preventing premature disclosure. This safeguards vendor interests, maintaining fair and competitive procurement processes. The Legislature deems the exemption a public necessity to balance transparency with business protection. The Senate version provides a requirement to complete recording of exempt meetings, with the recordings and related records becoming public following similar conditions to the public records exemptions.

GENDER IDENTITY EMPLOYMENT RESTRICTIONS FAILS
HB 599 / SB 1382 – *Gender Identity Employment Practices* by Rep. Chamberlin / Sen. Martin failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

The bill establishes policies regarding personal titles and pronouns in employment, defining terms and outlining rights and prohibitions related to gender identity in the workplace. It defines key terms such as “adverse personnel action” and “sex,” asserts that sex is determined by biological traits at birth and prohibits requiring the use of preferred pronouns that do not align with a person’s biological sex. The bill protects employees and contractors from adverse actions for refusing to use preferred personal titles or pronouns and prohibits discrimination based on religious or biology-based beliefs, providing avenues for seeking remedies for violations. Additionally, it bars nonprofit organizations and state-funded employers from mandating training or activities related to sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression as conditions of employment.

PUBLIC DEPOSITORY EXPANSION FAILS
HB 611 / SB 1018- *Public Deposits* by Rep. Botana / Sen. Ingoglia failed this session. HB 611 passed the House but died in Senate Messages; meanwhile, SB 1018 was never heard in its committee.

The bill allows both state-chartered and federally chartered credit unions to serve as Qualified Public Depositories (QPDs) and custodians for another QPD’s pledged collateral. It establishes criteria for a credit union to meet before being designated as a QPD by the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and mandates credit union QPDs to make the same attestations as other QPDs. Additionally, the bill introduces separate mutual responsibility and contingent liability provisions for credit union QPDs to prevent cross-liability with banks and requires the CFO to segregate and separately account for collateral proceeds, assessments, or penalties attributable to credit unions from those related to banks, savings banks, or savings associations.

VIRTUAL CURRENCY KIOSK REGULATION FAILS
SB 662 / HB 977– *Virtual Currency Kiosk Businesses* by Sen. Burton/Rep. Steele failed. SB 662 died in its last committee while the House bill was never heard in committee.

This bill establishes a regulatory framework for virtual currency kiosk businesses and provides protections for users of the kiosks by requiring such businesses to register with the Office of Financial Regulation (OFR), requiring certain disclosures, restricting the name under which such business may transact, and providing penalties for specified

violations of the part. The Legislative intent of the bill is, in summary, to reduce unlawful and fraudulent activities. The bill provides the OFR is responsible for supervising virtual currency kiosk businesses and authorizes the Financial Services Commission (the “Commission”) to adopt rules to regulate them.

DISABLED EX-SERVICEMEMBERS TAX EXEMPTIONS FAILS
HB 727 / SB 1004 - *Tax Exemptions for Disabled Ex-Servicemembers* by Rep. Amesty / Sen. Torres failed this session. Both bills died in their final committee stops.

The bill increases the value of the ad valorem tax exemption for disabled ex-service members from \$5,000 to \$10,000. This increase first applies to the 2025 tax roll.

IMPACT RESISTANCE WINDOWS AND DOORS SALES TAX HOLIDAY FAILS
SB 890 - *Taxation* by Sen. Boyd did not pass this session. This bill died on its second committee stop.

The bill exempts the retail sale of impact-resistant windows, doors, and garage doors from sales and use tax from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2026. It also grants the Department of Revenue the authority to adopt emergency rules to implement this tax exemption.

GRANNY FLAT TAX EXEMPTION AND IMPLEMENTING BILLS FAIL
HJR 1511 / SJR 976 - *Reduction of Assessed Value* by Sen. Perry / Rep. McClain failed this session. Both bills died in their second committee stop. The corresponding implementing bills, SB 978 / HB 1513 also failed.

This bill proposes an amendment to the Florida Constitution to permit a county to provide ad valorem tax relief to portions of homestead property used to provide living quarters for parents or grandparents. Currently, the Florida Constitution permits a reduction in assessed value only where a property has been improved in order to provide such housing.

DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE PACKAGE FAILS
HB 1001 / SB 1030 – *Taxation* by Rep. Stevenson / Sen. Rodriguez failed. HB 1001 passed the House but died in Senate Messages. Meanwhile, the Senate companion died in its final committee of reference.

The bill authorizes the Department of Revenue to review and adjust assessments in certain situations and gives them the authority to include all authorized taxes and penalties in a garnishment or levy. The bill provides rulemaking authority and allows

counties and school boards to choose not to impose local sales taxes on commercial rent.

PROPERTY TAX SYSTEM STUDY FAILS

HB 1371- *Property Tax System Study* by Rep. Chamberlin failed this session. It passed its first committee of reference, House Ways and Means, before stalling in State Affairs.

This bill mandates the Office of Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) to study the potential impact of eliminating all property taxes and replacing the revenue with a consumption tax. OPPAGA must submit its findings by February 1, 2025.

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT TAX EXEMPTION FAILS

HB 1299 / SB 1440 - *Affordable Housing Property Tax Exemptions for Accessory Dwelling Units* by Rep. Cross / Sen. Calatayud failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

This bill expands affordable housing tax exemptions and remove a time limit on related ordinances. The bill proposes changes to the local option tax exemption for affordable housing, which was established in 2023. It suggests allowing counties or municipalities to exempt up to 100% of the assessed value of certain affordable accessory dwelling units, in addition to existing options. The bill eliminates the requirement for ordinances adopting this tax exemption to expire before the fourth January 1 after adoption. These changes would be applicable starting from the 2025 tax roll.

TOURIST IMPACT TAX AUTHORIZATION FAILS

SB 1594 - *Tourist Impact Tax* by Sen. Stewart failed this session. The bill was never heard in committee.

The bill specifies conditions under which tax revenues can be allocated to a county destination marketing organization and outlines limitations on reducing its funding. The bill mandates that if tax funds support an activity, service, venue, or event, its primary purpose should be attracting tourists. Counties are permitted to allocate tax revenue to fund a “county destination marketing organization,” as defined by s. 288.005. However, if a county allocates less than 40% of its local tourist tax revenue to this organization, it cannot reduce its funding without approval from at least two-thirds of the county’s governing board membership.

DISABLED VETERAN TAX REVISION FAILS

HB 1373 / SB 1686 - *Ad Valorem Tax* by Rep. Alvarez/ Sen. Collins failed this session. The Senate bill died in its last committee stop. HB 1373 Property Tax Discount for Disabled Veterans by Rep. Alvarez was

never heard this session. The implementing bills, HB 1375 / SB 1684 also failed.

This bill amends the State Constitution by revising the requirements for a discount from the amount of ad valorem tax owed on homestead property for certain disabled veterans, opting out of the 65 and older age requirement, and adding that veterans must also meet the new requirement that veterans must have received a purple heart as well. The general law must allow counties and municipalities to grant these additional exemptions.

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK COMPANIES LEGISLATION FAILS IN SENATE

SB 7076 - *Transportation Network Companies* by Senate Finance and Tax Committee failed this session. This bill died on the Senate floor.

The bill prohibits an airport or a seaport from charging a TNC a pickup fee for a prearranged ride requested within 60 minutes before the time the rider enters the TNC vehicle which is greater than the lowest pickup fee charged to a taxicab company.

HAND COUNTED BALLOT PROHIBITION FAILS

HB 359 - *Voting Systems* by Rep. Jacques failed this session. The bill was never heard in any of its committee stops.

This bill authorizes counties to count ballots by hand at the precinct level and sets conditions for voting system approval. The bill also contains the following provisions:

- Allows counties to adopt the use of hand counting ballots at the precinct level.
- Prohibits the Department of State from approving any voting systems that use hardware or software produced, owned, or licensed by foreign companies or non-US citizens or that are produced in a foreign country.
- Requires the Department of State to make all information and materials related to approved voting systems available on its website three months before an election.
- Declares that software related to voting systems must be considered a public record and provided at the actual cost of duplication, removing a previous public records exemption.

FOREIGN ELECTION SOFTWARE FAILS

SB 1752 – Elections by Sen. Ingoglia failed this session. The bill was never heard in any of its committee stops.

This bill imposes new requirements and restrictions on voting systems, vote-by-mail eligibility, and implements manual vote counts in certain circumstances. The bill also contains the following provisions:

- Prohibits the Department of State from approving voting systems involving foreign-owned, operated, or produced hardware or software, and requires all software to be open-source and publicly inspectable.
- Requires the Department of State to make voting system information and materials publicly available on its website three months prior to utilization in an election.
- Mandates a manual count of votes in two randomly selected precincts per county by the county canvassing board before certification of election results for state or federal races.
- Specifies procedures for the manual count, including public access, notice requirements, and comparison of manual count results to precinct vote totals.
- Limits vote-by-mail eligibility to voters who fulfill specific criteria and requires a separate vote-by-mail ballot request for each election.
- Adjusts the voter’s certificate on vote-by-mail envelopes to reflect new eligibility criteria and mandates disclosure of the basis for voting by mail.
- Revises the timeframe during which early voting must be provided and removes authorization for secure ballot intake stations except at the supervisor of elections’ main and branch offices.
- Cancels all vote-by-mail ballot requests for the August 2024 statewide primary election and subsequent elections upon the act’s effective date, requiring supervisors of elections to inform voters of new vote-by-mail request requirements.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT THRESHOLD INCREASE FAILS AGAIN

HJR 335 - *Requiring Broader Public Support for Constitutional Amendments or Revisions* by Rep. Roth and Rep. Beltran failed this session. This bill was never heard in committee.

The bill would place a Constitutional amendment on the next general election ballot to raise the threshold to pass a Constitutional amendment from 60% to 66.67% of electors. If passed by the voters, the amendment would take effect on January 7, 2025.

Homestead Tax Exemption for Roof Repair Fails
HB 913 / SB 1710 - Homestead Tax Exemptions by

Rep. McFarland / Sen. Yarborough failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

The bill amends the criteria for assessing changes, additions, or improvements regarding homestead property by specifying that maintenance or repair, including roof or window replacement, shall not qualify as a change, addition, or improvement for assessment purposes. The bill also contains the following provisions:

- Revises penalties and interest rates for property owners who unlawfully received a homestead exemption, setting the interest at the rate specified in s. 213.235 of the unpaid taxes for each year, and implementing a penalty of triple the interest rate, not exceeding 50% of the unpaid taxes for each year.
- Adjusts the requirements for notifying property appraisers about changes affecting the exemption status, emphasizing the importance of prompt notification by property owners to avoid penalties.
- Specifies that if a homestead exemption is incorrectly granted due to a clerical error, the recipient of the exemption may not be assessed a penalty and interest.

TDT SINGLE PROJECT RESTRICTION FAILS

HB 1599 / SB 1748 - *Tourist Development Tax* by Rep. Truenow / Sen. Brodeur failed this session. HB 1599 was not heard in committee, while the Senate companion died in its final committee stop, Appropriations.

Prohibits a tourist development plan from allocating over 25% of annual tax revenue to a single project without supermajority approval from the county’s governing board. The bill also contains the following provisions:

- Amends section 125.0104, Florida Statutes, impacting how tourist development tax revenue can be used.
- Requires county tourist development councils to submit a plan for approval detailing anticipated tax revenue, tax district, and a priority list of projects or special uses.
- Mandates that no more than 25% of the tax revenue for a fiscal year be allocated to any one project unless approved by a supermajority vote of the county’s governing board.

MEDICAL EXAMINER PUBLIC RECORDS LEGISLATION FAILS

HB 1237 / SB 1272 - *Pub. Rec./Medical Examiners* by Rep. Duncan, Rep. Antone / Sen. Yarborough failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

The bill broadens the scope of the public records exemption for personal information to encompass current or former medical examiners and their

families. Specifically, it shields home addresses, phone numbers, birth dates, and photos of medical examiners from public disclosure. The exemption extends to the spouses and children of these examiners, protecting their personal details and the locations of their schools or daycares.

BILL CREATING DIVISION OF LABOR STANDARDS FAILS
HB 1199 / SB 1388 - *Division of Labor Standards* by Rep. Nixon / Sen. Torres failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

The bill establishes the Division of Labor Standards under the Department of Commerce, tasked with overseeing labor laws, safeguarding employee rights, and ensuring fair wages. This division will focus on enforcing labor statutes and upholding state constitutional provisions related to employee protections and wage standards. It updates notification requirements for informing employees about their rights under state minimum wage laws, including providing materials in multiple languages.

Additionally, it introduces a rebuttable presumption against employers for adverse actions taken against employees within 90 days of exercising protected rights. The bill outlines procedures for filing complaints, conducting investigations, and imposing penalties for violations of labor standards. Furthermore, it establishes the Division of Labor Standards Community Advisory Board to provide guidance on matters of employee safety and equity.

FLORIDA MAIN STREET PROGRAM FAILS
SB 1166 / HB 1183 - *Florida Main Street Program and Historic Preservation Tax Credits* by Sen. DiCeglie / Rep. Barnaby, Rep. Stark failed this session. HB 1183 was not heard this session, while its Senate companion died in its second committee stop.

This bill establishes The Main Street Historical Tourism and Revitalization Act which proposed to offer tax credits for rehabilitating certified historic structures in Florida. Eligibility criteria include participation in designated Main Street programs.

The Act provides a 20% tax credit, up to \$200,000, for rehabilitation, increasing to 30% for projects in local program areas. It sets an annual cap of \$25 million on total credits and limits individual projects to \$1 million. Applicants must submit detailed documentation, including eligibility certificates and cost reports. Unused credits can be carried forward for five years, with procedures for auditing and revoking credits for non-compliance.

The Department of Revenue will report annually on employment impact, building use, affordable housing, and property value changes resulting

from rehabilitations. Emergency rules may be adopted for implementation, and the act outlines the order of application for various tax credits against corporate income and insurance premium taxes.

PROPERTY TAX ADMINISTRATION LEGISLATION FAILS
HB 1649 / SB 378 - *Property Tax Administration* by Rep. Plakon/Sen. Garcia failed this session. HB 1649 died in its second committee reference, while the Senate companion was not heard this session.

Referred to as the “Taxpayer Empowerment Act,” this bill proposes adjustments to property assessment processes for ad valorem taxes. It modifies the timeline for property appraisers to appeal Value Adjustment Board decisions, reduces instances where errors in assessed value may lead to back taxes and penalties for homestead property owners, and broadens the scope of appeals that Value Adjustment Boards can hear.

NEW HOMESTEAD CRITERIA LEGISLATION FAILS
HB 1103/SB 1374 - *Establishment of a New Homestead* by Rep. Caruso/Sen. Wright failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

SB 1374 proposes reforms property tax assessments, particularly for newly established homesteads previously classified as nonhomestead without a change in ownership. It permits agricultural, water recharging, recreational, and conservation lands to be assessed based on their use. Tangible personal property held for sale or livestock may be taxed at a specified percentage or be exempted. Homestead properties are to be assessed at just value as of January 1 following the amendment’s effective date, with annual assessment changes capped at 3% or the change in the Consumer Price Index. New homesteads meeting specified conditions can be assessed at less than just value, with an annual increase not exceeding 10% of the previous year’s assessment.

IMPACT-RESISTANCE TAX EXEMPTION FAILS
HB 835 - *Impact-resistant Opening Protection* by Rep. Duggan failed this session. This bill was never heard in committee.

The bill proposes an exemption from certain taxes for the sale of impact-resistant items until June 30, 2026. It specifically exempts sales of impact-resistant doors, windows, and garage doors from sales tax imposed by the relevant chapter. The exemption sunsets on June 30, 2026.

FRS SPECIAL RISK REVISION FAILS
HB 1637 / SB 1416 - *Special Risk Class of Florida Retirement System* by Sen. Rodriguez/Rep. Mooney failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

This bill offers changes to the Florida Retirement System offer provisions for Special Risk Class employees an additional option to choose between the pension plan and investment plan, subject to certain conditions. Eligible employees may switch plans once, provided they accrue service credit in an employer-employee relationship, excluding unpaid leaves of absence. It outlines criteria for transferring from the investment plan to the pension plan, including the transfer of benefit obligations without allowing excess contributions refund. A provision is introduced specifically for Special Risk Class employees, allowing them to switch back to the pension plan from the investment plan between July 1, 2024, and September 30, 2024, by surrendering their current investment plan value. The act is intended to serve the state’s interest by ensuring fair and well-managed benefits to employees, retirees, and their dependents, survivors, and beneficiaries in an actuarially sound manner.

