



All About Florida

20
26

LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COUNTY POPULATION INFORMATION/WHY FLORIDA COUNTIES MATTER	3
WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM/WHERE DOES IT GO	4
PREEMPTIONS PERSIST	5
WHY LOCALISM MATTERS	7
GROWTH MANAGEMENT	8
FLORIDA'S PROPERTY TAX EQUATION	9
2025-26 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	11

COUNTY POPULATION INFORMATION



9 URBAN COUNTIES

With a total population of 13,208,401



29 FISCALLY CONSTRAINED COUNTIES

With a total population of 934,323



LARGEST COUNTY MIAMI-DADE

2,814,927 residents



29 MEDIUM COUNTIES

With a total population of 9,236,537



35 COASTAL COUNTIES

With 825 miles of beaches

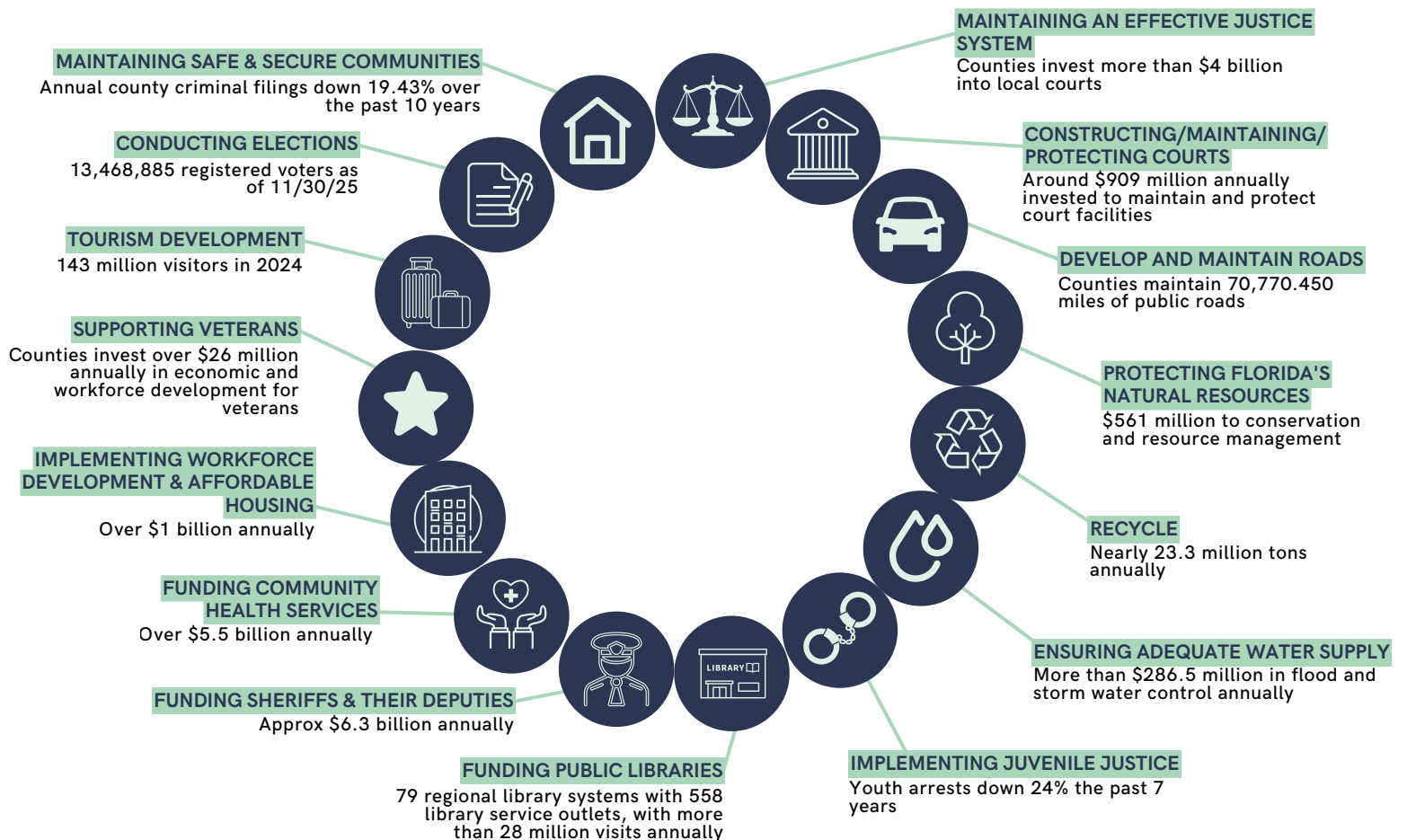


SMALLEST COUNTY LIBERTY

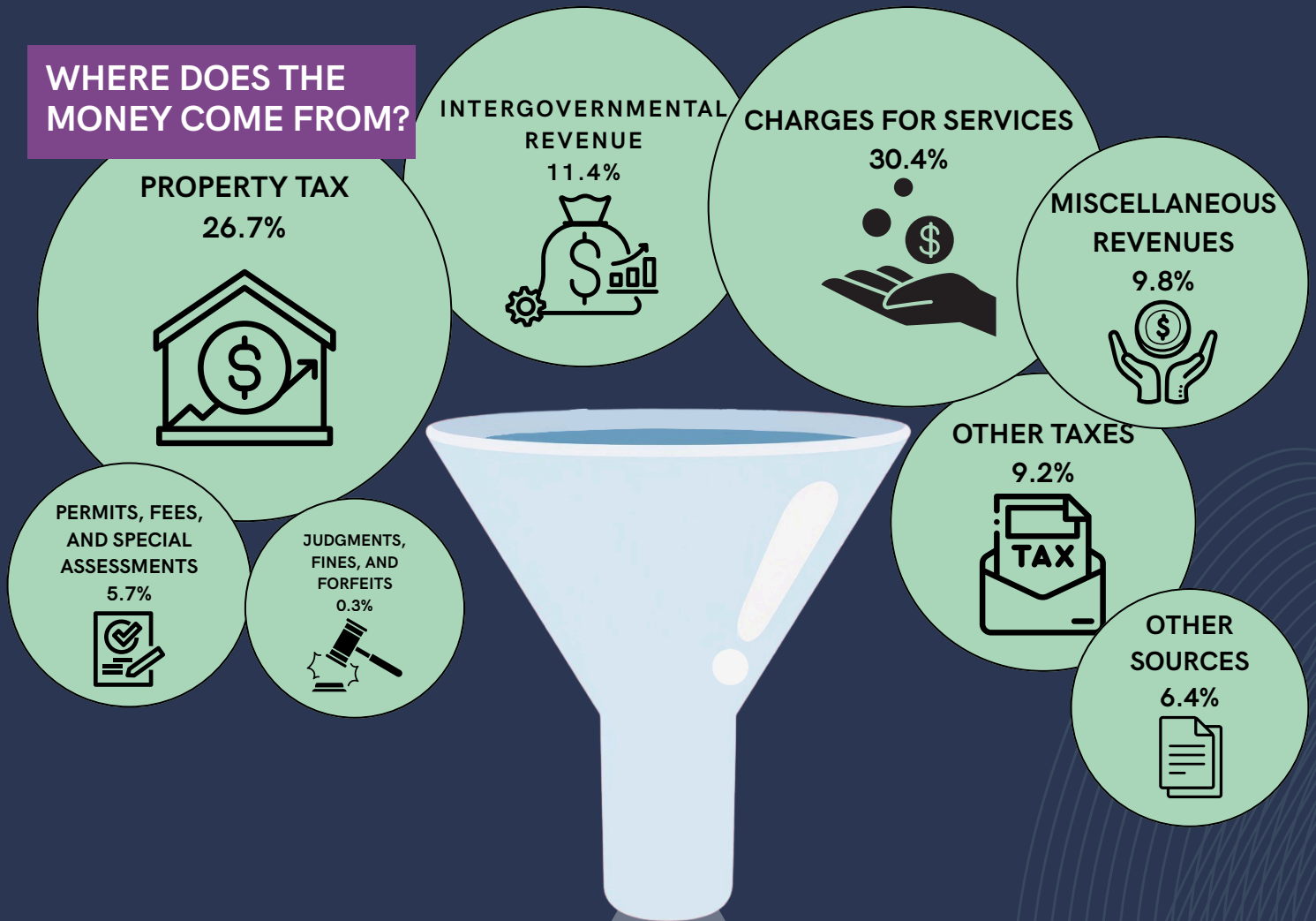
8,140 Residents



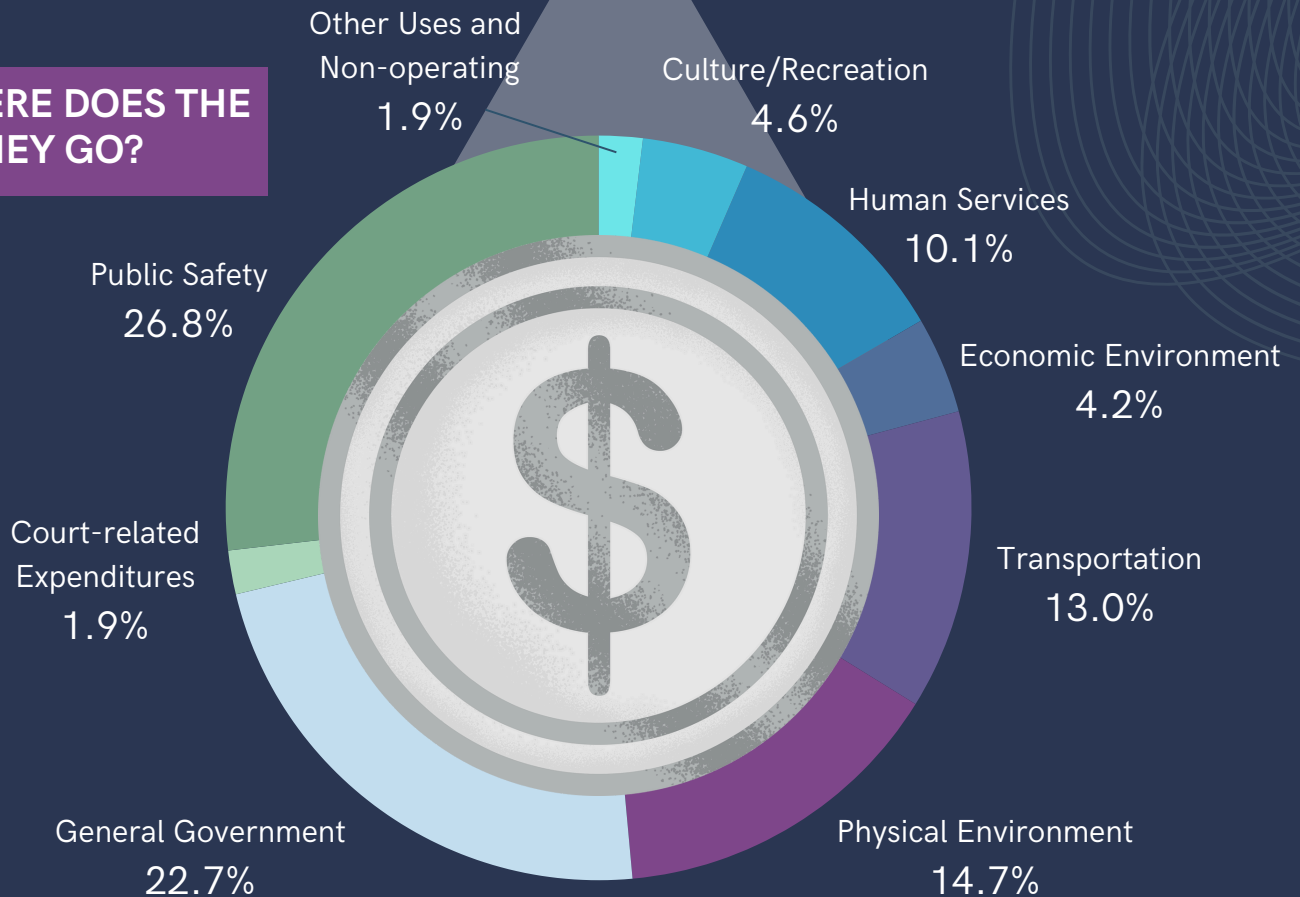
WHY FLORIDA COUNTIES MATTER



WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?



WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?



PREEMPTIONS PERSIST

As Florida's population continues to grow and change, it is important that our communities continue to reflect local values. This is best accomplished by empowering local voters and their representatives rather than by one-size-fits-all regulations from Tallahassee.



UTILITY AND
TECHNOLOGY



PLANNING AND
ZONING



LOCAL GOVERNMENT
REVENUES

Recent measures have stripped local residents of a voice in basic community decisions—from licensing local specialty contractors to regulating businesses in residential neighborhoods. State leaders have increasingly advanced proposals that limit local authority over utilities, technology policy, planning and zoning, and local revenue decisions. In recent years, some efforts have even sought to require explicit legislative approval for routine local actions.

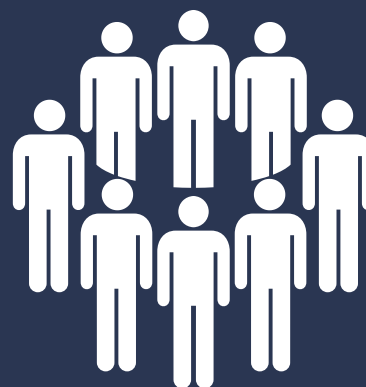
These actions expand Tallahassee bureaucracies, forcing residents to navigate layers of approvals for everyday matters, while leaving communities with fewer protections and less recourse. By shifting reasonable local authority to the state without meaningful avenues for relief, these policies will alter neighborhood character and expose consumers to real financial harm.



PREEMPTIONS PERSIST

LOCALISM PRESERVES THE RIGHTS OF OUR COMMUNITIES

The attack on home rule threatens to undermine the rights of Floridians to have an accessible and efficient government that reflects their values. Tallahassee overregulations are bad for communities and local business.



PASSED PREEMPTIONS DURING 2025 SESSION



Utility Relocation



Impact Fees



Post-Storm Land
Development (SB 180)



Development
Approvals



Building
Standards



Live Local 3.0
(Affordable Housing)



Business Rent
Tax Repeal



PASSED PREEMPTIONS DURING 2024 SESSION



Local Preferences
in Public Works
Projects



Workplace Heat
Protection



EV Charger
Regulation



Prohibits Growth
Management
and Annexation-
Related Charter
Amendments by
Charter Review
Commission



Business Impact
Statement
Expansions



Local Procurement
(HB 433)



Energy Siting



FAILED PREEMPTIONS DURING 2025 SESSION



Sovereign
Immunity



Agricultural
Enclaves



Tourist Development
Tax Offsets



Homestead
Exemptions for
Rental Properties



County
Commissioner
Term Limits



Local Option
Taxes
(Reauthorization)

