2026 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL SUMMARIES

Florida League of Cities

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SPOTLIGHT BILLS

- **Property Tax bills:** See bills under the Finance and Taxation section (beginning on page 26)
- **Affordable Housing/Live Local:** SB 1548 (Calatayud) – Monitor and HB 1389 (Redondo) – Oppose (see page 76)
- **Impact Fees:** CS/SB 548 (McClain) and CS/CS/HB 1139 (Gentry) – Oppose (see page 65)
- **Land Use Regulations for Local Governments Affected by Natural Disasters:** SB 840 (DiCeglie) – Support and HB 1465 (Andrade) – Oppose (see page 20)
- **Local Business Taxes:** SB 122 (Truenow) and HB 103 (Botana) – Oppose (see page 38)
- **Local Government Spending:** CS/SB 1566 (DiCeglie) and CS/HB 1329 (Benarroch) – Monitor (see page 124)
- **Local Land Planning and Development/Qualified Contractors:** CS/CS/HB 927 (Sapp) and CS/SB 1138 (Masullo) – Oppose (see page 66)
- **Provision of Municipal Utility Service to Owners Outside the Municipal Limits:** CS/CS/SB 1014 (Mayfield) and CS/HB 1075 (Sirois) – Oppose (see page 151)
- **Suits Against the Government:** HB 145 (McFarland) and SB 1366 (Brodeur) – Oppose (see page 135)
- **Transportation:** CS/HB 1233 (Griffitts) and CS/CS/SB 1220 (Massullo) – Oppose (see page 141)
- **Utility Services:** CS/CS/SB 1724 (Martin) and CS/HB 1451 (Busatta) – Oppose (see page 154)

BUILDING CODE

Bills are in alphabetical order by subject area
Text highlighted in yellow indicate recent revisions made to a bill

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Alternative Plans Review and Building Inspection (Oppose)
SB 750 (DiCeglie) deletes current law authority for a local government to charge an administrative fee when an owner or contractor retains a private provider for plans review or building inspection services. (O'Hara)

Building Inspections During an Emergency (Monitor)
CS/HB 1109 (Cross) and **CS/CS/SB 1260** (DiCeglie) require the Department of Management Services (DMS) to enter and maintain state term contracts for the purpose of providing building inspection services. The bills further authorize a person to act in the following positions under the direction of a local building official for a period of one year from the date of the declaration of a state of emergency issued by the Governor for a natural emergency, a manmade emergency, or a technological emergency, if such person has entered into a state term contract with DMS, is qualified to work in any state that has a mutual aid agreement under Florida law, or has held a valid license for such work in any state for five years immediately before the date of the declaration: building code inspector, building inspector, coastal construction inspector, commercial electrical inspector, electrical inspector, mechanical inspector, plumbing inspector, residential electrical inspector, residential inspector, plans examiner, building plans examiner, plumbing plans examiner, mechanical plans examiner, or electrical plans examiner. (O'Hara)

Building Permits and Inspection (Oppose)
CS/CS/HB 803 (Trabulsy) and **CS/CS/SB 1234** (DiCeglie) address exemptions from the Florida Building Code and local government building permits, expiration of local government building permits, uniform building permit applications, timeframe for approval of a building permit, local building department requirements applicable to private providers, and zoning requirements for offsite-constructed residential dwellings.

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Florida Building Code
Requires the Florida Building Commission to modify the Florida Building Code to exempt from building permit requirements the installation of temporary residential hurricane and flood protection walls or barriers that meet specified conditions. The Commission is further required to modify the Building Code to exempt retaining walls installed on certain residential properties from building permit requirements.