LEGISLATIVE STRUCTURE REFORM FAILS
HB 1625 - *Procedures of the Legislature* by Rep. Beltran failed this session. This bill was not heard this session.

This bill seeks to reform legislative procedures, officer requirements, committee structures, session schedules, law enactment dates, legislative compensation, and budget review processes. They include revisions to requirements for legislative officers and their selection, with the addition of alternate presiding officers and executive directors. Specific legislative committees with defined jurisdictions would be mandated, with limits placed on the total number of committees and subcommittees. The dates and format for legislative sessions would be changed, removing special sessions and adjusting the regular session schedule. Procedures for bill progression through committees and onto session agendas, including conditions for amendments and debate, would be specified. The process and timeframe for bills to become laws post-governor’s approval or veto would be modified. Legislative member compensation would be set at half the rate of a U.S. Representative, with staff salaries at a minimum of one-third of this rate. Provisions for necessary legislative member facilities and administration of office funds would be required. Also, specific appropriations could be removed from budget bills during a 72-hour public review period before final passage.

TAX EXEMPTION FOR BROADBAND EQUIPMENT FAILS
HB 1585 / SB 1468 - *Tax Exemption for Communications and Internet Access Services Providers* by Rep. Steele/Sen. Hutson failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee this session.

The bill proposes an exemption on the purchase or lease of qualifying equipment by providers of communication services or Internet access services from sales and use tax, if the equipment is used to fulfill broadband grant requirements. It redefines existing subsections and introduces a new exemption specifically for communication services or Internet access services providers in Florida. Definitions for terms such as “central office,” “communications services,” and “qualifying equipment” are provided. The exemption applies solely to equipment, machinery, software, or infrastructure within central offices, headends, or hubs used for service provision, with exclusions such as land, office furniture, and customer premise equipment. Additionally, it specifies that the exemption does not apply to taxes under s. 212.031.

FILM INCENTIVE MEASURE FAILS
HB 1453 / SB 872 - *Tourist Development Tax* by Rep. Valdes / Sen. Stewart failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee this session.

The bill proposes expanding the uses of tourist development tax revenues, allowing funds to be used for incentives for film and television production. It permits counties to utilize these revenues for public facilities that aim to boost tourist-related business activities, subject to specified conditions.

The bill allows for the allocation of funds towards acquiring, constructing, and promoting publicly owned or operated convention centers, sports stadiums, and other tourist attractions. It enables financing for zoological parks, beach park facilities, and shoreline maintenance projects, as well as for convention bureaus and tourist information centers. Furthermore, the bill introduces a provision to use tourist development tax revenues as incentives to attract film and television production by certified companies.

AGENCY RULES EVALUATION FAILS
HB 1279 / SB 1326 - *Administrative Procedures Committee Review of Agency Rules* by Rep. Gregory/Sen. DeCeglie failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

The bill mandates an annual compilation and review of agency rules with an emphasis on reduction and efficiency.

- Requires agencies to compile an annual inventory of their rules, including total rules in effect, the number promulgated or withdrawn in the past

- year, and a regulatory review proposing rule reductions by 10%, 20%, and 30%.
- The Administrative Procedures Committee is tasked with advising and assisting agencies in preparing and revising rule inventories and achieving specified rule reductions.
 - The committee's staff director must prepare an annual historical report by December 1, summarizing the year's efforts in rule reduction, identifying the percentage of rules reduced, and recommending statutory changes if necessary.
 - This report is to be provided to the committee, published on the committee's website, and electronically transmitted to key legislative leaders.

PUBLIC RECORD REQUEST FEE CAP FAILS

SB 1494 - *Public Records Requests* by Sen. Pizzo failed this session. The bill was not heard in committee.

The bill seeks to address transparency and accountability in public records requests by implementing several measures. It prohibits agencies from charging fees after receiving a request for record inspection or copying and allows custodians to determine record exemptions based solely on required safeguards. The maximum civil penalty for public records violations is increased from \$500 to \$5,000, and public officers face misdemeanor charges for retaliating against requestors. Agencies unlawfully withholding records face a \$100 daily civil penalty payable to requestors, with courts prioritizing enforcement actions until compliance. The bill specifies conditions for court-issued stay orders and removes the requirement for complainants to provide written notice to record custodians in certain cases. The amendments apply retroactively to July 1, 2017, for attorney fees regulations.

FREE SPEECH AND CONCERTS PROTECTION FAILS

HB 15 / SB 1206 - *Contracts for Live Entertainment* by Rep. Rudman / Sen. Martin failed this session. HB 15 was never heard this session stop whereas the Senate companion, SB 1206, died in its second committee stop.

The bill creates the “Right to Rock Act,” which prohibits the owner or operator of a public venue from canceling a live performance of an artist, a performer, or a musical group because of their lawful exercise of freedom of speech or their personal beliefs. The bill defines “public venue” as a place, building, or structure, regardless of whether owned by or rented to a governmental entity, school, college, or university, which is funded by or constructed with public or government funds. The bill does not apply to an owner or operator who cancels a live performance based on a reasonable belief that the performance would violate any

applicable state law or rule. The bill requires a venue owner or operator who cancels a live performance of an artist, a performer, or a musical group in violation of the provisions in the bill to bear all costs, fees, and penalties enumerated in the related contract with the artist, performer, or musical group.

AIRCRAFT SALES TAX LIMITATION FAILS

SB 230 - *Sales Tax on Aircraft Sales and Leases* by Sen. Wright failed this session. This bill was never heard in committee.

The bill limits the sales tax on aircraft transactions and revises exemptions related to aircraft sales and leases in Florida. The bill also contains the following provisions:

- Caps the maximum sales or use tax on each aircraft sale or use in the state at \$4,000.
- Exempts the sale or lease of aircraft up to 12,500 pounds maximum certified takeoff weight from sales tax, including unassembled aircraft that will be assembled by the purchaser.
- Defines “aircraft” as a manned vehicle capable of flight designed to transport persons or property.
- Removes prior requirements for a purchaser or lessee to participate in flight training and research programs with state universities to qualify for aircraft-related tax exemptions.

AIRCRAFT TAX CAP FAILS

SB 264/HB 269 - *Aircraft Taxes* by Sen. Rodriguez/ Rep. Overdorf failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

This bill modifies tax regulations on aircraft sales, use, and repair. Additionally, the bill caps the maximum tax collected on the sale or use of an aircraft in the state at \$18,000 and on each repair of aircraft at \$60,000. Furthermore, the bill expands tax exemptions for the sale or lease of qualified aircraft, specifically including those with a maximum certified takeoff weight of less than 12,500 or more than 15,000 pounds, when used by a common carrier.

COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT OF RETIREMENT BENEFITS

SB 242 - *Cost-of-living Adjustment of Retirement Benefits* by Sen. Hooper failed this session. The bill was never heard in any of its committee references.

The bill revises the calculation of cost-of-living adjustments for certain retirees and beneficiaries in Florida, ensuring annual adjustments according to a new formula. For retirees before July 1, 2011, adjustments are calculated based on the duration of received benefits, with first-time receivers receiving an initial benefit plus a percentage multiplied by 3. For those who previously received adjustments, the new benefit is determined by adding 3 percent

to the current benefit. Starting July 1, 2024, annual adjustments will be mandatory, moving away from previous conditions dependent on legislative actions and funding availability.

SAVE OUR HOMES REFORM FAILS

SB 652 / SB 654 - *Homestead Assessments* by Sen. Garcia (I) failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee this session.

SB 652 replaces the previous method with assessments based on specific provisions outlined in s. 193.1554 or s. 193.1555. Properties receiving the exemption after January 1, 1994, will be reassessed annually beginning in 1995, with changes capped at three percent of the prior year's assessed value or the CPI change, whichever is lower. If reassessed value exceeds just value, it will be reduced. Certain conditions prevent a change of ownership from resetting assessed value. Changes or improvements are assessed at just value, with exemptions for damaged or destroyed property. Property not replaced is reassessed accordingly. These provisions apply only to properties with a homestead exemption. The bill takes effect upon approval of SB 654. SB 654 reforms property assessment for homesteads, ensuring fairness. It classifies land based on use, exempts specific property, and mandates homesteads be assessed at just value as of January 1 following the amendment's effective date, with annual changes capped at 3% or CPI. Rules prevent assessments from exceeding just value, outline adjustments after ownership changes or improvements, and facilitate transferring benefits. It also allows assessment reductions for homesteads accommodating elderly family members and sets limits for certain residential properties. Additionally, it excludes certain improvements and mandates working waterfront properties be assessed based on current use.

LEGAL TENDER GUIDELINES FAILS

HB 697 / SB 750 - *State Legal Tender and Bullion Depository* by Rep. Bankson, Rep. LaMarca / Sen. Rodriguez failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

The bill recognizes gold, silver, and electronic currency as legal tender and establishes state bullion depositories. It exempts bullion from taxation and ensures transactions involving it incur no tax liability. Legal tender can be used for private debts, taxes, and fees, subject to certain contractual conditions. The Department of Financial Services administers bullion depositories, ensuring security, insurance, and audits. Guidelines cover transactions, storage, and exchanges, including for electronic currencies backed by legal tender. Conflict of interest

policies are outlined, protecting account holders and assets from unauthorized actions. The Chief Financial Officer can create electronic currencies backed by bullion, with specified transactional procedures.

BULLION RECORDS EXEMPTION FAILS

HB 699 / SB 752 - *Pub. Rec./State Bullion Depositories* by Rep. Bankson, Rep. LaMarca / Sen. Rodriguez failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

The bill creates a public records exemption for bullion depository account records, safeguarding against financial crimes and ensuring data security. It permits individuals and entities, including governmental bodies, to establish and manage such accounts. The administrator is required to maintain confidential records of all accounts and transactions. State agencies can store bullion in depositories, treating it as part of the state's financial reserves. The exemption is subject to review and potential repeal by October 2, 2029, under the Open Government Sunset Review Act, emphasizing the need for confidentiality to protect against identity theft and financial fraud while preserving financial autonomy and market integrity.

RENEWABLE ENERGY TAX RELIEF FAILS

HB 769 - *Assessment of Renewable Energy Source Devices* by Rep. Bankson failed this session. HB 769 passed its first two committees but died in its final stop, House Commerce.

The bill expands the ad valorem tax benefits for solar and renewable energy source devices to include infrastructure and equipment used in the collection, transmission, storage, or usage of energy derived from biogas for conversion into renewable natural gas. In order to qualify for the benefits, the equipment must convert biogas into renewable natural gas suitable for pipeline injection.

While this bill failed, the substance of the bill was passed as part of the HB 7073, the Annual Tax package for 2024.

FRS PLAN TRANSFER FAILS

HB 973 / SB 1022 - *Pension Plan Election under Florida Retirement System* by Rep. Temple/Sen. Rodriguez failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

The bill allows certain Florida Retirement System members who switched from the pension plan to the investment plan to return to the pension plan, deferring costs until retirement. Eligible employees will be notified by July 30, 2024, and must decide within 90 days, with the election effective the

following month. Costs are deferred until retirement, with amortization over 10 years, not exceeding 25% of retirement benefits. Additionally, cross-references are amended regarding pension plan election by reemployed retirees.

AUTHORIZED AGENTS OF TAX COLLECTORS MEASURE FAILS
HB 817 / SB 840 - *Authorized Agents of Tax Collectors* by Rep. Duggan / Sen. DeCeglie failed this session. HB 817 died on the House floor, while SB 840 stalled in its second committee stop.

The bill mandates tax collectors to appoint general lines insurance agencies as authorized agents for issuing vehicle-related titles and stickers upon petition. These agencies must file a \$2 million performance bond and provide audited financial statements to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. They can offer services only to their customers, limited to five locations per county. Tax collector authorization is required for access to the electronic filing system. The agencies are subject to applicable laws, with the department authorized to adopt rules. Additionally, \$939,800 in nonrecurring funds is appropriated for equipment and installation.

HOMESTEAD TRANSFER REVISION FAILS
HJR 879 - *Homestead Property Tax Assessment* by Rep. McFarland failed this session. This bill was withdrawn prior to introduction.

The proposed amendment extends the timeframe for transferring accrued homestead property tax benefits from three to four years after establishing a new homestead. It simplifies the calculation method for transferring these benefits and is set to take effect on January 1, 2025. The changes will be subject to approval or rejection by the state's electors, aiming to enhance accessibility and equity in homestead tax benefits.

CHILD CARE BILL FAILS
HB 635 / SB 820 - *Child Care and Early Learning Providers* by Rep. McFarland/Sen. Grall failed this session. HB 635 died on the House floor, while SB 820 stalled in its last committee stop.

The bill introduces several provisions affecting childcare facilities and homeowners' insurance for large family childcare homes. It allows municipalities to exempt licensed preschools from special assessments and offers tax credits to taxpayers operating childcare facilities or making contributions to them. The bill also modifies licensing requirements for childcare providers, exempts certain entities from licensing if their facility is solely attended by employees, and updates regulations related to

inspections, background screening, and personnel training. Additionally, annual notifications regarding immunization and leaving children in cars are removed, and county commissions are required to annually affirm continued services for locally managed licensing of childcare facilities. The bill also clarifies cancellation and coverage from residential property insurance for large family childcare homes.

PROPERTY ASSESSMENT REFORM FAILS
HB 331/SB 1060 - *Assessment of Real Property and Residential Real Property* by Rep. Garcia/Sen. Calatayud failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee this session. Their respective implementing bills, HB 333 and SB 1062 also failed.

The bill includes provisions for classifying various types of land for assessment, sets limits on assessment changes for homestead property, and mandates assessment at just value after ownership changes. It also addresses assessment of tangible personal property, historic property, and properties providing living quarters for elderly relatives. Additionally, it restricts assessment increases for residential real property and other real property and excludes consideration of certain improvements in assessments.

TDT REQUIRED DISTRIBUTION TO MUNICIPALITIES FAILS
SB 1072 / HB 1081 - *Tourist Development* by Sen. Avila/Rep. Porras failed this session. Both bills passed their first committee but ultimately stalled in their second.

The bill allows a county to use TDT revenues to complete existing projects, debt obligations, or contracts as of July 1, 2024, with remaining revenues distributed proportionally to municipalities and allocated monthly for specified purposes, including arts and cultural organizations, visitors' bureaus, and regular TDT uses. Additionally, the bill mandates that 50% of charter county convention development revenue be distributed to municipalities for convention-related purposes, while the remainder must be used by the county for establishing and maintaining countywide convention and visitor's bureau facilities. These amendments seek to optimize the allocation of funds for tourism promotion and infrastructure enhancement in Miami-Dade County.

SPECIAL RISK CLASS CHANGES FAIL
SB 560/HB 1089 - *Special Risk Class* by Sen. Bradley/Rep. Shoaf failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

The bill amends the Florida Retirement System's criteria for special risk membership, expanding eligibility to include new roles and responsibilities effective from 1978 to 2024. It introduces additional job

classifications eligible for special risk membership, such as correctional officers, emergency medical technicians, probation officers, and forensic employees. Starting July 1, 2024, various vocational instructors, government analysts, chaplains, and maintenance workers will also be eligible.

The legislation maintains eligibility for members who qualify under previous criteria and have suffered qualifying injuries, ensuring fair and adequate retirement system protections for eligible employees and their dependents.

HOMESTEAD REVISION FAILS
HB 1103 / SB 1374 - *Homesteads* by Rep. Caruso / Sen. Wright failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

The bill aims to adjust property assessment procedures, particularly for newly established homestead properties, under specific conditions. The amendment specifies that new homestead properties can be assessed at less than just value under certain circumstances, with limits on annual assessment increases. The proposed joint resolution would allow a property owner subject to a 10% limitation to retain that differential once establishing that property as a homestead property instead of being assessed at just value as current law requires. The effective date of the amendment is not specified.