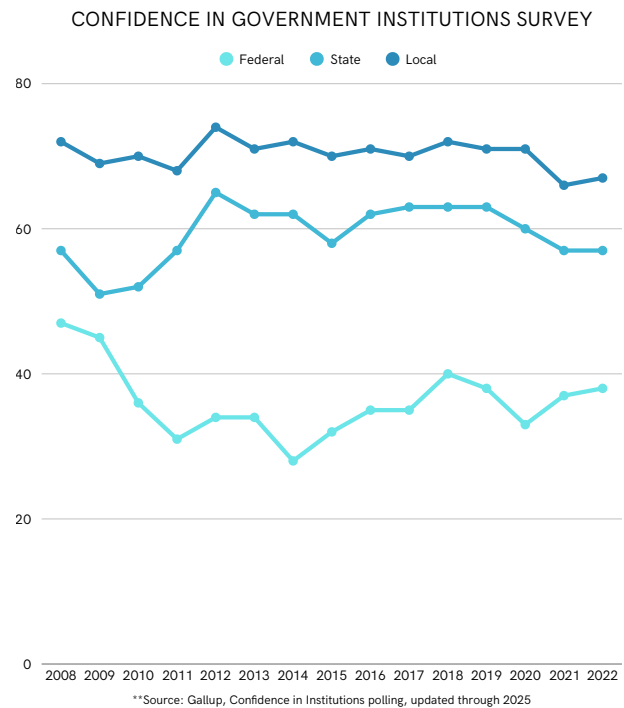


Waste
Incineration

WHY LOCALISM MATTERS

LOCALISM ALLOWS BUSINESSES TO BE ACCESSIBLE AND NIMBLE

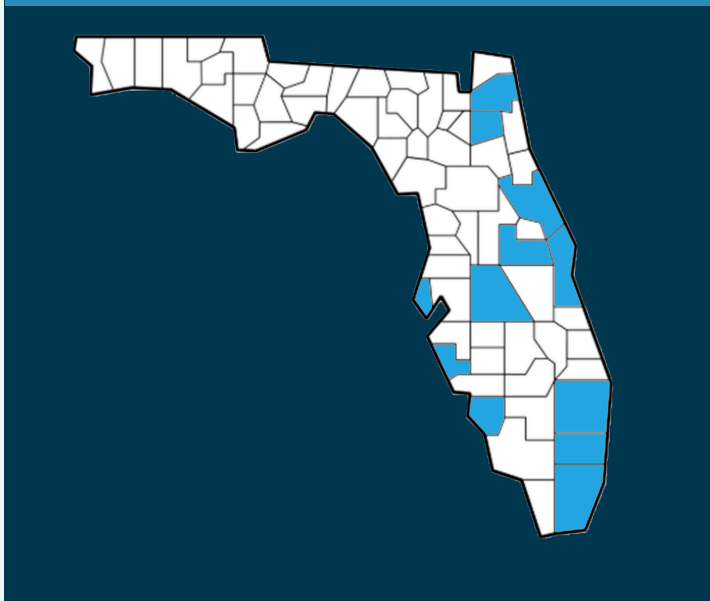
Businesses should not be forced to navigate the state legislative process for minor matters that are easily addressed at the local level. This is particularly problematic for small businesses, which may lack the resources to pursue matters through the state legislative process. Local governments are the most accessible venue to resolve business concerns because they are closest to the people and most familiar with their communities. Tallahassee is not equipped to address every problem in every community.



LOCALISM ALLOWS FOR REGULATORY CERTAINTY

Florida's statutory and case law has evolved under the home rule system. Upending that body of law will have far-reaching, unintended consequences. Businesses are conservative by nature, and economic uncertainty discourages investment and innovation. Even specific preemptions often have unintended consequences and frequently result in litigation. **When Tallahassee picks the winners, Floridians lose.**

COUNTIES WITH TERM LIMITS



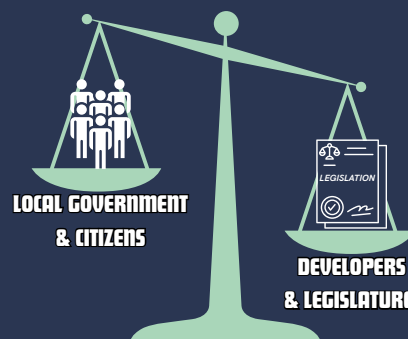
TERM LIMITS

The Florida Constitution provides that 5-7 members will be elected to four-year staggered terms. A charter county has the authority to set their own term limits; 12 counties in Florida impose term limits within their county charter. Legislation that requires term limits could result in an imbalance of power within the executive functions at the local level. Placing term limits on just part of the executive structure creates limited institutional knowledge and experience in governance. This dynamic is particularly strong in fiscally constrained counties.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Florida's Legislature is steadily stripping counties of their traditional control over planning and zoning through incremental state laws that override local decisions and weaken public oversight. The result is faster approvals for developers, fewer public hearings and local votes, and less accountability to the communities affected.