Local Government Building Permits

- Provides that a local government building permit for a single-family dwelling expires one year after issuance or the effective date of the next edition of the Florida Building Code, whichever is later
- Prohibits inspection fees that are based on the total cost of a project or that exceed the actual inspection costs incurred
- Exempts a single-family dwelling from obtaining a building permit for any work on the lot valued at less than $7,500, except for gas, electrical, plumbing, mechanical, or structural work. A project may not be divided into more than one project for purposes of evading the requirements of this provision. The person performing the work must file a notice of work or notice of building permit exemption with the local government within 30 days after work begins. Such notice is not required for work performed personally by the property owner. The bills specify that a local government has no legal duty to the owner or contractor for work performed pursuant to this section.
- Requires approval of a building permit application within five business days if the permit is for structural, accessory structure, alarm, electrical, irrigation,

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landscaping, mechanical, plumbing, or roofing on an existing single-family residential dwelling, where the value of the work is less than $15,000

- CS/SB 1234 provides that a signed and sealed permit application and attestation by a licensed architect or engineer that the plans comply with the Building Code for the construction or renovation of a single-family dwelling in a jurisdiction for which a state of emergency was issued in the 24 months before submission of the application is deemed approved; the local government must issue the permit within two days.
- CS/CS/HB 803 directs a local government to issue a building permit for the design, installation, relocation, replacement, or repair of a distributed energy distribution system or backup power system for a one- or two-family dwelling under specified conditions. It prohibits a local government from enforcing any regulation related to such systems beyond enforcing standards contained in the Florida Building Code and the Florida Fire Prevention Code. Such systems may be inspected by the local government or a private provider. A failed inspection report may not be the sole basis for a local enforcing agency to withhold a certificate of occupancy, but the enforcing agency may withhold authorization to energize the system until corrections are performed and verified.
- The bills prohibit a local government from requiring the owner of a single-family home or its contractor to obtain a building permit for the installation of temporary residential hurricane and flood protection walls or barriers under specified conditions, including a condition that the wall or barrier complies with applicable zoning, drainage, easement, and setback requirements. It specifies that a local government has no legal duty to the owner or contractor

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for the work performed. CS/CS/SB 1234 would require building permits for such projects if necessary to maintain compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program. The bills authorize the Florida Building Commission to adopt rules to implement these requirements. The bills also prohibit a local government from requiring a building permit for each individual lot upon which a retaining wall is installed on single-family residential property.

- CS/CS/SB 1234 also prohibits the imposition or enforcement of certain glazing requirements on a proposed commercial or mixed-use new construction or restoration project. In addition, the bill provides that a nonresidential structure constructed after July 2026 that is located in a flood zone must elevate its lowest floor above the required flood zone elevation, unless, as an alternative, all structural areas meet specified requirements.

Uniform Building Permit Applications

- Directs the Building Commission to develop uniform building permit applications for mandatory use by local governments for residential and commercial construction projects. The Commission must endeavor to make the permit capable of integration with local building permit software and account for locally adopted amendments to the Florida Building Code.

Private Providers

- Specifies that a local government or building official may not prohibit or discourage the use of a private provider

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- Strictly limits audits to ensuring the required affidavit is properly completed and that the minimum mandatory inspections have been performed and recorded
- Permits a local building official to conduct a site visit in connection with an audit only if the official has actual knowledge that the private provider's forms and documents are incomplete or incorrect, and requires the official to provide written notice of such deficiencies to the private provider before performing a site visit
- Requires five days' notice of any audit to be performed
- Requires all permit applications to be submitted electronically
- Provides that an agreement between a fee owner or contractor and a private provider is not required to be submitted as part of a permit application or condition of issuing a permit
- Requires the reduction in building permit fee to be based on the cost incurred by the jurisdiction, including labor, personnel, clerical, and supervisory costs associated with providing the service; prohibits any additional fees for inspections or plans review; prohibits any punitive administrative fees for using a private provider
- Prohibits a local government from requiring additional forms beyond those required at registration, except for the written notice required if a private provider is used to perform an inspection. Prohibits local alteration of the form adopted by the Building Commission to notify the local building official that a private provider will be used.