RESCINDED HOMESTEAD MEASURE FAILS
HB 1105 - *Rescinding a Homestead Exemption Application* by Rep. Caruso failed this session. This bill passed the House before dying in Senate messages.

The bill allows taxpayers who have filed a homestead exemption application to rescind it between August 1 and September 15 of the same taxable year. To do so, they must notify the property appraiser. Rescinding is only permitted if the taxpayer owned the property when it was assessed on January 1 of the previous year, it was assessed as non-homestead property on that date, and the taxpayer has continuously owned the property from the time of assessment until filing the homestead exemption application. Additionally, the Department of Revenue is authorized to adopt emergency rules.

PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION MEASURE FAILS
HJR 1369 - *Property Tax Exemptions* by Rep. Chamberlin failed this session. The bill was never heard in committee. Its implementing bill, HB 1371, also failed.

The bill creates new property tax exemptions, including a \$100,000 exemption for all property owners and \$250,000 exemption for homestead property owned by senior citizens aged 65 or older.

HB 1371, originally the implementing bill for HJR 1379, mandates an evaluation by the Office of Program Policy analysis of the potential consequences of replacing property taxes with a consumption tax.

HEALTH, SAFETY, & JUSTICE-PASSED

COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR REQUIREMENTS PASSES

HB 1567 – *Qualifications for County Emergency Management Directors* by Rep. Grant (SB 1262 Sen. Collins) passed.

This bill creates minimum education, experience, and training standards for all county emergency management directors (directors) which include:

- Fifty hours of training in business or public administration, business or public management, or emergency management or preparedness or a bachelor's degree.
- Four years of specified experience in comprehensive emergency management services with direct supervisory responsibility for responding to at least one emergency or disaster. The bill provides that a master's degree in certain fields may be substituted for 2 years of the required experience but not for the required supervisory experience, or alternatively, certain professional accreditation may substitute for the required experience as long as the certification remains in good standing until the experience requirements are met.
- One hundred fifty hours in comprehensive emergency management training provided through or approved by the Federal Emergency Agency (FEMA) or its successor, including completion of certain National Incident Management System (NIMS) courses, or equivalent FEMA courses through the Emergency Management Institute (EMI).

Effective date: July 1, 2024

ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION PASSES

HB 7063- *Anti-Human Trafficking* by Rep. Overdorf (SB 796 by Sen. Avila) passed this session. FAC supported this legislation in the 2024 FAC **Legislative Action Plan**.

The bill extends the authorization for the direct-support organization for the Statewide Council on Human Trafficking until October 1, 2029, with a provision for legislative review. It modifies reporting procedures and awareness signs for human trafficking, replacing the requirement for the National Human Trafficking Hotline number with the Florida Human Trafficking Hotline number.

Additionally, it mandates the update and posting of human trafficking awareness signs by January 1, 2025. The bill also requires nongovernmental entities to provide an affidavit confirming the absence of coercion for labor or services when contracting with governmental entities. Overall, while it may incur minor costs for updating signs, its fiscal impact is

expected to be insignificant.

Effective date: July 1, 2024

NICOTINE PRODUCT RESTRICTION PASSES

HB 1007 – *Nicotine Products and Dispensing Devices* by Rep. Overdorf (SB 1006 Sen. Perry) passed this session.

Provides for statewide regulation of the wholesale and retail sale of nicotine dispensing devices (NDDs). This includes:

- Requires manufacturers of NDD's to register annually with the Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) for any products sold in Florida, as well as provide evidence that they have Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval to market their products
- Directs DBPR to create a directory of registered NDD's
- Requires wholesalers of NDD products to obtain a permit issued by DBPR
- Requires manufacturers of NDD's to maintain certain records for up to three years, including data regarding to whom the products were sold
- Prohibits the shipment into Florida and sale of any NDD products that are: unregistered with DBPR, unapproved by the FDA, or have been ordered by the FDA to be removed from the market
- Creates new criminal violations and penalties for breaches of this section
- Provides for suspension and revocation of permits

Effective date: October 1, 2024

TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED LEGISLATION PASSES

SB 1380 – *Special Transportation Services for Persons with Disabilities* by Sen. Hutson (HB 1673 by Rep. Busatta-Cabrera) passed.

The bill addresses special transportation services for individuals with disabilities. It defines key terms, revises the membership and duties of the Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged, removes certain requirements for commission members, and mandates training for paratransit drivers. The bill also requires transportation providers to offer technology-based booking and tracking services, specifies complaint resolution procedures, and removes a deadline for establishing a model system for investigating adverse incidents. Additionally, it mandates reports from the Center for Urban Transportation Research and the I-STREET Living Lab on improving paratransit services for persons with disabilities.

Effective date: July 1, 2024.

JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORM PASSES

HB 1425 – *Juvenile Justice* by Rep. Yarkosky (SB 1352 by Sen. Bradley) passed.

This bill revises provisions related to juvenile justice, focusing on treatment, education, and facility classifications. The bill also contains the following provisions:

- Authorizes certain Department of Juvenile Justice employees and contracted providers to possess and administer opioid antagonists, granting them immunity from liability for administration.
- Replaces "gender-specific" with "sex-specific" and defines "sex," adjusting programming and services for youth.
- Redesignates the nonsecure residential restrictiveness level as the "moderate-risk residential level," revises components of the maximum-risk residential level and defines "moderate-risk" and "maximum-risk" facilities.
- Excludes juvenile assessment centers from facilities permitted to receive certain children transitioning from secure detention to supervised release detention care.
- Requires school boards to facilitate high school graduation credits for students in juvenile justice detention, prevention, or day treatment programs and to develop individualized education and transition plans for these students.
- Establishes review and approval responsibilities for the Florida Scholars Academy's academic calendar, allowing a reduction in the minimum number of instruction days for teacher planning.
- Revises provisions relating to juvenile justice circuit advisory boards, stating their composition, duties, and the requirement for each circuit to have one.

Effective date: July 1, 2024

JACKSONVILLE-DUVAL SHERIFF BUDGETARY AUTHORIZATION PASSES

SB 1704 – *Sheriffs in Consolidated Governments* by Sen. Yarborough (HB 1447 by Rep. Duggan) passed.

This bill enhances the financial and operational autonomy of sheriffs within consolidated governments in Florida by granting them the authority to transfer funds between categories and code levels post-budget approval by the relevant governing body. It preserves the independent powers of sheriffs in consolidated governments concerning procurement, personnel selection, and management, without conflicting with civil service systems or boards.

Effective date: July 1, 2024.

EMERGENCY SHELTER REQUIREMENTS PASSES

SB 7002 - *Deregulation of Public Schools* by Sen. Calatayud, Sen. Hutson, and Sen. Osgood (HB 7039 by Choice & Innovation Subcommittee, Rep. Rizo) passed.

The bill establishes deregulation measures for public school district finance, budgeting, facilities, and oversight, aimed at increasing flexibility and reducing regulatory burdens on district school boards.

As part of this deregulation, the bill revises the current requirement in s. 252.38, F.S., that school boards provide necessary personnel to staff facilities used as emergency shelter to the provision of necessary personnel to access the facilities or provide other duties related to the facilities as may be required pursuant to the county emergency management plan and program.

Effective date: July 1, 2024.

BAKER ACT AND MARCHMAN ACT REFORM PASSES

HB 7021 – *Mental Health and Substance Abuse* by Rep. Maney (SB 1784 Sen. Grall) passed this session.

The bill revises mental health and substance abuse regulations in Florida, including protocols for involuntary examinations and treatment, licensing for psychiatric nurses, and the establishment of behavioral health collaboratives. The bill affects both the Baker Act Program and the Marchman Act Program. It exempts certain licensed physicians and nurses from background screening requirements and establishes parameters for patient restrictions, notices, and emergency treatment orders. The bill also introduces procedures for transferring patients and documenting clinical records, amends procedures for handling minor patients, defines involuntary outpatient placement criteria, and clarifies mental health facility capacity conditions. Additionally, it establishes the Office of Children's Behavioral Health Ombudsman and provides funding for implementation, while repealing sections related to involuntary assessment and treatment services.

Effective date: July 1, 2024.

RECOVERY RESIDENCIES REFORM PASSES

HB 1065 - *Substance Abuse Treatment* by Rep. Caruso (SB 1180 by Sen. Harrell) passed this session.

The bill authorizes the Department of Children and Families to issue one license for all eligible service components operated by a service provider. The bill prohibits any recovery residence from denying an individual access to the residence solely on the basis the individual has been prescribed federally approved medication for the treatment of substance use disorders. The bill prohibits a local ordinance or regulation from regulating the duration or frequency of a resident's stay in a certified recovery residence located within a multifamily zoning district. The bill authorizes an increase in the number of residents actively managed in a recovery residence at any given time from 100 residents to 150 residents, if certain requirements are met.

Effective date: July 1, 2024

MY SAFE FLORIDA HOME PROGRAM REVISIONS PASSES

SB 7028 – *My Safe Florida Home Program* by Senate Banking and Insurance Committee (HB 1263 by Rep. LaMarca) passed.

The bill expands the My Safe Florida Home Program to include specific eligibility requirements for hurricane mitigation inspections and grants, focusing on owner-occupied, single-family homes or townhouses with a homestead exemption. It outlines conditions for homeowners to reapply for inspections and grants, allows inspections without grant eligibility, and specifies grant usage for improvements like opening protection and roof-to-wall connections. Low-income homeowners may receive up to \$10,000 without matching requirements.

The Department of Financial Services is mandated to develop an efficient application process, prioritize reviews based on income and age, and ensure timely construction completion or grant extension requests. Provisions are included for requesting additional information and withdrawing applications if not received promptly, emphasizing education and outreach regarding program benefits. Effective date: July 1, 2024.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL SERVICES PACKAGE PASSES

HB 989 – *Department of Financial Services* by Rep. LaMarca (SB 1098 by Sen. DiCeglie) passed.

The bill encompasses numerous changes to Florida’s regulatory framework, including renaming a division and creating a tax liaison position. It clarifies benefit types for firefighters with cancer and adjusts regulations for the My Safe Florida Home Program. Administrative processes are streamlined by eliminating quarterly reporting requirements and specifying reimbursement methods for Workers’ Compensation. It also mandates approval for contracts exceeding \$100,000 by various associations and adjusts agent licensing processes. Provisions regarding insurance policy renewal notices, fire safety regulations, warranty associations, bail bond agents, and unclaimed property are modified. The bill includes a fiscal analysis and most provisions become effective upon enactment, with specified exceptions. Effective date: upon becoming a law.

MY SAFE FLORIDA HOME PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTION PASSES

SB 988 – *Public Records / My Safe Florida Home Program* by Sen. Martin (HB 943 Rep. LaMarca) passed.

The bill establishes exemptions for certain information within applications and home inspection reports submitted to the My Safe Florida Home (MSFH) Program administered by the Department of Financial Services (DFS). The exempt

information includes detailed address components, contact details, and home descriptions with pictures. This exemption applies retroactively to past and future submissions. The purpose is to enhance participant privacy and reduce the risk of home invasions. The bill includes a provision for review and potential repeal by October 2, 2029, and it requires a two-thirds majority vote in the Legislature due to its impact on public records. The bill is not expected to incur fiscal costs for government agencies and takes effect immediately upon enactment. Effective date: Upon becoming a law.

NEW FENTANYL PENALTY PASSES

SB 718 – *Exposures of First Responders to Fentanyl and Fentanyl Analogs* by Sen. Collins (HB 231 by Rep. Baker) passed.

This bill protects first responders from the dangers of fentanyl exposure by making it a second-degree felony for individuals over 18 to recklessly expose them to the substance, resulting in overdose or serious injury. It defines dangerous fentanyl and provides immunity for individuals seeking medical assistance in drug-related overdose situations. Effective date: October 1, 2024

PUBLIC SAFETY WORKER MEDICAL REFORM PASSES

SB 808 – *Treatment by a Medical Specialist* by Sen. DeCeglie (HB 637 by Rep. Yeager) passed.

SB 808 allows firefighters, law enforcement officers, correctional officers, and correctional probation officers to choose their medical specialists for treatment of compensable presumptive conditions. Written notice of the selected specialist must be provided to the workers’ compensation carrier, and treatment must be authorized within five days. The bill limits reimbursement for specialist treatment to 200 percent of the Medicare rate and specifies that the specialist must be certified in the relevant medical specialty. Effective date: October 1, 2024.

PURPLE ALERT SYSTEM LEGISLATION PASSES

HB 937 *Purple Alert* by Rep. Casello (SB 640 by Sen. Berman) passed.

The bill introduces two levels of activation: local and statewide. The Purple Alert, designed for cases involving unidentifiable vehicles or missing adults on foot, will now have limited dissemination for local alerts within the specific area where the person may be located. Local law enforcement agencies will develop their own policies for local Purple Alert activation. When activating a local alert, law enforcement must contact media outlets, inform on-duty officers, and communicate with other agencies in the jurisdiction. Statewide Purple Alerts, which involve

identifiable vehicles, can be requested by law enforcement agencies. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement will then coordinate with various departments for dynamic message signs on state highways, notifications on lottery terminals, and subscriber alerts. Effective date: July 1, 2024

PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTION FOR SUICIDE VICTIMS PASSES

SB 474 - *Public Records/Suicide Victims* by Sen. Grall (HB 529 by Rep. Trabulsy) passed this session.

The bill protects privacy by making it confidential and exempt from public access any photographs, videos, audio recordings, and autopsy reports depicting or related to a person’s suicide. Exceptions are made for specific parties, such as surviving spouses, parents, or adult children. The bill specifies procedures for accessing these materials, including court involvement and penalties for unauthorized disclosure. It retroactively applies these exemptions to existing materials and requires a two-thirds vote for final passage. These exemptions are subject to review and will expire in 2029 unless renewed by the Legislature. Effective date: Upon becoming a law.

SENTENCING GUIDELINES FOR PROBATION PASSES

HB 1241 - *Probation and Community Control Violations* by Rep. Snyder (SB 1154 by Sen. Simon) passed this session.

HB 1241 amends s. 948.06, F.S., to revise provisions related to probation and the alternative sanctioning program (ASP). Specifically, the bill:

- Requires a court to modify, rather than revoke probation, if a probationer meets specified criteria and has fewer than two previous violations of probation resolved by the court and limits the jail sentence a court may impose for a violation to 90 days for a first violation and 120 days for a second violation; and
- Requires a court to hold a hearing on a violation of probation within 30 days after a probationer’s arrest or to release the probationer without bail unless the court determines that the hearing was not held in the applicable time frame due to circumstances attributable to the probationer.

The bill amends s. 921.0024, F.S., to prohibit a community sanction violation that was resolved through the ASP from being used when determining an offender’s sentence for a violation of probation if probation is revoked. Effective date: July 1, 2024

MY SAFE FLORIDA CONDOMINIUM INSPECTION PILOT PROGRAM PASSES
HB 1029 - *My Safe Florida Condominium Pilot / Program* by Rep. Lopez (V), Rep. Hunschofsky (SB 1366 by Sen. DeCeglie) passed this session.

The bill establishes the My Safe Florida Condominium Pilot Program (MSFCP Program) within the Department of Financial Services (DFS), aiming to offer licensed inspectors and grants to eligible condominium associations, subject to funding availability. DFS is tasked with ensuring fiscal accountability, contract management, and strategic leadership for the program. Modeled after the My Safe Florida Home Program, the MSFCP Program entails similar requirements for participation, hurricane mitigation inspections, eligibility for grants, and annual reporting. Effective date: July 1, 2024

CLERK OF COURT REFORM PASSES

HB 1077 – *Clerk of Court* by Rep. Botana (SB 1470 by Sen. Hutson) passed this session.

The bill makes comprehensive changes to funds and procedures governing court operations, public defenders, and clerks of court. It revises the remittance of recovered funds by state attorneys, updates the allocation of payments received by public defenders, and determines the entity funding the capital collateral regional counsel. Additionally, it updates the list of court-related functions funded by various fees and costs, modifies the depositing of filing fees, and removes the requirement for state attorneys to publish affirmative action reports. The bill also authorizes clerks to invest funds and creates a pilot program for driver’s license reinstatement in Miami-Dade County. Effective date: upon becoming a law.