HB 299 SB 208 HB 479
SB 180
SB 102 HB 267 HB 665



Blue Ribbon Project:

This bill upends local government review by creating automatic administrative approvals for “blue-ribbon” projects over 10,000 acres, reserving 60% of the land while allowing 40% or 4,000 acres for development. The bill overrides local plans, removes public hearings, and shifts land-use decisions from elected officials to large landowners with limited enforcement.

- HB 299/SB 354 - Blue Ribbon

Affordable Housing:

Further limits local government review in Florida's affordable housing landscape, replacing community-based decision-making with a faster, state-driven approval pipeline.

- SB 1548/HB 1389 - Live Local 4.0
- SB 48/HB 3131 - Accessory Dwelling Units
- SB 948/HB 1143- Starter Home Act

Local Planning & Permitting:

Taken together, these bills chip away at the core of local growth management—tightening state control over permitting, imposing shot clocks and uniform permitting standards, weakening development orders, and restricting local fee authority, leaving communities with fewer tools to manage growth effectively.

- HB 405/SB 526 - Commercial Construction Projects
- SB 750 - Alternative Plans Review and Building Inspections
- HB 803/SB 1234 - Building Permits and Inspection
- HB 1093/SB 1362 - Advanced Air Mobility
- HB 927/SB 1138 - Qualified Contractors
- SB 968/HB 1049 - Home Backup Power Systems

CURRENT FILED 2026 LEGISLATION

Land Development

- HB 299/SB 354 - Blue Ribbon Project
- SB 208/HB 399 - Compatibility & Infill
- HB 979/SB 1434 - Infill Redevelopment
- SB 548/HB 1139 - Impact fees
- SB 686/HB 691 - Agriculture Enclaves
- SB 706/HB 919 - Commercial Service Airports

Housing

- SB 48/HB 313 - Accessory Dwelling Units
- HB 675/SB 756 & SB 752 - Affordable Housing
- SB 948/HB 1143 - Starter Homes
- SB 1548/HB 1389 - Live Local 4.0

Uniform Permitting, Building Permits, Development Orders & Fee Reductions

- HB 405/SB 526 - Commercial Construction Projects
- SB 750 - Alternative Plans Review and Building Inspections
- HB 803/SB 1234 - Building Permits and Inspection
- HB 929/SB 1020 - Local Government Regulation of Chickees
- HB 1093/SB 1362 - Advanced Air Mobility
- HB 927/SB 1138 - Qualified Contractors
- SB 968/HB 1049 - Home Backup Power Systems

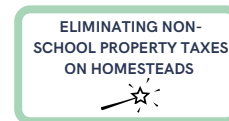
FLORIDA'S PROPERTY TAX EQUATION

DON'T BREAK WHAT WORKS

Florida is growing fast and costs have risen considerably. That's put pressure on essential services. Counties are stretching every dollar as far as possible to continue delivering the quality of life Floridians expect. For now, both sides of the "property tax equation" remain in balance.

TAX BASE × TAX RATE = PROPERTY TAX REVENUES → FUNDS LOCAL SERVICES

But this legislative session, proposed changes to our property tax system would significantly narrow the tax base, **leaving fewer people to pay more money:**



Each of these proposals makes the current system less efficient and jeopardizes essential services, including:



LAW ENFORCEMENT



FIRE FIGHTERS & EMS



ROADS & INFRASTRUCTURE



WATER QUALITY

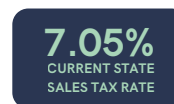


SECURE ELECTIONS



HURRICANE RECOVERY

These services are essential. Mandated by Florida's constitution and statutes, they cannot be eliminated even if their funding sources are. If property taxes are eliminated, the conservative Tax Foundation says sales taxes would have to more than double (and quadruple for rural counties) to fill the gap:



(SOURCE: REASON, OCTOBER 2025)

The math doesn't work.