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- Prohibits a local building official from reviewing plans, construction drawings, or other related documents determined by a private provider to be compliant with the Building Code; permits the building official to review other forms and documents for completeness only; requires the building official to provide written notice to a permit applicant of any incomplete forms or documents within 10 days of receipt of a permit application and affidavit from a private provider; provides for tolling of 10-day requirement to address deficiencies, but the application is deemed approved if the local government fails to adhere to the applicable timeframes
- Prohibits fees relating to reinspections or administrative matters relating to reinspections
- Provides that a local building official is not responsible for the regulatory administration or supervision of inspection services of a private provider, including verification of licensure and insurance
- Specifies that a local building official may not fail an inspection performed by a private provider for not having the inspection records at the job site if the records are transmitted within four days
- Provides that a certificate of compliance following completion of all inspections must be a form approved by the Commission and may be signed by any licensed individual employed by the private provider's firm
- Permits a local building official to only perform inspections that a private provider has determined compliant if the official has actual knowledge the private provider did not perform the inspections; requires the official to

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provide written notice to the provider before such inspection; permits the building official to review forms and documents for completeness only

- Requires a local enforcement agency or building official to establish a registration system for private providers and prohibits imposition of an administrative fee for the registration process
- A local government may not prohibit or limit the use of virtual inspections by private providers for any construction for which such providers have a license to inspect.
- If a private provider is used, a local enforcement agency must reduce the building permit fee by 25% and if the provider is used for all plans review and inspections, the fee must be reduced by 50%. If the fee is not reduced as specified, the local government is prohibited from collecting any building permit fees for the project.

Zoning for Offsite-Constructed Residential Dwellings

- CS/CS/SB 1234 requires an off-site constructed home (a home with components manufactured off-site but assembled on-site) to be permitted by right in any zoning district where single-family homes are allowed. The bill prohibits local governments from treating an off-site constructed home differently or more restrictively than a single-family site-built dwelling. A local government may, however, apply generally applicable setback, aesthetic, and other standards that also apply to on-site single-family homes. (O'Hara)

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Commercial Construction Projects (Monitor)
CS/CS/HB 405 (Griffitts) and **CS/SB 526** (Grall) address public construction projects, commercial construction projects, and the use of private providers for commercial construction projects. For public construction projects, the bills provide that a provision in a public construction project that waives, extinguishes, or releases the rights of a contractor to recover costs or damages, or to obtain an extension for delays in performance, is void and unenforceable if the delay is caused in whole or in part by the local government or its agents. This provision applies to all public construction projects entered on or after July 1, 2026.

For commercial construction projects, the bills direct the Florida Building Commission to create a "uniform commercial building permit application" by December 31, 2027. The bills specify minimum requirements for the contents of such an application. The uniform application must be accepted for use statewide, and it may not be modified. The bills direct the Commission to adopt additional trade-specific forms for use with the uniform application. The bills specify that local governments may require additional documents or plans necessary to demonstrate compliance with the Florida Building Code or local zoning ordinances. CS/SB 526 was amended to require the Commission to develop uniform standards for commercial building permit acceptance, rather than a uniform application.

CS/CS/HB 405 requires local governments to include any applicable reductions in permit fees related to the use of private providers on their posted fee schedules and to specify the services covered by any administrative fee associated with private provider use on their websites. In addition, the bill requires building permit fees to be limited to the actual and reasonable costs incurred and prohibits fees from being based on industry standards, market rates, or comparable retail pricing. Such fees must be proportional to the work performed by the local government.

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The bills provide that if a private provider is used for plans review or inspection for a commercial construction project, a local enforcing agency must reduce its permit fee by 25% of the portion of the fee attributable to plans review or inspection. If a private provider is used for all required plans review and inspections, the local enforcing agency must reduce its permit fee by 50%. If the local enforcing agency fails to reduce its fee as required, it forfeits the ability to collect any fees for the project.