COURT INTERPRETER EXPANSION PASSES

HB 1393 - *Court Interpreter Services* by Rep. Tuck, Rep. Joseph (SB 1660 by Sen. Torres) passed this session.

The bill allows the state court system to use state funds for court-appointed interpreting services for non-indigent individuals if funds are available in the fiscal year appropriation for due process services and if the services comply with Supreme Court regulations. Additionally, the bill eliminates the requirement for trial court administrators to recover funds used for court interpreter services from individuals who have the present ability to pay. Effective date: upon becoming a law.

PROPERTY INSURANCE PROGRAM FAILS

SB 102 / HB 1017 – *Insurance* by Sen. Jones / Rep. Edmonds failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

This bill creates a Property Insurance Commission, composed of two members appointed by the President of the Senate, one by the Minority Leader of the Senate, two by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and one by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives. This bill also states that the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) is tasked with evaluating the effectiveness of the property insurance mediation program outlined in Florida Statutes.

FIREARM PROHIBITION FAILS

HB 209 / SB 130 – *Possession or Use of a Firearm in a Sensitive Location* by Rep. Rayner / Sen. Berman failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

This bill prohibits possession or use of firearm in sensitive locations, and also defines the term “sensitive location” to including healthcare facilities, certain government buildings- polling locations, courthouses, or law enforcement agencies, parks or recreational facilities operated or controlled by a county, place of worship, public libraries/parks, child care program, and building owned by the Federal, State or Local government entity, homeless shelters, educational institutes, public transportation or public transit, bar or restaurant where alcohol is served, etc.

TAX EXEMPTION FOR DISABLED FIRST RESPONDERS FAILS

HB 171- *Homestead Exemptions for Totally and Permanently Disabled First Responders* by Rep. Daniels failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

The bill removes limitations related to disabilities caused by cardiac events, eliminates obsolete provisions, and rennumbers and amends various subsections for clarity. This bill requires applicants to provide specific documentation to the county property appraiser. The bill also includes notices to taxpayers and physicians regarding the consequences of providing false information.

CORRECTIONS REFORM FAILS

HB 181/SB 296 - *Treatment of Inmates* by Rep. Nixon / Sen. Davis failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

These bills require state correctional institutes to provide the following: Proper ventilation for all housing, sufficient mealtime of 20 minutes for inmates unless the inmate has approved medical condition requiring an extension. Adequate food supply in case of an emergency, a correctional institution must set up a program with one or more community food bank locations near the institution. Necessary health supplies, Personal Protection Equipment for medical staff and inmate health, and necessary health products, including sanitary napkins, tampons, soap, and toothpaste. The department shall provide written notice to inmates of these rights upon entry. An inmate may file a grievance at any time if they believe these rights are being denied. Expands the definition of “Permanently incapacitated inmate” to include physical disability, impairment, or handicap.

MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS TRAINING BILL FAILS

HB 195 - *Mental Health Crisis Intervention Training for Law Enforcement Officers* by Rep. Chambliss failed this session. HB 195 was withdrawn prior to introduction.

This bill seeks to add an amendment to s. 943.17 F.S. and this amendment will create a subsection that will accomplish the following:

- By July 1, 2025, the commission, with consulting from a national organization with expertise in mental health crisis intervention, will create minimum standards for basic skills and continued training for Law Enforcement
- Thereafter, every basic skills course curriculum 32 required for law enforcement officers to obtain their initial 33 certification shall include a 40-hour curriculum on mental 34 health crisis intervention and a minimum of 8 hours of 35 continuing education courses annually.

INMATE AIR CONDITIONING REQUIREMENT FAILS

HB 233 / SB 1702 - *Air Conditioning in Inmate Housing* by Rep. Hart / Sen. Powell failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

This bill requires state correctional institutes to provide portable air conditioners or air-cooling systems in each housing unit. This shall be funded from appropriations to the department in the General Appropriations Act.

PATIENT-DIRECTED DOCTOR'S ORDERS BILL FAILS

HB 219 & HB 221 / SB 390 & SB 392 - *Patient-Directed Doctor's Orders* by Rep. Plasencia / Sen. Gruters failed this session. None of the four were heard in committee.

These bills introduce changes related to patient-directed doctor's orders (PDDO) in various sections of Florida statutes. This bill emphasizes that the absence of a PDDO form does not prevent physicians or others from withholding or withdrawing medical interventions under certain conditions and clarifies that such forms are not required for treatment or admission to a healthcare facility. It also deals with legal and insurance aspects related to PDDO forms and specifies circumstances for health care surrogates to provide consent for PDDO forms.

JUDICIAL VACANCY MEASURE FAILS

HB 457 / SB 490 – *District Courts of Appeals* by Rep. Silvers / Sen. Grall failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

The bill addresses the excess judicial capacity in the First and Second District Courts of Appeal, stemming from the establishment of the Sixth District Court of Appeal due to changes in jurisdictional boundaries. To manage this, the legislation amends section 35.06, Florida Statutes, stipulating that if an event arises leading to a judicial vacancy in either of these districts, the number of judges in that respective district will reduce by one, setting a cap of 12 judges per district. Additionally, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court is mandated to notify the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House whenever such an event that could create a vacancy occurs in either district, as defined in sections 35.06(1) and (2) of the Florida Statutes.

BALANCE BILLING REFORM FAILS

SB 568 / HB 639 – *Coverage for Out-of-Network Ground Ambulance Emergency Services* by Sen. Hooper / Rep. Yeager failed this year in session. SB 568 died in its second committee, while HB 639 died in its last committee stop.

This bill requires health insurers and health maintenance organizations (HMO's) to reimburse out-of-network ambulance service providers for emergency ambulance services at the lowest of the following rates:

- The rate set by the jurisdictional county or municipality in which the services originated.
- The contracted rate at which an insurer would reimburse a participating or in-network provider.
- The lesser of either the provider's billed charges OR 350% of the Medicare rate for the same service

These billing reforms “balance billing” practices by providers.

COURT TECHNOLOGY FUNDING AUTHORIZATION FAILS

HB 763 / SB 950 – *Funding Court Technology* by Rep. Stark, Rep. Bankson/Sen. Stewart failed. Neither bill was heard in committee.

This bill authorizes clerks of court to fund improvements to court technology using filing fees, service charges, court costs, and fines. It also revises the distribution of certain civil penalties and administrative fees.

- Allows the funding of court-related functions such as case maintenance, records management, and improving court technology from various court-related fees.
- Adjusts the allocation of an additional civil penalty of \$16, where \$1.50 is remitted to the General Revenue Fund, \$9.50 to the Highway Safety Operating Trust Fund, and \$5.00 retained by the clerk for funding court-related technology needs.
- Specifies that of the \$12.50 administrative fee for noncriminal violations, \$6.25 is deposited into the Public Records Modernization Trust Fund for court-related technology needs, and \$6.25 goes into the fine and forfeiture fund.

CLERK INTERPRETER AUTHORIZATION FAILS

HB 987 – *Court Related Functions* by Rep. Lopez (J), Rep Harris failed this session. The bill passed its first committee, but ultimately stalled in its second stop.

The bill authorizes circuit court clerks to offer interpretation and translation services, at their discretion. It specifies that these services are ministerial, authorized, and an allowable expenditure. These services may be offered to any party, with or without legal representation. Parties may still opt to use their own interpretation or translation services.

COMMUNITY MOBILE SUPPORT TEAMS FAILS

HB 1309/SB 1394 – *Community Mobile Support* by Rep. Canady/Sen. Gruters failed this session. SB 1394 died in its last committee stop, while HB 1309 was never heard.

The bill requires the Department of Children and Families to contract with managing entities to place crisis counselors from community mental health centers within local law enforcement agencies. These crisis counselors to conduct follow-up contacts with children, adolescents, and adults who have been involuntarily committed under the Baker Act by a law enforcement officer and provide follow-up care to individuals in the community that law enforcement has identified as needing additional mental health support. The bill details

what services the community mobile support team is required to offer and details the requirements of a community mental health center contracted by the managing entity.

SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER PROGRAM FAILS

HB 1583 / SB 1636– *Substance Use Disorder Treatment* by Rep. Steele / Sen. Gruters failed during session. SB 1636 was never heard in its second committee whereas HB 1583 was never heard.

This bill establishes the Substance Use Disorder Housing Advisory Council tasked with studying national best practices to improve therapeutic housing in compliance with federal law. The council, in collaboration with the University of South Florida College of Public Health, will assess zoning codes’ impact on licensed service providers’ ability to offer evidence-based treatment and housing. Membership and appointment criteria are outlined, with a preliminary report due on July 1, 2027, and a final report on September 1, 2027. Patient records in recovery residences become confidential, and local regulations are barred from restricting residents’ stay duration or frequency in certified recovery residences within certain areas.

RESILIENT COMMUNITIES GRANT PROGRAM FAILS

SB 1762 - *Resilient Communities Grant Program* by Sen. Rouson failed this session. The bill was never heard in committee.

The bill establishes the Resilient Communities Grant Program within the Department of Children and Families to aid communities in offering comprehensive services for individuals confronting substance use and mental health issues. It permits counties and municipalities to apply for participation, mandating collaboration with local managing entities. The bill encourages the formation of committees to set strategic goals and benchmarks for grant fund utilization. Additionally, it assigns the Florida Certification Board and managing entities the task of devising application review criteria, incorporating factors such as substance use programs in schools and the availability of job training programs. Grants will be awarded for a 3-year planning and implementation phase to certified counties or municipalities, contingent on state funding availability. The program’s funding is dependent on legislative appropriation.

911 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS FAILS

HB 1413 / SB 1508 - *Public Safety Telecommunicators* by Rep. Baker/Sen. Wright failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

The bill expands the Florida Retirement System’s

Special Risk Class to include 911 public safety telecommunicators, adjusting criteria and retirement benefits for them. It defines them as special risk members effective July 1, 2024, requiring 25 years of service for full retirement eligibility without penalty. Their retirement benefits will be calculated according to Regular Class provisions. Technical amendments are made to align with this inclusion. The bill asserts the importance of providing fair benefits to state employees and retirees, including these new special risk members.

RETAIL PETS BAN FAILS

HB 1033 / SB 1478 – *Animals* by Rep. Killebrew / Sen. Yarborough failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

This bill prohibits pet stores from selling or offering for sale domestic dogs and cats. It includes the following specific provisions:

- Defines “pet store” as any business that sells animals to the public at retail for profit, excluding breeders who sell animals they personally bred and raised.
- Defines “sell or offer for sale” as to advertise or display for sale, barter, or trade.
- Establishes that selling or offering for sale a domestic dog or cat by a pet store is a noncriminal violation, with each violation treated as a separate offense and punishable as outlined in s. 775.083.
- Allows for the enactment or enforcement of local ordinances that are more stringent than this section, thereby permitting municipalities and counties to impose stricter regulations.

PET RABBIT RESTRICTIONS FAIL

HB 701 / SB 1426 – *Pet Rabbits* by Rep. Waldron / Sen. Osgood failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

This bill implements restrictions on the sale and care of pet rabbits to ensure their welfare. The bill also contains the following provisions:

- Prohibits the sale of rabbits in public spaces, private parking lots, flea markets, open-air venues, and retail pet stores during March and April.
- Forbids the sale, offer for sale, or giveaway of rabbits under 2 months of age for pets, toys, or premiums, and bans keeping them in retail pet stores.
- Mandates individual housing for each rabbit in retail pet stores, with requirements for cleanliness, food, water, hay, and microchipping.
- Requires retail pet stores to maintain accessible records of each rabbit’s source, including a certificate of source and veterinary inspection, for at least 2 years.
- Stipulates that abandoned rabbits be returned

to the retail store or breeder, or placed with a rabbit rescue or animal shelter if the previous owners are untraceable.

- Allows for official inspections of retail pet stores for compliance, with penalties for refusal or interference.
- Excludes rabbits raised for agricultural, livestock exhibitions, or youth organizations like Future Farmers of America and 4-H from these regulations.

BAIL REFORM FAILS

SB 1424 – *Pretrial Release* by Sen. Jones failed this session. SB 1424 was withdrawn from consideration before being introduced.

This bill abolishes monetary bail for offenses, except under specific interstate compacts. The bill also contains the following provisions:

- Abolishes the requirement of posting monetary bail after July 1, 2024, except as provided in interstate compacts related to driving offenses and wildlife violations.
- Directs the Division of Law Revision to rename chapter 903, Florida Statutes, to “Pretrial Release.”
- Amends various sections of the Florida Statutes to include any form of pretrial release under the terms “bail” and “bond,” conforming to the abolition of monetary bail.
- Repeals sections relating to aspects of monetary bail, including the nature of criminal surety bail bonds, qualification of sureties, validity of undertakings by minors, appearance bonds, contracts to indemnify sureties, deposit of money or bonds as bail, and several other related sections.
- Amends sections to conform to the changes made by this act, including definitions, procedures, and conditions related to pretrial release, bail, and related processes across various statutes.

REENTRY RESOURCES FAILS

SB 1216 / HB 1303– *Reentry Resources Centers* by Sen. Powell / Rep. Hinson failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

This bill amends existing legislation to enhance reentry assistance for inmates through the establishment of reentry resource centers. The bill also contains the following provisions:

- Specifies that inmates being released are eligible for transition assistance, which is to be provided through reentry resource centers offering comprehensive support services.
- Lists several types of assistance to be included, such as housing, employment, family unification, and health treatment.
- Outlines a detailed process for assistance

provision, including initial engagement, crafting customized plans, and maintaining contact to adjust plans as necessary.

- Stresses the importance of employment through career connection activities and necessitates quarterly follow-ups with a specialist post-employment.
- Allows the department to contract with various organizations for the provision of support services aimed at skills acquisition, stable employment, permanent housing, and preventing recidivism.
- Mandates coordination with other departments to facilitate inmate entry into applicable programs like nutrition and work opportunity programs.

GOVERNOR EMERGENCY POWERS LEGISLATION FAILS

HB 1623 – *Emergencies* by Rep. Beltran failed this session. The bill was never heard in any of its committees.

This bill restricts the Governor of Florida’s emergency management powers and mandates legislative approval for renewing emergency executive orders, proclamations, or rules beyond initial 60 days. The bill also contains the following provisions:

- Requires legislative resolution for extending an executive order, proclamation, or rule beyond 60 days, with a possible extension up to 6 months after a full review and redraft by the Governor.
- Stipulates that executive orders or proclamations regarding emergency-induced closures or restrictions of K-12 public schools and businesses must be reassessed every 30 days, with affected businesses considered commandeered after more than 14 days of imposed restrictions.
- Demands that any executive order, proclamation, or rule limiting individual or business rights be narrowly tailored to serve a compelling public health or safety purpose and be limited in duration, applicability, and scope.
- Emphasizes that the powers granted should not infringe upon or limit rights provided in the State Constitution.
- Revises definitions and procedures related to public health advisories, including removing State Health Officer’s authority to enforce advisories and specifying conditions for isolating or quarantining individuals without a due process hearing.

AED REQUIREMENT FOR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES FAILS

HB 1477 / SB 1774 – *Automated External Defibrillators at Parks and Youth Recreation or Sports Facilities* by Rep. Williams / Sen. Powell failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

This bill mandates the presence of functioning

automated external defibrillators at county and municipality-owned parks and youth recreation or sports facilities, alongside training and notification requirements. The bill also contains the following provisions:

- Requires each park and youth recreation or sports facility owned or operated by a county or municipality to maintain a functioning automated external defibrillator on premises at all times.
- Ensures employees and volunteers at these parks and facilities receive proper training on the use of automated external defibrillators in accordance with specified standards and notifies local emergency services of the defibrillator’s location.
- Grants immunity from civil liability to volunteers who use an automated external defibrillator in emergency situations.

PTSD COVERAGE FAILS

HB 993 / SB 1490 – *First Responders and Crime Scene Investigators* by Rep. Burgess / Sen. Holcomb failed this session. HB 993 was never heard in any of its committees, while SB 1490 was never heard in its second committee.