Bad for taxpayers and neighborhoods, eliminating homestead property tax creates an avoidable fiscal crisis.









THE RESULT:

- A system that is less efficient and less accountable
- Higher sales taxes and burden on renters and small businesses
- Shifts priorities away from first responders and local services
- Empowers distant politicians and special interests

THE FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES IS:

- Committed to protecting the integrity, functionality, and fairness of Florida's property tax system;
- Recognizes the growing disconnect between market values and taxable values and works to prevent disproportionate tax shifts that threaten counties' ability to fund essential services.
- Advocates for local fiscal capacity and provide taxpayers and policymakers with transparent accounting of the true cost of delivering those services.

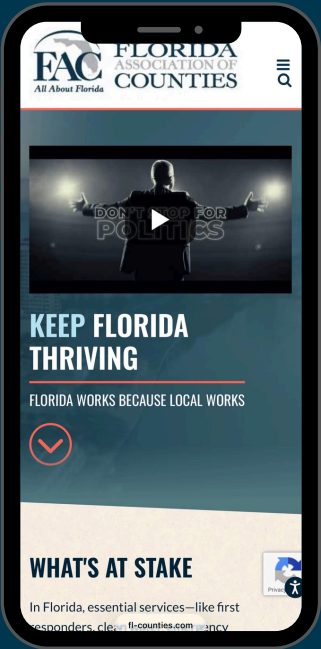
PROPERTY TAX TRUTHS VS. MYTHS

MYTH	<div> <div>X</div> <div> <div>MYTH</div> <div>Eliminating property taxes will lower costs for everyday Floridians.</div> <div>  </div> </div> </div>	FACT	<div> <div>✓</div> <div> <div>FACT</div> <div>It's not a tax cut—it's a tax shift. Wealthy landowners and out-of-state property owners benefit most, while working families pay more through higher sales taxes and hidden fees.</div> <div>  </div> </div> </div>
	<div> <div>X</div> <div> <div>MYTH</div> <div>Scrapping property taxes won't impact essential services.</div> <div>  </div> </div> </div>		<div> <div>✓</div> <div> <div>FACT</div> <div>Services like public safety, parks, and clean water depend on stable, local funding. Eliminating property taxes threatens the things that make Florida a great place to live.</div> <div>  </div> </div> </div>
	<div> <div>X</div> <div> <div>MYTH</div> <div>This plan gives communities more control over their future.</div> <div>  </div> </div> </div>		<div> <div>✓</div> <div> <div>FACT</div> <div>It does the opposite. It centralizes power in Tallahassee, giving special interests more say while everyday residents lose their voice.</div> <div>  </div> </div> </div>

REPORT ON FLORIDA COUNTY PROPERTY TAXES

KEEPFLORIDATHRIVING.COM

FAC's Report, located on KeepFloridaThriving.com, provides statewide context for all counties and the individual county property tax snapshots, using locally sourced, audited, and state reported data. Information in this report and the county snapshots is intended to inform state officials and the public on factors impacting Florida’s property tax system and county budgets. Each county in Florida has a unique property tax base depending on the county’s composition of real property. Each county snapshot, found following the link for that county, contains easily accessible and helpful links to individual county budgets and audit reports.



KeepFloridaThriving.com

2025-26 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



Michelle Lincoln
President
Monroe County



René Flowers
President-Elect
Pinellas County



Susan Adams
First Vice President
Indian River County



Larry Harvey
Second Vice President
Putnam County



Terry Burroughs
Immediate Past President
Okeechobee County

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:



Cragin Mosteller
Deputy Executive Director



Cell: 850.294.3907



Cmosteller@fl-counties.com



[@cragin](https://twitter.com/cragin)



FAC

FLORIDA
ASSOCIATION OF
COUNTIES

All About Florida

850.922.4300

100 S Monroe St, Tallahassee, FL 32301



flcounties



flcounties



flcounties



flcounties.com