The bills also prohibit the imposition or enforcement of certain glazing requirements on a proposed commercial or mixed-use new construction or restoration project. In addition, the bills provide that a nonresidential structure constructed after July 2026 that is located in a flood zone must elevate its lowest floor above the required flood zone elevation, unless, as an alternative, all structural areas meet specified requirements. (O'Hara)

Department of Business and Professional Regulations (Monitor)
SB 1666 (Burgess) modifies current laws relating to the boards and professions regulated by the Department of Business and Professional Regulations. Section 29 of the bill revises section 553.791, Florida Statutes, relating to the use of private providers for building permit plans review and inspections. It provides that a private provider and any duly authorized representative licensed as a building code administrator may perform any plan review or inspection requiring licensure under chapter 468, Part IV if the person served for at least three consecutive years as a building code administrator authorized by a municipal or county government and has had no disciplinary action imposed against his or her license. (O'Hara)

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Enforcement of the Florida Building Code (Monitor)
CS/HB 1169 (Tramont) and **CS/SB 1614** (Leek) provide that a local government is not eligible to receive additional state funds if it has been subject to an audit by a state legislative committee within one year following a state funding request or if it fails to submit an affirmation with any funding request to its legislative delegation. CS/SB 1614 was amended to clarify that a local government is not eligible to receive state funds through a local funding initiative request if the local government has been subjected to a legislative committee's audit within one year following the request or if the local government does not submit in its funding initiative request an affirmation stating that it is no longer the subject of a state audit. CS/HB 1169 was amended in similar fashion but the verbiage differs. The affirmation must state that the local government has spent all funds received from building permit fees and that it does not have any excess funds for services or repairs to its stormwater management system. In addition, the bills authorize a local government to use excess revenue from building permit fees to perform necessary repairs and services to its stormwater management system. (O'Hara)

Florida Building Code Construction Requirements (Monitor)
HB 911 (Mooney) and **SB 1218** (Rodriguez) require the Florida Building Commission to require the entire building envelope of all new construction of the following buildings to meet the impact resistance requirements of the Florida Building Code and be constructed to withstand windspeeds of 160 miles per hour: 1) R1 and R2 multistory residential occupancies; 2) new residential construction within five miles of the mean high-water line of any tidal water; 3) new residential construction in a high-velocity hurricane zone under the Florida Building Code; 4) buildings used as emergency shelters; and 5) the rebuilding of any of the above. (O'Hara)

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Home Backup Power Systems & Building Permits for Work on Single-Family Homes (Monitor)
SB 968 (McClain) and **HB 1049** (Esposito) address building permit exemptions for back-up power systems and other work on single-family homes. The bills prohibit local governments from adopting technical amendments to the Florida Building Code that require a permit or any local review or approval for a backup power system. The bills prohibit a local government from requiring a permit or approval for the installation or repair of a backup power system installed in a single- or two-family dwelling or townhouse by a licensed contractor or by a public utility. The bills also prohibit any regulation of the installation of such backup power systems beyond the Florida Building Code or the Florida Fire Safety and Prevention Code. Local government inspections of such backup power systems are permissible under the bill, although a private provider may be used for such inspections. The bills specify procedures and timeframes for inspections. In addition, the bills prohibit a local government from requiring a building permit for any work valued at less than $7,500 on the lot of a single-family dwelling. A local government may require a building permit for gas, electrical, plumbing, or structural work (but not repair or replacement of exterior doors or windows) performed on a lot of a single-family dwelling, regardless of the value of the work. HB 1049 was amended to state that any residential manufactured building that is certified under chapter 553 by the Department of Business and Professional Regulation may not be denied a building permit for placement on a mobile home lot, a recreational vehicle park, or mobile home subdivision. (O'Hara)

Onsite Sewage Treatment and Disposal System Permits (Monitor)
SB 698 (Martin) and **HB 589** (Nix) relate to building and plumbing permits associated with a single-family residence that will use an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system. The bills prohibit a municipality or political subdivision from requiring owners

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and builders of such residences to receive a construction permit from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) as a condition of issuing a building or plumbing permit for the residence. The owner or builder must provide proof to the municipality or political subdivision that it applied for the on-site sewage treatment and disposal system permit when applying for a building or plumbing permit. In addition, the bills specify that any new rules for the use and installation of onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems adopted by DEP do not apply to permits submitted within 120 days after the date such rules are adopted. (O'Hara)