This bill expands benefits and protections for first responders and crime scene investigators relating to posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and makes specified diagnoses eligible for telehealth services. The bill also includes the following provisions:

- Broadens the definition of “first responder” to include a variety of officers and technicians, including federal law enforcement officers and 911 public safety telecommunicators.
- Authorizes PTSD diagnoses for correctional officers and crime scene investigators through both in-person and telehealth services by licensed psychiatrists.
- Establishes that PTSD suffered by a crime scene investigator as a result of their work is a compensable occupational disease under specific circumstances.
- Lists qualifying PTSD traumatic events, including directly witnessing death or severe injury, and sets out the evidentiary standard required for claims.
- Specifies that PTSD benefits for crime scene investigators do not require a physical injury and are not subject to certain limitations or apportionments.
- Mandates that the employing agency provides mental health awareness and treatment training and requires the Department of Financial Services to adopt relevant rules.
- Increases the employer contribution rates for members of the Florida Retirement System to fund the benefit changes provided by this act.

COUNSELING SERVICES FOR FIRST RESPONDERS FAILS

HB 211 - *Licensed Counseling for First Responders* by Rep. Lopez (V) failed this session. HB 211 was withdrawn prior to introduction.

The bill mandates that first responders’ employing agencies cover licensed counseling services following traumatic incidents. It defines terms like “first responder” and “licensed counseling” to clarify the scope. Employing agencies must pay for up to 12 hours of initial counseling, with potential for 36 hours based on professional recommendation, all to be completed within one year. Agencies are prohibited from requiring first responders to use accrued leave for counseling during work hours. First responders can choose their counselor unless a pre-approved list exists. Employing agencies cannot access counseling-related medical records without written authorization. Additionally, the bill aligns definitions in related statutes.

TRAFFICKED LABOR PROHIBITION FAILS

SB 628 – *Prohibition Use of Human Trafficked Labor in government Contracts* by Sen. Simon failed this session. SB 628 was never heard in any of its committee stops.

This bill amends section 787.06, Florida Statutes, to require contractors to submit an affidavit affirming they do not use coerced labor. The bill also contains the following provisions:

- Requires nongovernmental entities entering into contracts with governmental entities to provide an affidavit.
- Mandates the affidavit be signed under penalty of perjury by an officer or representative of the nongovernmental entity.
- Clarifies that the affidavit must attest the nongovernmental entity does not use coercion for labor or services.
- Defines “governmental entity” as per s. 287.138(1).

Note: Parts of this bill passed in HB 7063 Anti-human Trafficking.

CONDITIONAL RELEASE PILOT PROGRAM FAILS

HB 745 / SB 838 – *First Offense Conditional Release Pilot Program* by Rep. Garcia / Sen. Perry failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

This bill establishes a conditional release pilot program for certain first-time offenders who have served 20 years or more in state correctional facilities. The bill also contains the following provisions:

- Eligible individuals must not have other felony convictions beyond those related to their current sentence and must have a clean disciplinary record for the past 5 years, excluding specific

violent and sexual offenses.

- Conditional release is allowed under specified procedures and restrictions, including a provisional release date set 90 days after completing 20 years of confinement.
- Released individuals must remain at their residence except for specific approved activities and may be subject to electronic monitoring, moving to less restrictive release after two violation-free years.
- The commission must report on the program’s success by January 2, 2027, focusing on community integration and completion of sentences under house arrest.
- Program admissions will end on June 30, 2027, unless extended by the Legislature, but current participants can remain until sentence completion under program terms.

REEMPLOYMENT OF RETIRED LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS FAILS

SB 400 / HB 853 - *Reemployment of Retirees in the Florida Retirement System* by Sen. Burgess / Rep. McClure failed this session. SB 400 died in its final committee stop, while HB 853 died in its second committee of reference.

HB 853 authorizes an FRS retired law enforcement officer to be reemployed by an FRS employer in a position that qualifies for the Special Risk Class and receive compensation from that employer and retirement benefits provided the retiree is not reemployed within the 6 months following his or her date of retirement. The bill also reduces the amount of time a State and County Officers and Employees Retirement System retiree is prohibited from receiving both a salary from an FRS employer and retirement benefits from 12 months to 6 months immediately after his or her date of retirement and limits those employees eligible for reemployment by an FRS employer to those reemployed in a position that qualifies for the Special Risk Class.

SB 400 addresses the reemployment of Florida Retirement System (FRS) retirees regardless of their membership class, allowing them to be reemployed by an FRS-participating employer without a suspension of benefits period. This change applies after achieving a bona fide termination of service with all FRS-participating employers

PROSECUTION REFORM FAILS

HB 969 / SB 1080 – *Prosecuting Children as Adults* by Rep. Chambliss / Sen. Powell failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

This bill modifies the process and criteria for prosecuting children as adults in Florida, impacting several aspects of juvenile justice. This includes:

- Prohibits detaining children transferred to adult court in adult facilities prior to a hearing unless the child waives this right.
- Removes the requirement for state attorneys to request or justify not requesting the transfer of juveniles for adult prosecution.
- Deletes the state attorney’s discretion to direct file a juvenile for adult prosecution, revising criteria for discretionary direct file.
- The law mandates that a court must advise a child and their guardian of the right to a due process evidentiary hearing upon the child’s transfer to adult court by state attorney.
- Establishes a comprehensive list of factors for the judge to consider during the due process evidentiary hearing, including the child’s maturity, history, nature of the offense, and the likelihood of rehabilitation.
- Retains adult court jurisdiction unless there is evidence supporting the child’s return to juvenile court, requiring specific findings for court decisions.
- Enables immediate review and appeal under specified rules of court orders regarding the prosecution of children as adults.

MY SAFE FLORIDA HOME REVISIONS FAIL

HB 1143 / SB 1208– *My Safe Florida Home Program* by Rep. Cross / Sen. Martin failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

The bill expands the My Safe Florida Home Program to encompass flood mitigation alongside existing hurricane damage prevention measures. It mandates the Department of Financial Services to contract with entities for flood certification inspections, requiring qualifications mirroring those for wind certification. Eligibility for flood mitigation grants is adjusted based on various criteria, including location within a floodplain and active flood insurance coverage. Grant funds can be used for elevation, floodproofing, and other specified adjustments, with \$200 million allocated for grants and \$5 million for administrative costs for fiscal year 2024-2025. Additionally, the bill establishes a no waiting list policy for grants without explicit legislative authorization.

WATER & ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY-PASSED

ENVIRONMENTAL FUNDING PASSES USING GAMING COMPACT DOLLARS

SB 1638 – *Funding for Environmental Resources Management* by Sen. Brodeur (HB 1417 by Rep. Buchanan) passed this session. FAC supported this legislation through the inclusion in the 2024 FAC Legislative Action Plan to support a water work plan.

The bill directs the Department of Revenue to distribute 96% of the 2021 gaming compact revenues to land conservation and water infrastructure projects. The bill directs funding towards the acquisition and management of conservation lands and the identification and prioritization of critical clean water infrastructure investments be deposited in the Indian Gaming Revenue Trust Fund within the Department of Financial Services. The allocations are based on the lesser of a fixed funding level or a funding formula steering funding to the Florida Wildlife Corridor, land management activities, Resilient Florida, and other vital water quality projects and research.
Effective date: Upon becoming a law.

STORMWATER RULE RATIFICATION PASSES

SB 7040 – *Stormwater Rule Ratification* by Sen. Rodriguez (HB 7053 Rep. Altman) passed this session.

This bill ratifies the Department of Environmental Protection’s proposed stormwater rule. The 2020 Clean Waterways Act directed DEP and the water management districts to initiate rulemaking regarding stormwater infrastructure and the associated environmental resource permitting process. Proposed rules with an aggregate 5-year economic impact estimate over \$1 million trigger the statutory requirement for legislative ratification—the 5-year impact of this rule is estimated to be over \$1 billion.
Effective date: Upon becoming a law.

PUBLIC BATHING AND BEACH WATER SAMPLING/NOTIFICATION LEGISLATION PASSES

HB 165 – *Sampling of Beach Waters and Public Bathing Spaces* by Rep. Cossett-Seidman (SB 338 Sen. Berman) passed this session.

The bill directs the Department of Health (DOH) to adopt rules relating to public bathing waters and bacteriological sampling. Rules must address the issuance of water quality health advisories and the closure of affected public bathing waters. It prescribes a notice process for counties to notify DOH following a water quality incident in

county-owned waters and requires the county to post health advisory signage in any county-owned bathing spaces following a water quality incident. The bill originally transferred authority over bacteria sampling of public bathing waters from the Department of Health (DOH) to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).
Effective date: July 1, 2024

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PACKAGE PASSES

HB 1557 – *Department of Environmental Protection* by Rep. Chaney (SB 1386 by Sen. Calatayud) passed this session.

The bill represents the 2024 Department of Environmental Protection agency package and provides the following:

- Designates the Kristin Jacobs Coral Reef Ecosystem Conservation Area as an aquatic preserve.
- Requires each WMD, in coordination with DEP, to develop rules by December 31, 2025, that promote the reuse of reclaimed water.
- Expands the types of projects undertaken by municipalities and counties that may be awarded funding by the Resilient Florida Grant Program and expands the information that must be submitted to DEP when vulnerability assessments are funded.
- Requires DEP to coordinate with the Chief Resilience Officer as well as the Florida Flood Hub for Applied Research and Innovation (Florida Flood Hub) in developing and maintaining the sea level rise data set and in updating the comprehensive statewide flood vulnerability and sea level rise data set and requires that the assessment be updated at least every 5 years.
- Requires the Chief Science Officer to coordinate with the Chief Resilience Officer and the Florida Flood Hub when developing statewide sea level rise projections.
- Clarifies that the Legislature intends that the transfer of the regulation of the Onsite Sewage Program from the Department of Health (DOH) to DEP be completed in a phased approach, and requires that before the phased transfer, DEP shall coordinate with DOH to identify equipment and vehicles that were previously used to carry out the program in each county and that are no longer needed for such purpose and further requires DOH to transfer the agreed-upon equipment and vehicles to DEP to the extent that each county agrees to relinquish ownership of such equipment and vehicles to DOH.

- Requires DEP to adopt rules establishing and implementing a program of general permits for certain onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems (OSTDSs).
- Requires DEP to establish an enhanced nutrient-reducing OSTDS approval program that will expeditiously evaluate and approve such systems for use in this state.
- Requires that the annual report submitted by DEP regarding the Water Quality Improvement Grant Program must also include a status report on each project funded since 2021.
- Requires DEP to create a water quality dashboard.

Effective date: July 1, 2024

WATER QUALITY ENHANCEMENT CREDIT PROGRAM EXPANSION PASSES

SB 1532 – *Mitigation* by Sen. Brodeur (HB 1073 by Rep. Truenow) passed this session.

The bill expands the water quality enhancement credit program to allow private entities to purchase credits. Currently, only governmental entities may purchase water quality enhancement credits under the program. Specifically, the bill provides that water quality enhancement credits may be sold to governmental entities seeking to meet an assigned basin management action plan allocation or reasonable assurance plan or to private or governmental applicants for the purpose of achieving net improvement or meeting environmental resource permit performance standards.
Effective date: July 1, 2024

FLORIDA RED TIDE MITIGATION AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE PASSES

HB 1565 – *Florida Red Tide Mitigation and Technology Development Initiative* by Rep. Grant (SB 1360 by Sen. Gruters) passed this session.

The Florida Red Tide Mitigation and Technology Development Initiative is currently performing laboratory testing of algal bloom prevention and mitigation technologies. This bill directs the initiative to progress into the field trial deployment phase for technologies with successful laboratory tests. Successfully tested technologies are made eligible for expedited regulatory review and use in state waters.
Effective date: July 1, 2024

WATER WELL CONTRACTOR LEGISLATION PASSES

SB 1136 – *Regulations of Water Resources* by Sen. Trumbull (HB 1163 Rep. McClain) passed this session.

The bill revises the criteria for licensing as a water well contractor to require a certain threshold of

permitted contracting experience within the state of Florida. It also prohibits a person or business entity from advertising well contracting services with a licensed water well contractor.
Effective date: July 1, 2024

SHORE PROTECTION MEMORIAL SUPPORTED, STALLS ON FLOOR

HB 1411 – *Shore Protection* by Rep. Cross and Rep. Berfield failed this session. The bill passed both its committees of reference but was not heard on the House floor. FAC supported the measure as part of its 2024 **Legislative Action Plan**.

Under current U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) policy, beach renourishment projects require perpetual easements from all private landowners within the project area. This has placed a number of projects in the state in an indefinite deadlock.

This bill serves as a memorial urging Congress to direct USACE to amend its current easement policy for shore protection projects and allow critical shore protection projects in Florida to proceed without delay.

SALTWATER INTRUSION VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENTS FAILS WITH COASTAL BUILDING PREEMPTION

SB 298 / HB 1079 – *Saltwater Intrusion Vulnerability Assessment* by Sen. Polsky/Rep. McFarland failed this session. SB 298 passed the Senate but died in House messages; meanwhile, HB 1079 died in its second committee stop.

HB 1079 included language concerning coastal construction control lines. Current law allows a local government's building/zoning codes to deviate from the Department of Environmental Protection's construction control line regulations, conditional on Department approval. This would prohibit counties from such deviation going forward, though codes in place before December 1, 2023, are grandfathered.

Both bills authorize the Department of Environmental Protection to award grants to coastal counties for saltwater vulnerability assessments under the Resilient Florida grant program. Grants under this section are to include a 50% state cost-share. Cost-sharing requirements are waived for coastal counties with a population under 50,000.

Such assessments are expected to analyze the impact of saltwater intrusion on the county's water supply, as well as the county's preparedness for a saltwater intrusion event. Saltwater intrusion represents a movement of coastal saltwater into inland freshwater aquifers and is often associated with sea level rise.

PFAS REGULATION FAILS

HB 1665 / SB 1692 - *Preventing Contaminants from Discharging into Wastewater Facilities and Waters of the State* by Rep. Gossett-Seidman / Sen. Brodeur failed this session. HB 1165 was never heard, while its Senate companion, SB 1692, died in its final committee stop.

This law would create the Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) and 1,4-Dioxane Pretreatment Initiative within the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), to coordinate wastewater facility industrial pretreatment programs. Wastewater facilities with industrial pretreatment programs are directed to do the following:

- Complete an inventory of industrial users to identify potential sources of PFAS contamination and 1,4 dioxane by July 1, 2025
- Provide notice by March 1, 2025, to the identified industrial users that they may become subject to PFAS and 1,4 dioxane permitting standards
- Issue a permit, order, or similar measure to enforce applicable pretreatment standards and requirements for 1,4-dioxane and certain types of PFAS, including specific discharge limits; and
- Between July 1, 2026, and January 1, 2027, complete a grab sampling at each identified industrial user's facility and other at-risk sites that are probably sources of 1,4-dioxane and certain types of PFAS and implement appropriate corrective action before July 1, 2027, to reduce or eliminate these contaminants.

The bill also provides interim discharge limits and surface water quality standards for 1,4-dioxane and certain PFAS compounds for industrial users until new specific limits are adopted.

STATEWIDE RECYCLING GOALS UPDATE FAILS

SB 36 / HB 455 – *Comprehensive Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan* by Sen. Stewart / Rep. Casello failed this session. HB 455 passed the House before dying in Senate Messages; meanwhile, SB 36 died in its second committee. FAC supported this legislation through the inclusion in the 2024 FAC Legislative Action Plan.

This legislation directs the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to develop a comprehensive statewide recycling and waste-reduction plan by July 1, 2025. To develop the plan, DEP is to convene a technical assistance group to assess the conclusions and recommendations of the previous statewide recycling plan, which sunset in 2020. Among the minimum provisions of the plan are:

- A statewide recycling goal based on sustainable materials managements and waste diversion.
- A 3-year plan addressing recycling education and outreach, local recycling assistance, and market expansion strategies for recyclable materials
- Reporting requirements to the legislature

DREDGING AND BEACH RESTORATION PROJECTS FAILS

HB 163 / SB 608 – *Dredging and Beach Restoration Projects* by Rep. Gossett-Seidman/ Sen. Rodriguez failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

This bill would require an environmental impact analysis conducted by an independent contractor as a condition of any dredging or beach restoration project permit. The independent contractor performing the analysis must pass a conflict check with the local government's project contractor—specifically, they may not have worked together on a project within the past year, or for one year following conduction of the analysis.

