

## **2026 Florida Legislative Session Recap**

Week 8 - February 2-6

### **"Fundamental Disagreement" on Budget Blocks Progress**

The session is heading into the final week and there is still no significant progress on the budget. House Speaker Daniel Perez says there is a "fundamental disagreement on what the state budget should look like". He summed it up by saying the House wants to spend less and the Senate wants to spend more, and he is not going to be very flexible on that. The rift extends to legislation as well, and as a result, most of the priority bills of the Senate, House, and the Governor appear dead, or at least in serious trouble. It is obvious the Legislature is not even close to a solution and overtime is looming.

The Senate Appropriations Committee went through the process of taking up eight House budget conforming bills and adopting delete-all amendments without inserting new language. This makes the bills ready to be placed in conference. However, there is still no word on when budget conference negotiations will begin. An agreement on the tax package is also elusive.

#### **House Passes \$248.7 Million Tax Package**

On Thursday, the House passed its tax package (HB 7031), containing tax relief and tax administration provisions. The bill would provide \$248.7 million in tax savings, \$92.9 million of which is recurring. The largest cut is a \$65.2 million in recurring property tax relief for mobile home parks. The largest state tax cut is a four-month sales tax holiday for hunting, fishing and camping supplies. This will save consumers \$34.8 million in sales taxes this year, \$7.8 million of which is local revenue. This package reduces General Revenue by only \$20.4 million in the new budget year. [See all the provisions in HB 7031.](#)

On Monday, the Senate Appropriations Committee adopted amendments to their tax package (SB 7046) and corporate income tax piggyback bill (SB 7048). The amendment added provisions, including a few new tax breaks that increased the total savings the Senate is proposing from \$34.1 million to \$78.0 million (\$8.1 recurring). It is still much smaller than the House proposal. [See all the provisions in SB 7046 \(with amendment\).](#)

The Senate tax package contains a very unfriendly taxpayer provision that did not appear until the amendment was adopted. The change would make it even harder for taxpayers to recover interest when they contest a tax assessment or refund denial. Florida TaxWatch, along with many others, has worked to bring fairness to the Department of Revenue's process for paying interest on refunds, which does not work in favor of the taxpayer. It appeared that a provision that could help might be included in SB 7046. Instead, this provision, which makes a bad situation worse, was added. **Florida TaxWatch urges the House to not accept this change.**

### **Senate Agrees with House on Corporate Piggyback Bill - No Tax Relief for You!**

The House included the corporate income piggyback language in its tax package (HB 7031), while the Senate has a separate bill (SB 7048). The amendment to HB 7031 does align the Senate with the House's position to decouple from all the tax relief in the federal One Big Beautiful Bill Act, meaning Florida corporations will not see any benefit from OBBBA on their state tax returns, and instead get increased tax compliance burdens. **The Senate took up SB 7048 on Friday. It substituted HB 7031 and adopted an amendment that deleted all the House language and replaced it with only the piggyback language. They sent it back to the House. This means the House could pass the bill next week and keep this issue out of the budget conference.**

**Another sign of overtime?** - The House Rules and Ethics Committee approved a rule that allows members to fundraise during extended or special session sessions. The Senate already has this rule.

## **BILL ACTION THIS WEEK**

### **Passed the House**

**Big Beautiful Healthcare Frontier Act** - [HB 693](#) is a large health care bill containing many provisions, including meeting federal requirements for SNAP to lower its payment error rate to avoid a huge fine, as Florida TaxWatch [warned about](#). It includes a work requirement for most SNAP beneficiaries and a host of other health care changes.

**Live Local IV** - Looks like the 3rd year in a row the Legislature will revise the 2023 Live Local housing act to increase Florida's affordable/workforce housing stock. HB 1389 would expand where local governments must allow multifamily and mixed-use developments, preempt local housing regulations, and remove the option for local government to opt out of Live Local property tax exemptions. Amended by Senate, back to House.

**Swimming Lesson Voucher Program** - HB 503 would expand eligibility for the free program to children between 1 and 7 and require hospitals, birth centers, and childbirth educators to

distribute educational materials on drowning prevention to parents and caregivers. See [our latest in a series of reports](#) on preventing childhood drowning.

**IT Procurement Reform** - HB 1197 includes several measures recommended by Florida TaxWatch to increase the efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency of the state's IT procurement.

**Coordinated Access Model Pilot Program** - HB 783 establishes a new pilot program to help with coordinating access for behavioral health care using a single point of entry.

### **Passed the Senate**

**Citizens Property Insurance Corp.**- Fresh of the news that all Citizens policy holders will get a rate reduction in this year, SB 1028 will continue to try and return Citizens to being "the insurer of last resort," by setting up to commercial lines clearinghouses. If a policyholder is offered equal coverage for up to 115% of a citizen's policy, they must accept the private offer or pay Citizens the difference.

**Homes for Veterans** - SB 1602 creates a pilot program in Broward, Escambia, Hillsborough, and Santa Rosa counties to provide landlords with incentives to lease dwelling units to veterans.

### **Passed the House and Senate**

**Medical Practice in Areas of Critical Need** – HB 809 would authorize the Board of Medicine to approve continued practice for providers that have an active primary care treatment relationship with at least one patient in an area of critical concern when the certificate was issued but has subsequently lost such designation.