Regulation of Chickees (Monitor)
SB 1020 (Truenow) and **HB 929** (Cobb) prohibit a municipality or county from preventing the construction of a chickee in a side yard, provided the chickee is at least 10 feet from the property line or any other structure. A county or municipality may not enact any regulation concerning chickees and that is more restrictive than federal floodplain management regulations. A chickee is defined in current law as an open-sided wooden hut with a thatched roof. Current law exempts chickees constructed by the Miccosukee or Seminole Indian Tribe from the Florida Building Code. The bill expands the definition of "chickee" in the Building Code to include a wooden deck and non-wood fasteners. The bill amends the Florida Fire Prevention Code to specify that a chickee that is at least 20 feet away from any other structure subject to the Fire Prevention Code or that otherwise includes fireproofing measures approved by a certified fire protection system contractor is exempt from the Florida Fire Prevention Code. (O'Hara)

Other Bills of Interest
SB 800 (Mayfield) and **HB 839** (Melo) – Engineering

CYBERSECURITY

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Artificial Intelligence (Monitor)
CS/SB 482 (Leek), **HB 1395** (Rizo), and **HB 659** (Hunschofsky) create new rules and guidance for artificial intelligence (AI). CS/SB 482 and HB 1395 create the "Artificial Intelligence Bill of Rights." The proposals set new laws governing the use of artificial intelligence in Florida, specific to local government contracts. The bills provide that a local government is not allowed to knowingly enter into a contract with an entity for artificial intelligence if the entity is owned by a government of a country of foreign concern, the country of foreign concern has a controlling interest, or the entity is organized under the laws or has its principal place of business in a foreign country of concern. All three bills create rights for Floridians to know when they are interacting with AI. Specifically, CS/SB 482 provides protections against the misuse of AI-generated images for commercial, defamatory, or harmful purposes, whereas HB 659 provides that any violation of these protocols is considered a deceptive act or an unfair practice. CS/SB 482 prohibits schools, including charter schools, from using or providing students with access to AI instructional tools before the sixth grade and provides specific exceptions when such use would be allowed. The bill also requires schools to provide notice to the parent when a child is given access to an AI-instructional tool and the option for the parent to opt out of the use of the tool. The bill requires the school to provide the parent with access to the same AI-instructional tool the child has access to. CS/SB 482 added a technical amendment clarifying that there are no prohibitions on the sale or disclosure of information specifically authorized by federal law. (Wagoner)

Cybersecurity Standards and Liability (Monitor)
CS/HB 635 (Giallombardo) and **CS/SB 692** (Leek) focus on cybersecurity for local governments. SB 692 requires local governments to adopt cybersecurity standards that are in line with the state standards. Both bills will require vendors or third parties to meet state standards for minimum requirements for cybersecurity. SB 692

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removes any requirements for local governments to create and set their own cybersecurity standards by a specified time. Both bills were amended to prohibit local governments from requiring higher standards of vendors or third parties than what state or federal law requires. Lastly, both bills provide that local governments and vendors will be immune from liability in connection with a cybersecurity incident so long as they continually update their security protocols within one year of the latest updates. (Wagoner)

Information Technology (Monitor)
CS/CS/SB 480 (Harrell) restructures and centralizes the state's information technology governance by transferring the duties of the Florida Digital Service from the Department of Management Services into a new Division of Integrated Government Innovation and Technology (DIGIT) within the Executive Office of the Governor. The bill designates DIGIT as the primary agency responsible for statewide IT strategy, standards, oversight, cybersecurity, data management, and reporting, while also updating definitions, reporting requirements, and IT governance processes across state agencies. The bill removes provisions requiring local governments to adopt cybersecurity standards. However, the bill does tighten incident reporting requirements for local governments, reducing the reporting timeline for cybersecurity incidents from 48 to 12 hours and for ransomware incidents from 12 to six hours. (Wagoner)

Local Government Cybersecurity (Support)
CS/SB 576 (Harrell) and **CS/CS/HB 1085** (Miller), as amended, establish a Local Government Cybersecurity Protection Program to assist counties and municipalities in preventing, detecting, and responding to cybersecurity threats, including ransomware incidents.