Additionally, the local government seeking a permit must notify adjacent local governments of its intent to perform an environmental impact study, with a penalty of 10% of project costs for violations of this section. Dredging projects in ports maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are exempt from this requirement.

EVERGLADES PROTECTION AREA LAND USE BILL FAILS

HB 723 / SB 1364 - *Everglades Protection Area* by Rep. Busatta-Cabrera / Sen. Calatayud both failed this session. HB 723 died in its second committee stop whereas SB 1364 passed the Senate and died in House messages.

The bill requires that any comprehensive plan or plan amendment applying to land within 2 miles of the Everglades Protection Area be reviewed pursuant to the State Coordinated Review Process. This includes a Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) determination of adverse impacts; in the event of adverse impacts, DEP is directed to coordinate with the Department of Commerce and the relevant local government to identify planning strategies to mitigate or eliminate the potential adverse impacts. The local government is then required to either adopt the mitigation strategy or not adopt that component of the comprehensive plan or amendment.

BROAD ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT LEGISLATION FAILS

SB 738 /HB 789 - *Environmental Management* by Sen. Burgess / Rep. Overdorf failed this session. SB 738 passed the Senate but died in House messages; meanwhile, its House companion died on the House floor.

Similar to language in SB 406, the bill prescribes a 4:1 side slope ratio for any surface water management systems. Existing rules by DEP, water management districts, or locally delegated programs, are superseded by this bill and may be repealed without further rulemaking.

In addition, the bill limits the cause of action relating to unauthorized pollution to damages to real or personal property.

SIDE SLOPE PERMITTING RULES FAILS

SB 406 - *Statewide Environmental Resource Permitting Rules* by Sen. Rodriguez failed this session. The bill passed its first committee but died in Senate Fiscal Policy.

This bill prescribes a 4:1 side slope ratio for any surface water management systems. Existing rules by the Department of Environmental Protection, water management districts, or local delegates, are superseded by this bill and may be repealed without further rulemaking.

Similar side slope language can be found in SB 738 / HB 789.

MANGROVE RESTORATION RULEMAKING FAILS

SB 32 / HB 1581 – *Mangrove Replanting and Restoration* by Sen. Garcia / Rep. Mooney failed this session. HB 1581 passed the House but died in Senate Messages; meanwhile, SB 32 died in its final committee stop.

This bill requires the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to adopt rules for mangrove replanting and restoration. To this end, DEP is also directed to conduct a statewide study, assessing the value of mangrove forests and other nature-based solutions to coastal flooding.

Rulemaking is required to include or address the following components:

- Erosion, particularly in areas of critical state concern
- Barrier islands
- Everglades and Biscayne Bay revitalization
- Vulnerable properties
- Intracoastal navigation and markers
- Permitting incentives, particularly for living shorelines/nature-based features
- Local partnership opportunities through the Resilient Florida grant program

MITIGATION CREDIT GUIDELINES FAILS

SB 1646 – *Mitigation Credits* by Sen. DiCeglie failed this session. The bill was not heard in any of its committees of reference.

- The bill makes the following revisions regarding mitigation credits:
- Defines “proximity factor” as a measurement for determining wetland mitigation credit requirements based on a project’s site location relative to the wetland mitigation bank.
 - Requires the Department of Environmental Protection and water management districts to authorize the use of mitigation credits from surrounding basins if credits within the project area basin are unavailable.
 - Specifies criteria for determining the unavailability of mitigation credits within a basin, including a requirement for a signed letter from the mitigation bank.
 - Mandates that the department and water management districts evaluate environmental impact losses, ecological success likelihood, and mitigation site significance when awarding mitigation credits.
 - Implements a proximity factor to calculate additional credits for projects using mitigation credits from outside the project area basin, with specific ratios based on the project’s location.
 - Prescribes that rules will be adopted by the department to implement these provisions.

MITIGATION AREAS AND ASSESSMENTS FAILS; BILL WITHDRAWN
SB 836 – *Mitigation Areas and Assessment* by Sen. Simon failed this session. The bill was withdrawn prior to introduction.

Current law requires the Department of Environmental Protection and the water management districts, in their capacity as the state’s administrators of environmental resource permitting programs, to adopt by rule a uniform method for mitigation assessments of wetlands and surface waters. The uniform method must consider the degree of financial risk involved in mitigation activities. Under the bill, a method may not consider the risk in the event that a permittee assumes financial responsibility in one of the following forms:

- Cash or cash equivalent in escrow
- Irrevocable letter of credit
- Performance bond
- Trust fund agreement
- Guarantee bond
- Insurance certificate

SURFACE WATER PREEMPTION FAILS
HB 863 / SB 986 - *Management and Storage of Surface Waters* by Rep. Killebrew/ Sen. Burton failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

Current law preempts the regulation of environmental restoration and water quality improvement activities on lands classified as agricultural, provided that the

Department of Environmental Protection or the jurisdictional water management district has determined the activities to have an insignificant impact on the state’s water resources. This bill expands the exempted activities to include environmental “enhancement or creation.” This expressly includes activities that alter the topography of the land, divert or impede surface water flow, or impact wetlands, provided there is a net increase in wetland resource functions. However, the exemption does NOT provide for mitigation banking activities.

RESILIENCE DISTRICT PROGRAM FAILS
SB 1330 – *Resilience Districts* by Sen. Calatayud failed this session. The bill was never heard in committee.

The bill establishes the statutory framework for “resilience districts” to address infrastructure and resilience problems through citizen-initiated financing. Districts must be created through petition by property taxpayers within the proposed district boundaries. Petitions must include consent from 70% of the landowners, as well as the proposed district name, purpose, initial board members, and a budget with a project timeline. Resilience districts are authorized to undertake projects such as flooding and sea level rise mitigation, infrastructure improvements, septic to sewer conversions, and redevelopment of non-resilient housing.

Local governments may serve as the project manager of a resilience district and are authorized to collect up to a 5% fee of the total project cost for administration.

HEARTLAND HEADWATERS LATF BILL FAILS
HB 451 / SB 452 – *Land Acquisition Trust Fund* by Rep. Bell / Sen. Burton failed this session. HB 451 was never heard, while the Senate companion died in its second committee stop.

The bill provides an annual appropriation of \$20 million from the state’s Land Acquisition Trust Fund to fund implementation of 2017’s Heartland Headwaters Protection and Sustainability Act. The 2017 Act directed the Polk Regional Water Cooperative to submit an annual report identifying water resource projects in its jurisdiction as priorities for state funding. The Legislature declared the waters of this region to be of strategic importance, given their relative vulnerability and future water demands of the region. The appropriation in HB 451/ SB 452 is to be used for financial assistance for projects identified within the annual report.

ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT FAILS
SB 480 / HB 683 – *Energy Infrastructure Investment* by Sen. DiCeglie/Rep. Yeager failed this session. SB 480 passed the Senate but ultimately stalled

in House Messages. The House bill passed its first committee, but later stalled in House Commerce.

The bill authorizes the Florida Public Service Commission (PSC) to establish an experimental mechanism to facilitate energy infrastructure investment in renewable natural gas (RNG).

PREEMPTION OF RECYCLABLE AND POLYSTYRENE MATERIALS REPEAL FAILS
SB 498 – *Preemption of Recyclable and Polystyrene Materials* by Sen. Stewart failed this session. The bill was never heard.

This bill repeals the current preemption on the regulation of certain recyclable materials. Repeals the current preemption on the regulation of polystyrene products.

EXCISE TAX ON WATER EXTRACTED FOR COMMERCIAL OR INDUSTRIAL USE FAILS
SB 510 - *Excise Tax on Water Extracted for Commercial or Industrial Use* by Sen. Stewart fails this session. SB 510 was never heard in committee.

This legislation creates a new part of Ch. 211, F.S. addressing “water extracted for commercial or industrial use,” and amends the title of the chapter to reflect this expansion.

FLORIDA KEYS LATF BILL FAILS
SB 566 - *Land Acquisition Trust Fund* by Sen. Rodriguez failed this session. This bill died in its second committee stop.

The bill provides an annual appropriation of \$20 million from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund to implement the Florida Keys Stewardship Act. Funds may be used by the Department of Environmental Protection for the following purposes:

- Projects that promote the protection of the Florida Bay, Florida Keys, or nearby marine ecosystems
- To acquire land within the Florida Keys area of critical state concern

REGULATION OF SINGLE-USE PLASTIC PRODUCTS FAILS
SB 698 - *Regulation of Single-use Plastic Products* by Sen. Rodriguez failed this session. This bill was never heard in committee.

This legislation would direct the Department of Environmental Protection to conduct and submit reports every five years on use trends and developments of retail shopping bags. Also authorizes coastal municipalities under 500,000 persons to conduct a pilot program regulating single-use plastics, conditional on pertinent data

collection and submission of a report by 2027. The program may not impose new taxes or fees in regulating single-use plastics.

STATE RENEWABLE ENERGY GOALS FAILS
SB 144 / HB 193 – *State Renewable Energy Goals* by Sen. Berman / Rep. Eskamani failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

The bill prohibits the drilling, exploration for, or production of petroleum products on state lands and waters and prohibits the permitting of associated structures. Removes landfill gas from the statutory definition of “biomass.” It removes waste heat from the statutory definition of “renewable energy,” and replaces it with “tidal energy.” It establishes a statewide goal for 100% of the state’s electricity to be renewable energy by 2050; similarly, sets a goal of net-zero statewide carbon emissions by 2051. The bill directs the Office of Energy within the Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services to develop a plan for achieving these goals, including interim targets every ten years.

VOLUNTARY FREEBOARD REQUIREMENTS BILL FAILS
HB 749 / SB 1766 - *Flood Damage Prevention* by Rep. Basabe Sen. Rodriguez failed this session. HB 749 was never heard in committee, while the Senate companion died in its final committee stop.

This bill establishes the maximum freeboard requirements for new construction—local governments are in turn preempted from establishing more stringent freeboard requirements. The bill also directs the Florida Building Commission to initiate rulemaking for minimum freeboard requirements.

WATERWAY MARKER GUIDELINES FAIL
SB 784 - *Installation of Waterway Markers* by Sen. Gruters failed this session. The bill was never heard in committee.

This bill would require all waterway markers pursuant to this section to be affixed to a plastic breakaway structure or floating buoy. This expressly preempts a state or local government entity from affixing a waterway marker to a steel beam or wood piling. These preempted structures must be replaced with an eligible structure by January 1, 2025. Additionally requires that any application for marking state waters include information regarding the structure or buoy to which the marker will be affixed.

INDIAN RIVER LAGOON PROTECTION PROGRAM FAILS
HB 1005 / SB 1354 - *Indian River Lagoon Protection Program* by Rep. Roth / Sen. Wright failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

The bill revises the following distribution rates of documentary stamp revenues:

- The Resilient Florida Trust Fund distributions are reduced from 5.4175% to 2.875%
- The Water Protection and Sustainability Program Trust Fund distributions are increased from 5.4175% to 7.959%

Of the Water Protection and Sustainability Program distributions, the greater of 40% or \$60 million shall be earmarked for the Indian River Lagoon Protection Program. Funds are to be used for conversion of eligible septic tanks to advanced wastewater treatment systems. Funds will be disbursed to local governments but may not exceed 50% of total project costs—the remaining costs must presumably be borne by the local government.

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT CONSOLIDATION FAILS
HB 1075 / SB 1772 - *Soil and Water Conservation Districts* by Rep. Truenow / Sen. Collins failed this session. HB 1075 died in its second committee stop, while its Senate companion, SB 1772, was never heard.

This legislation would dissolve 9 soil and water conservation districts and transfer their assets and liabilities to the counties in which they operate. Dissolves 49 other soil and water conservation districts and transfers their assets and liabilities to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. In their stead, the state will be divided into 7 regional soil and water conservation districts. The bill also prescribes that the supervisors of a soil and water conservation district be appointed by the Commissioner of Agriculture rather than elected.

ADVANCED WASTEWATER REQUIREMENTS FAILS
HB 1153 / SB 1304 – *Advanced Wastewater Treatment* by Rep. Cross, Rep. Mooney / Sen. Berman failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

This bill would direct the Department of Environmental Protection to submit a report regarding treatment data for any advanced wastewater treatment facility with a permitted capacity of greater than 1 million gallons per day.

CARBON SEQUESTRATION MEASURE FAILS
HB 1187 / SB 1258 - *Carbon Sequestration* by Rep. Cross / Sen. Rodriquez failed this session. Both bills died in their second committee stops, respectively.

This law would create the Carbon Sequestration Task Force adjunct to the Department of Environmental Protection, to provide recommendations for the development of a statewide carbon sequestration

program. The duties of the task force are to include the following:

- Identify and inventory terrestrial and aquatic environments suitable for carbon sequestration.
- Consider possible carbon sequestration opportunities in the state's land and marine resource use policies.
- Establish baseline carbon levels.
- Recommend long- and short-term benchmarks for carbon sequestration activities.
- Identify existing carbon markets.
- Identify funding mechanisms to encourage carbon sequestration practices in the state.

The bill also appropriates \$350,000 for FY2024-25, for administrative costs of the task force.

CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND DRINKING WATER STANDARDS FAILS
HB 1531 / SB 1630 - *Climate Resilience and Drinking Water Standards* by Rep. Joseph / Sen. Torres failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

This law would direct the Department of Environmental Protection to create the Blue Communities program, to provide technical/financial assistance grants and loans to eligible local governments for reduction of nutrient pollution and ocean acidification. Eligible “Blue Communities” must meet the following criteria:

- File an application.
- Adopt no less than 5 of the water initiatives listed in this section.
- Develop a plan to implement the chosen initiatives, and outline benchmarks for each initiative.
- Submit a report including expenditures and results of each initiative

Establishes the Ocean State Climate Adaptation and Resilience (OSCAR) Grant Fund within DEP. Grant funds are to be used for planning, design, and implementation of adaptation and resilience projects recommended by an advisory council within DEP. DEP and the advisory council are directed to establish a process for solicitation, evaluation, and award of grant funds. The House bill also directs DEP or a county health department designer to monitor the levels of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in community water systems using the latest national primary drinking water regulations. By September 1, 2024, DEP is directed to adopt rules concerning this subsection, including an enforceable maximum contaminant level for PFAS compounds.

STATEWIDE DRINKING WATER STANDARDS LEGISLATION FAILS
HB 1533 / SB 1546 – *Statewide Drinking Water Standards* by Rep. Plakon and Sen. Stewart failed this session. The Senate bill only passed its first committee, Environment and Natural Resources, while the House companion was never heard this session.

SB 1546 requires the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to adopt rules that establish a statewide drinking water maximum contaminant level for 1,4-dioxane of less than or equal to 0.35 micrograms per liter. Such rules must require a public water system to test all of its groundwater wells for 1,4-dioxane by January 1, 2025.

If such testing detects 1,4-dioxane at levels greater than 0.35 micrograms per liter, the public water system must:

- Develop and submit to DEP for approval a mitigation plan to bring any such concentration to an amount at or below such level, and comply with the new standards within 5 years after such rules are adopted.
- Retest for 1,4-dioxane at a frequency determined by DEP; and
- Make the mitigation plan and the results of any testing publicly available.

The bill also requires DEP to provide financial assistance to a public water system for the purpose of updating any infrastructure necessary to meet the standards for 1,4-dioxane.

MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE-TO-ENERGY BILL FAILS
SB 1606 / HB 1631 – *Municipal Solid Waste-to-Energy Program* by Sen. Torres/Rep. Campbell failed this session. Neither bill was heard in committee.

The bill transfers administration of the municipal solid waste-to-energy program from the Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services to the Department of Environmental Protection. Before it is eligible to receive grant funding under this section, a municipal solid waste-to-energy program must meet minimum air quality standards, as well as conduct and pass an environmental justice evaluation regarding the impacts to low-income and historically marginalized surrounding communities.

Wildlife Corridor Evaluation Measure Fails
SB 1620 – *Surplus Lands* by Sen. Collins failed this session. The bill was never heard in committee.

The bill directs the Acquisition and Restoration Council to determine if local governmental entity surplus lands are within a Florida Wildlife Corridor opportunity area, prohibiting the attachment of future development rights to these lands.

CYBERSECURITY LIABILITY PROTECTION PASSES

HB 473 - *Cybersecurity Incident Liability* by Rep. Giallombardo (SB 658 by Sen. DiCeglie) passed this session.

The bill provides that a county may not be held liable for a cybersecurity or ransomware incident, provided that the county has “substantially complied” with the statutory guidelines and best practices on the matter.

The bill does not create a cause of action, and expressly clarifies that failure to comply with these guidelines does not, in itself, constitute negligence on the part of the county. However, in any legal action connected to a cybersecurity incident, the county has the burden of proof to establish “substantial compliance.”
Effective date: upon becoming a law.

POLE ATTACHMENT PROMOTION RATES EXTENDED

HB 1147 – *Broadband* by Rep. Tomkow (SB 1218 by Sen. Burgess) passed this session.

The legislature previously implemented a promotional rate for the attachment of broadband facilities to poles owned by municipal electric utilities. The promotion requires municipal electrical utilities to offer broadband Internet service providers a discounted rate of \$1 per attachment per year for any new pole attachment necessary to make broadband service available to an unserved or underserved consumer within the service territory. The bill extends the sunset date of the promotional rate from July 1, 2024, to December 31, 2028.
Effective date: June 30, 2024

CYBERSECURITY MEASURE PASSES

HB 1555 - *Cybersecurity* by Rep. Giallombardo (SB 1662 by Sen. Collins) passed this session.

The bill clarifies the leadership structure of the Florida Center for Cybersecurity, or “Cyber Florida,” assigning authority to the President of the University of South Florida or their designate. The bill also revises the responsibilities and mission of Cyber Florida to include the following:

- A primary emphasis on education, research, and applied science in cybersecurity and related fields
- A secondary emphasis on community engagement and cybersecurity awareness
- Conduct, fund, and facilitate research and applied science to create new cyber technologies for both civilian and military applications.

The bill also authorizes Cyber Florida, at their express discretion, to consult on or assist any state agency or department with any state-funded cybersecurity initiatives. This includes training, professional development, education, and projects to enhance state cybersecurity infrastructure, including school districts and the judicial sector.
Effective date: July 1, 2024

STATE GOVERNMENT TECHNOLOGY MODERNIZATION COUNCIL ESTABLISHED

SB 1680 - *Advanced Technology* by Sen. Bradley (HB 1459 by Rep. McFarland) passed this session.

The bill establishes the Government Technology Modernization Council, an advisory council within the Department of Management Services, to generally advise the Legislature on new technologies, artificial intelligence, and provide guidance on necessary legislative reforms and the creation of a state code of ethics for artificial intelligence systems in state government. The general purpose of the advisory council is to study and monitor the development and deployment of new technologies and provide reports on recommendations for the procurement and regulation of such systems to the Governor and the Legislature. Accordingly, the bill requires council members to meet at least quarterly and to perform several duties, including the preparation and submittal of an annual report to the Governor and Legislature addressing the modernization of government technology. The bill also provides for the composition of the advisory council and regulates other aspects of service on the council.
Effective Date: July 1, 2024

ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY REFORM FAILS

HB 981 / SB 1362 – *Aviation* by Rep. Bankson / Sen. Harrell failed this session. HB 981 passed the House and was taken up in the Senate. However, the House refused to concur with the Senate floor amendment and the bill died in returning messages. SB 1362 passed its respective committees before being substituted for the House version.

The bills expand and revises Florida’s aviation laws to include definitions and regulations for advanced air mobility, emphasizing the development of vertiports and addressing airport zoning and land use. Ultimately, the bills differed on local zoning requirements and exclusivity in vertiport owners or operators within the jurisdiction of the subdivision. The bill also contains the following provisions:

- Revises the definition of aircraft to include a wide variety of types, including drones and tiltrotors, and clarifies the definition of an airport to encompass various aviation facilities.
- Requires owners or lessees of proposed vertiports to comply with site approval and licensing or registration requirements, including a physical inspection by the Department of Transportation.
- Mandates the Department of Transportation to support the integration of advanced air mobility into the state’s aviation system through resource provision, expert designation, and coordination with local jurisdictions and hub airports.
- Directs the Department to lead a statewide education campaign on the benefits of advanced air mobility and to provide a report to the Governor and Legislature with industry status, recommendations for regulatory changes, and infrastructure needs.
- Obligates certain municipally owned airports seeking public-funded vertiport operators to select through a competitive bidding process.
- Updates requirements for the adoption of airport land use compatibility zoning regulations to address issues such as landfill restrictions, bird management, noise studies, and the mitigation of incompatible land uses.

UNDERGROUND FACILITY PROJECT REQUIREMENTS FAILS

SB 708 / HB 825 - *Underground Facilities* by Sen. Burton / Rep. Koster failed this session. SB 708 died in its final committee stop, while HB 825 died on the House floor.

The bill revises regulations on excavations and demolitions regarding underground facilities. The bill also contains the following provisions:

- Extends the notification period for excavators from two to three business days before starting work, except for underwater projects, which require a ten-day notice.
- Requires member operators to mark the route of underground facilities within three business days after receiving a notification.
- Mandates member operators to communicate with the excavator if unable to meet marking deadlines to negotiate a new schedule.
- Introduces enhanced civil penalties for violations regarding underground facilities transporting hazardous materials.
- Reenacts several sections relating to definitions, exemptions, and low-impact marking practices for consistency with the amendments made.

ALTERNATIVE FUEL FLEET VEHICLE REBATES FAILS

SB 650 / HB 0803 - *Alternative Fuel Fleet Vehicle Rebates* by Sen. Rodriguez / Rep. Casello failed this session. SB 650 died in its final committee stop, while HB 803 was never heard this session.

This legislation renames the natural gas fuel fleet vehicle rebate program to the alternative fuel fleet vehicle rebate program and expands its scope. The bill also contains the following provisions:

- Expands rebate eligibility from only natural gas-fueled fleet vehicles to those powered by various alternative fuels, including electric and hybrid sources.
- Requires that these fleet vehicles comply with applicable U.S. Environmental Protection Agency emission standards.
- Mandates the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to adopt necessary rules for the program by December 31, 2024.
- Caps rebates at 50% of eligible costs or a maximum of \$25,000 per vehicle and \$250,000 per fiscal year for each applicant, with a partial reservation of funds for governmental applicants.
- States that the department must provide an annual assessment of the rebate program’s usage to the Governor and the Legislature by October 1, 2026, and annually thereafter.
- Removes obsolete language and provisions from previous iterations of the program, streamlining the application and rebate process.

BIDIRECTIONAL CHARGING LEGISLATION FAILS

SB 1212 - *Bidirectional Charging* by Electric Vehicles by Sen. Polsky failed this session. The bill was not heard in committee.

The bill mandates the establishment of the Workgroup on Bidirectional Charging by Electric Vehicles to explore the use of electric vehicles for emergency power supply and grid support. The bill also contains the following provisions:

- Recognizes the vulnerability of the state’s electrical grid to severe weather and emphasizes the importance of alternative electricity sources during emergencies.
- Defines key terms related to bidirectional charging and electric vehicles.
- Instructs the Office of Energy, along with other relevant departments, to create a workgroup by October 1, 2024, to examine the feasibility of using electric vehicles as mobile power sources.
- Specifies that the workgroup’s composition includes government officials, consumer advocates, and representatives from the utility and automotive industries, without compensation for their participation.
- Requires the workgroup to submit a detailed report by January 1, 2026, outlining the benefits, costs, technical needs, and required energy sector resources for implementing bidirectional charging practices.
- Stipulates the section’s expiration the day after the report submission deadline, January 2, 2026.

AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES BILL FAILS
SB 1580 - *Autonomous Vehicles* by Sen. Torres failed this session. The bill was not heard in any of its committee references.

This bill modifies regulations for autonomous vehicles, focusing on operator presence and reporting requirements. The bill also contains the following provisions:

- Exempts vehicles under 10,001 pounds from needing a licensed operator present.
- Requires a licensed human operator in autonomous vehicles over 10,001 pounds for public road operation.
- Mandates annual reporting by manufacturers on disengagements of the automated driving system for vehicles over 10,001 pounds.
- Obliges manufacturers to report any collisions involving their autonomous vehicles within 10 days.
- Directs the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles to evaluate the performance of autonomous vehicle technology, considering public safety and employment impacts, with a report due by January 1, 2030, or 5 years after the commencement of the evaluation.

SFY 2024-25 GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT

On March 8th, 2024, the Florida House of Representatives and the Florida Senate agreed to the budget for the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2024-2025. The budget is the culmination of many rounds of budget negotiations throughout the legislative session. The Florida Legislature is constitutionally required to pass a state budget, officially titled the General Appropriations Act, or HB 5001, during the annual regular session. The Legislature completed the budget on time, passing HB 5001 and adjourning Sine Dine at 2:25 P.M.

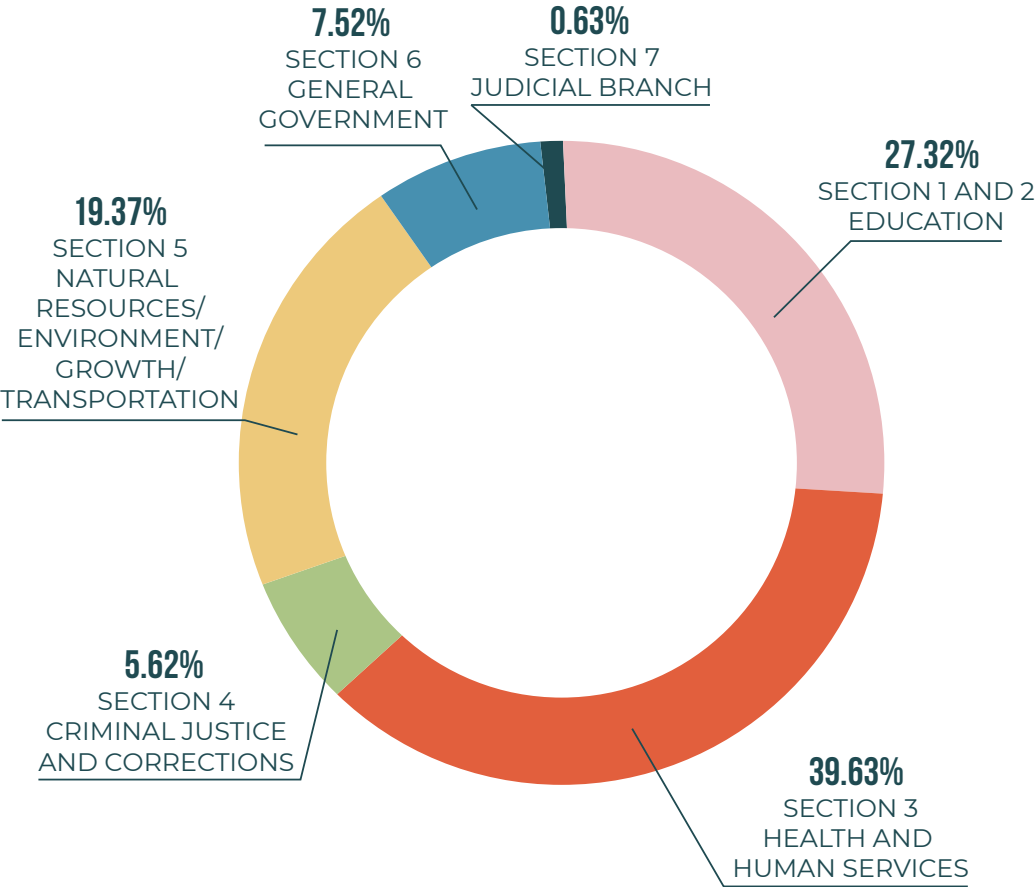
The House and Senate’s budget for State Fiscal Year 2024-25 totals approximately \$117.5 billion, and represents a 0.37% increase from the previous SFY 2023 General Appropriations Act. However, the budget is subject to line-item vetoes by the governor. The chart below summarizes a comparison of this year’s SFY 2024-25 budget and the budget approved from SFY 2023-24.

BUDGET COMPARISON BY SECTION	SFY 2023-24 GAA	SFY 2024-25 GAA	\$ DIFFERENCE SFY 23-24 VS. SFY 24-25	% DIFFERENCE SFY 23-24 VS. SFY 24-25	% OF TOTAL
SECTION 1. EDUCATION	\$ 3,156,143,737	\$ 2,502,800,000	\$(653,343,737)	-20.70%	2.13%
SECTION 2. EDUCATION	\$ 27,148,331,524	\$29,593,327,172	\$2,444,995,648	9.01%	25.19%
SECTION 3. HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES	\$47,260,202,276	\$46,546,944,340	\$(713,257,936)	-1.51%	39.63%
SECTION 4. CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND CORRECTIONS	\$6,007,616,760	\$6,597,123,676	\$589,506,916	9.81%	5.62%
SECTION 5. NATURAL RESOURCES/ENVIRONMENT/ GROWTH/TRANSPORTATION	\$22,669,753,979	\$22,649,588,381	\$(20,165,598)	-0.09%	19.28%
SECTION 6. GENERAL GOVERNMENT	\$ 10,071,975,277	\$8,832,151,288	\$(1,239,823,989)	-12.31%	7.52%
SECTION 7. JUDICIAL BRANCH	\$ 712,723,994	\$741,339,517	\$ 28,615,523	4.01%	0.63%
TOTAL BUDGET	\$117,026,747,547	\$117,463,274,374	\$ 436,526,827	0.37%	100%

Health and Human Services received the largest portion of funding for the budget in SFY 2024-25, totaling approximately \$46.5 billion. This represents a 1.51% decrease in appropriation from the current year. All educational programs and services combined received the second-largest amount of funding, totaling approximately \$32.09 billion. This represents a increase of approximately 5.6% from the current fiscal year.

Finally, Natural Resources, Environmental Issues, Growth Management and Transportation Expenditures represent the third largest portion of the budget in SFY 2024-25 with funding equaling approximately \$22.6 billion.

SFY 2024-25 GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT
% OF TOTAL BUDGET



General Revenue expenditures for the SFY 2024-25 budget equal approximately \$49.4 billion, while trust fund expenditures total approximately \$68.07 billion. The chart below compares expenditures between the SFY 2024-2025 budget and the previous year’s budget for SFY 2023-2024 by fund type.

BUDGET COMPARISON BY FUND TYPE	SFY 2023-24 GAA	SFY 2024-25 GAA	\$ DIFFERENCE SFY 23-24 VS. SFY 24-25	% DIFFERENCE SFY 23-24 VS. SFY 24-25
GENERAL REVENUE	\$46,504,607,631	\$49,386,520,604	\$2,881,912,973	6.20%
TRUST FUNDS	\$70,522,139,916	\$68,076,753,770	\$(2,445,386,146)	-3.47%
ALL FUNDS	\$117,026,747,547	\$117,463,274,374	\$ 436,526,827	0.37%

COUNTY FUNDING HIGHLIGHTS

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Shared County/State Juvenile Detention: The SFY 2024-25 budget estimates the counties’ portion of total Shared County/State Juvenile Detention to be \$73,621,645. This represents an estimated increase of \$3,242,579 from the current year’s budget, or approximately 4.6%.

Community Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services: Funded at approximately \$1.327 billion in the budget.

911 and E911 Grants: The SFY 2024-25 budget distributes \$121.8 million for local 911 telephone systems and \$21.6 million for local non-wireless E911 projects.

Community Action Treatment (CAT) Teams: The SFY 2024-25 budget allocates \$41.6 million, directed to DCF to contract with providers throughout the state for the operation of CAT teams, which provide community-based services for children (aged 11 to 21) with mental health and/or substance abuse diagnoses, this is the same budget as the previous fiscal year.

Public Safety, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse Local Matching Grant Program: The SFY 2024-25 budget allocates \$9 million for the program, which supports county programs that serve adults or youth who are in behavioral crisis and at risk of entering the criminal justice system. This represents the same budget year funding as the previous fiscal year.

Crime Labs: The SFY 2024-25 budget allocates slightly over \$77 million in grants and aids to local governments for criminal investigations, which represents an 9.4% increase over the previous fiscal year.

Homeless Programs Challenge Grants: The SFY 2024-25 budget allocates approximately \$30.02 million, to DCF for challenge grants. The continuums of care that receive challenge grants pursuant to section 420.6225(4), Florida Statutes, must prioritize mental health and substance abuse treatment, short-term and transitional shelters, sanctioned camping sites and safe parking sites. Sanctioned camping sites must provide sanitation and security at the site. Continuums of care receiving challenge grants shall provide quarterly reports to the State Office on Homelessness detailing the quantity, capacity, sanitation, security, services offered, and costs for sanctioned camping sites and safe parking sites. This additional funding represents a decrease from previous budget years.

AGRICULTURAL & ENVIRONMENT

WATER QUALITY HIGHLIGHTS:

- Septic-to-Sewer Improvements:** The SFY 2024-25 budget appropriates \$135 million toward the wastewater grant program for projects to construct, upgrade or expand wastewater facilities, to provide advanced wastewater treatment and to convert from septic to sewer, as established in section 403.0673, F.S.
- Water Quality Enhancement and Accountability:** The budget allocates \$10.8 million for increased water quality monitoring, the creation of a water quality public information portal, and for the establishment of the Blue-Green Algae Task Force. Funds may be used for administration and planning costs. The task force will support key funding and restoration initiatives to expedite nutrient reduction in Lake Okeechobee and the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee estuaries. The task force will identify priority projects for funding that are based on scientific data and build upon Basin Management Action Plans (BMAPs) to provide the largest and most meaningful nutrient reductions in key waterbodies, as well as make recommendations for regulatory changes
- Water Quality Improvement Grant Program:**
 - Allocates \$50 million for reductions in harmful discharges to the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie Estuaries (Everglades).
 - Allocates \$75 million for water quality improvement projects within the proximity of the Indian River Lagoon.
 - Allocates \$20 million for septic to sewer and wastewater projects, that will improve the water quality of Biscayne Bay.
- Total Maximum Daily Loads:** The SFY 2024-25 budget allocates \$26.5 million for Total Maximum Daily Loads. Respectively to DEP for innovative water treatment projects that demonstrate the ability to most rapidly achieve department verified phosphorous and/or nitrogen load reductions consistent with the nutrient load reduction goals and total maximum daily loads established by the department. The department may also provide cost-share funding for innovative nutrient removal projects.
- Harmful Algal Blooms:** The SFY 2024-25 budget allocates \$25.6 million for innovative technologies and short-term solutions for addressing harmful algal blooms in fresh waterbodies; funds may also be used for the red tide emergency grant program and to support local government efforts in cleaning beach and coastal areas. Funds may also be used to implement water quality treatment technologies, identified by the

department, near water control structures in Lake Okeechobee.

- **Springs Restoration:** The SFY 2024-25 budget allocates \$55 million from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund for land acquisition to protect springs and for capital projects that protect the quality and quantity of water that flow from springs.
- **Alternative Water Supply:** The SFY 2024-25 budget allocates \$55 million, to the water supply and water resource development grant program to help communities plan for and implement conservation, reuse and other water supply and water resource development projects. The House includes language to provide priority funding to regional projects in the areas of greatest need and for projects that provide the greatest benefit. The department shall identify and research all viable alternative water supply resources and provide an assessment of funding needs critical to supporting Florida's growing economy.
- **Water Supply Grant Program:** The SFY 2024-25 budget provides \$25 million for the local water supply grant program.

FLORIDA FOREVER: \$100 million

FLORIDA RECREATION DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE GRANTS: \$14.3 million.

FLORIDA COMMUNITIES TRUST: \$15 million

BEACH MANAGEMENT FUNDING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM:

The SFY 2024-25 budget allocates \$50 million provided to the Department of Environmental Protection for distribution to beach and inlet management projects consistent with any component of the comprehensive long-term management plan developed in accordance with section 161.161, Florida Statutes. Funds may be used in accordance with section 161.101, Florida Statutes, for projects on annual ranked lists, storm repair projects, or projects on lands managed by the state.

RESILIENT FLORIDA TRUST FUND AND PROGRAMS:

The SFY 2024-25 budget allocates \$125 million provided to the Department of Environmental Protection for the Statewide Flooding and Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan, year one, as submitted to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives on December 1, 2023, pursuant to section 380.093(5), Florida Statutes. In the event that projects included in the plan are unable to continue or if excess funds are identified by completed projects or ineligible activities proposed in applications, the department may reallocate funds to projects on its Statewide Flooding and Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan to the next project on the ranked list or to projects already funded in year one that have identified funding needs in subsequent years.

Additionally, an allocation of \$20 million is granted for planning grants to fund preconstruction activities and \$2 million for regional resilience coalitions.

EVERGLADES RESTORATION: \$614 million

TRANSPORTATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

AFFORDABLE HOUSING:

- **State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program:** The Legislature appropriated \$174 million respectively, for the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP), as part of the affordable housing package signed into law.
- **Affordable Housing Programs:** \$234 million was appropriated to The Florida Housing Finance Corporation for distribution.
- **Hometown Heroes Housing Program:** \$100 million makes homeownership affordable for eligible frontline community workers such as law enforcement officers, firefighters, educators, healthcare professionals, childcare employees, and active military or veterans, as part of the affordable housing package signed into law.

JOB GROWTH GRANT FUND:

The SFY 2024-25 budget allocates \$75 million.

VISITFLORIDA: The SFY 2024-25 budget allocates \$80 million. Specifically, \$5 million from the Tourism Promotional Trust Fund is provided for VISIT FLORIDA to develop marketing for nature-based tourism and trail towns.

SMALL COUNTY OUTREACH PROGRAM (SCOP): The SFY 2024-25 budget allocates \$88.6 million. Specifically, \$9,000,000 is provided for transportation projects in municipalities pursuant to section 339.2818(7), F.S.

SMALL COUNTY ROAD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SCRAP):

The SFY 2024-25 budget allocates \$26.5 million.

TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED GRANTS AND AIDS: Transportation Disadvantaged Grants and Aids: The SFY 2024-25 budget allocates approximately \$62.4 million. Specifically, \$3,000,000 is provided to the Transportation Disadvantaged Commission for a competitive grant program to provide innovative and efficient transportation service delivery. Funds shall be used to provide competitive grants to community transportation coordinators for innovative service delivery that is more cost efficient for the program and time efficient for the users. Grants may be or projects in which a community transportation coordinator works with a non-traditional service provider, such as a transportation network company or other entity that provides door-to-door,

on-demand, or scheduled transportation services. A county may submit one project that encompasses multiple goals or a single goal, such as providing cross-county mobility or reducing service gaps between existing routes and the user's final destination. A county may not receive more than one award and may receive a maximum award of \$750,000. Multiple counties may partner for a grant of up to \$1,500,000 provided that the project includes a goal of providing regional mobility in addition to any other goals. A ten percent local match is required for all grants. All funds shall be used to provide direct services to transportation disadvantaged clients.

RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- **Broadband:** The SFY 2023-24 budget allocate \$100 million for Florida's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment program (BEAD), which funds broadband Internet planning, deployment, mapping, equity, and adoption activities with a goal of providing high-speed, reliable broadband Internet service access to all Florida communities.
- **Rural Infrastructure Fund:** The SFY 2024-25 budget allocates \$27 million to support local rural infrastructure projects such as broadband, roads, storm and wastewater systems, and telecommunications facilities. Specifically, \$5,000,000 is provided as grant funding for the following Florida panhandle counties to facilitate the planning, preparing, and financing of infrastructure projects in these rural communities: Calhoun, Gadsden, Holmes, Jackson, Liberty, and Washington Counties. Eligible uses of these funds include roads or other remedies to transportation impediments; stormwater systems; water or wastewater facilities; and telecommunications facilities and broadband facilities. Grant funds are provided pursuant to section 288.0655(7), Florida Statutes.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

LIBRARY GRANTS AND LIBRARY COOPERATIVES: The SFY 2024-25 budget allocates approximately \$21.5 million.

FISCALLY CONSTRAINED COUNTY OFFSET: The SFY 2024-25 budget allocates \$71.1 million, to offset the impacts of previously approved constitutional amendments.

EMERGENCY DISTRIBUTIONS: The SFY 2024-25 budget allocates \$34.4 million in emergency distributions revenue sharing for small counties from the Local Government Half-Cent Sales Tax Clearing Trust Fund. \$20 million is to assist fiscally constrained counties, as defined in s. 218.67(1), Florida Statutes, with providing air-conditioned sheltering for their general population and special needs population during emergency

declarations. To qualify for funding assistance, a fiscally constrained county must demonstrate that it has at least one school that serves as an emergency shelter but does not have a generator capable of powering the full facility including the air-conditioning system. Funds shall be used to purchase, install, and/ or retrofit an emergency generator that can fully power the emergency shelter facility. The amount of funding assistance may not exceed \$1,500,000 per qualifying fiscally constrained county.

CYBERSECURITY: \$40 million in funding from the previous fiscal year budget is appropriated for the same purpose for nonrecurring assistance to local governments for the development and enhancement of cybersecurity risk management programs. The department shall include language in the local government agreements that releases the state from all liability related to cybersecurity incidents impacting the local government recipient. The funding shall be placed in reserve and the department is authorized to submit budget amendments requesting the release of these funds pursuant to chapter 216, Florida Statutes. Release of these funds is contingent upon submission of a detailed spend plan, which shall include the vendors, services provided, and local government recipients. No funds shall be distributed to contracts not competitively procured.

IMPLEMENTING & CONFORMING BILLS

Appropriations Implementing and Conforming bills make certain changes to substantive law in order to implement the proposed General Appropriations Act. Implementing and Conforming Bill topics include:

HB 5003 – IMPLEMENTING THE GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT

COUNTY JUVENILE DETENTION PAYMENTS

Section 39 of the budget implementing bill provides that the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) has a responsibility to review a county's juvenile detention cost sharing and may deduct from the shared revenue funds provided to counties in s. 218.23, F.S. for any county failure to meet their financial obligations under this section. The DJJ may make such deductions to the extent that it does not exceed a county's capacity to comply with bond covenants on any shared revenue distributions pledged for debt service. **Total DJJ cost sharing for the year FY 24-25 was \$73,621,645.**

CONFORMING BILLS

HB 151: FLORIDA RETIREMENT SYSTEM

The bill sets employer normal contribution rates and unfunded actuarial liability rates for the FRS are adjusted based on annual actuarial valuation, with the bill declaring fulfillment of an important state interest. The bill contains limited enhancement to

employee benefits, as the Cost-of-Living Adjustment did not make the final version of the bill.

Normal employer contribution rates for each membership class of Florida Retirement System (For both the Defined Benefit and Defined Investment plans) are amended as follows:

CLASS	CONTRIBUTION RATES	
	SFY 2023-24	SFY 2024-25
REGULAR	6.73%	6.73%
SPECIAL RISK	18.66%	18.66%
SPECIAL RISK ADMINISTRATIVE	11.54%	11.54%
ELECTED OFFICERS (LEGISLATORS)	10.45%	10.70%
ELECTED OFFICERS (JUDGES)	14.90%	14.90%
ELECTED OFFICERS (COUNTY OFFICERS)	12.39%	12.39%
SENIOR MANAGEMENT	8.56%	8.56%
DROP	8.49%	8.49%

To address the unfunded actuarial liabilities (UAL) of the Florida Retirement System, the bill amends the current contribution rates for each membership class as follows:

CLASS	UNFUNDED ACTUARIAL LIABILITY	
	SFY 2023-24	SFY 2024-25
REGULAR	4.78%	4.84%
SPECIAL RISK	11.95%	12.07%
SPECIAL RISK ADMINISTRATIVE	26.22%	26.22%
ELECTED OFFICERS (LEGISLATORS)	50.21%	50.21%
ELECTED OFFICERS (JUDGES)	27.93%	28.49%
ELECTED OFFICERS (COUNTY OFFICERS)	44.23%	44.23%
SENIOR MANAGEMENT	23.90%	23.90%
DROP	10.64%	10.64%

ANNUAL TAX PACKAGE, HB 7073, PASSES ON FINAL DAY

HB 7073 - *Taxation* by Rep. McClain (SB 7074 by Senate Committee) passed this session. The bill:

- Revises the “Missing Middle” Property Tax Exemption authorized in s. 197.1978(3) to allow a taxing authority to opt out of the exemption for its levy by a two-thirds vote if:
 - A finding is made by a taxing authority that the most recently published Shimberg Center for Housing Studies Annual Report identifies that a county that is part of the jurisdiction the taxing authority is within a Metropolitan Statistical area or region where the number of affordable and available units is greater than the number of renter households for the category entitled “0 -120 percent AMI”.
 - The opt out is good for two years and may be reenacted if the above conditions are again met.
 - Any property that has received the exemption prior to a local government opting out will continue to receive the exemption.
- Creates a new Property Tax Exemption for Affordable Housing Properties (s. 197.1978 (4)). The exemption is available to properties that all the following conditions:
 - Properties that contain 70 or more units
 - Subject to a land use restriction requiring the units are to provide affordable housing to persons or families meeting the extremely low, very low or low income for a period of 99 years.
 - Must be substantially completed within 2 years of the date of application.
 - Must be composed of an improvement to land where no previous improvement existed, or an old improvement was removed.
- Redefines “Construction Work in Progress” with regard to certain electric utility constructed or installed Tangible Personal Property
- Revises the conditions under which back taxes, penalty and interest are due for certain improperly received exemption or assessment limitations.
- Adds certain equipment used for Biogas to the list that may be assessed as Renewable Energy Source Devices
- Extends the period within which a homestead property must be rebuilt following a disaster to retain the Save our Homes differential from 3 years to 5 years.
- Expands the Indigent Care and Trauma Center Surtax (s. 212.055(4)) to allow Jacksonville-Duval County to impose the surtax but removes the ability to enact the tax with an extraordinary vote.

- Provides for two 14-day Disaster Preparedness Holidays; a 14-day Back to School Sales Tax Holiday, a 7-day Tool Time Holiday, and a Freedom Month Holiday where sales tax will not be due on certain admissions or outdoor recreational items for the month of July 2024
- Contains provisions impacting Hillsborough County regarding their Transit Surtax that was struck by the courts.

The final bill passed by the House and Senate does not include:

- 6-year Repeal and Reauthorization of Tourist Development Taxes
- 10-year Repeal and Reauthorization of Local Option Sales Taxes

Effective date: July 1, 2024

FAC STAFF



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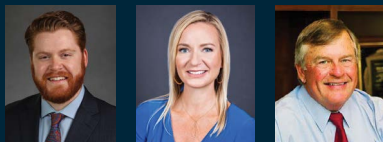
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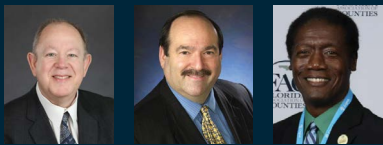
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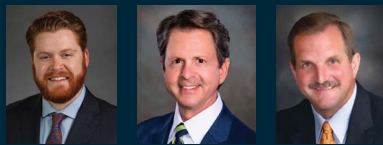
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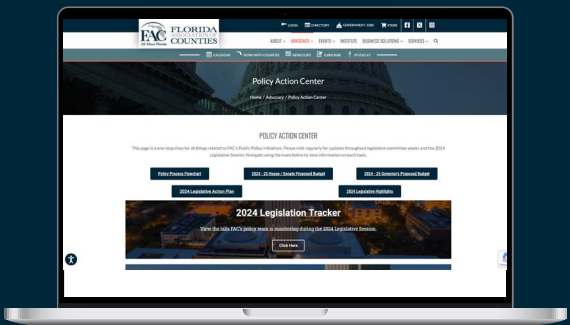
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Commissioner Bill Truex, Charlotte, Chair
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