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The bills take differing approaches regarding program administration. CS/SB 576 creates the Local Government Cybersecurity Protection Program within the Florida Digital Service (FDS), which is responsible for administering the program, entering into data-sharing agreements with local governments, and providing information technology commodities and cybersecurity services to eligible local governments through a state-administered grant program.

CS/CS/HB 1085 instead creates the program within the University of South Florida (USF), to be administered by the Florida Center for Cybersecurity in coordination with FDS. Under the House bill, the Florida Center for Cybersecurity must enter into data-sharing agreements with participating local governments and FDS to facilitate the collection, analysis, and exchange of cybersecurity threat information and administer a grant program providing cybersecurity technology commodities and services directly to local governments.

Under both bills, grants are awarded annually by October 1 based on objective eligibility criteria, with preference given to fiscally constrained counties. CS/CS/HB 1085 further provides that a local government may receive grant assistance for no more than two consecutive fiscal years. However, the House bill authorizes any local government—regardless of grant participation—to purchase cybersecurity commodities and services from contracts competitively procured and managed through the Florida Center for Cybersecurity, with the local government responsible for associated costs.

Both bills are intended to strengthen local government cybersecurity capacity through coordinated threat information sharing, centralized procurement of cybersecurity tools and services, and state-supported technical assistance while allowing local governments to voluntarily participate in the program. (Wagoner)

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Affirmative Action (Monitor)
HB 1189 (Sapp) and **SB 1662** (McClain) are comprehensive bills dealing with modifying state laws and preferences regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and affirmative action. Although the bill does not target cities specifically, the changes will affect local contracting, workforce recruitment, minority business participation, and employment policies where DEI or affirmative action intersect with municipal operations. These bills will likely limit how cities can develop and implement their own diversity initiatives and local priorities. (Wagoner)

Manufacturing (Monitor)
CS/HB 483 (Cobb) and **SB 528** (Truenow) create the "Chief Manufacturing Officer" within the Department of Commerce to support manufacturing efforts statewide. The bills require all state and local governmental entities to assist the Chief Manufacturing Officer to the extent the law and budgetary constraints provide. The bills require that the Department of Commerce prepare an initial report to the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate by December 15, 2027, and every two years thereafter. The bills create the "Florida Manufacturers' Workforce Development Grant Program" within the Department of Commerce. The grant program is intended to support proposed projects that support small manufacturers with the deployment of new technologies or cybersecurity infrastructure and to provide training support to the workforce. (Wagoner)

Prohibited Contracting with Covered Foreign Entities (Monitor)
SB 1126 (Garcia) prohibits governmental entities from entering

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into a contract to purchase computers, printers, or videoconferencing services if the company or its parent company is domiciled in the People's Republic of China (China) or China has an ownership stake. (Wagoner)

Rural Communities (Monitor)
SB 250 (Simon) and **HB 723** (Abbott) are bills relating to rural counties. SB 250 modernizes support for fiscally constrained counties (FCC) by updating definitions and increasing the FCC threshold from $5 million to $10 million in property tax revenue generated per mil. The bill boosts FCC funding to $50 million annually by shifting from direct-to-home satellite service tax to sales tax and establishing new spending requirements for public safety, infrastructure, and other public purposes. SB 250 creates the Office of Rural Prosperity within the Department of Commerce to assist rural communities with economic development and grant access. It also introduces a Rural Resource Directory to help local governments navigate funding opportunities. To address population declines, counties that have lost residents over the past decade will receive $1 million block grants targeted for growing their population.

Other key provisions include:
- Increasing infrastructure and business development funding, including $50 million for the Rural Infrastructure Fund and an expansion of the Rural Revolving Loan Program
- Expanding broadband access through improved coordination and funding for rural connectivity
- Investing in transportation, including $50 million annually for arterial rural roads and increased funding for small county road assistance
- Enhancing education funding, including tripling consortia grants for small school districts and creating a new Rural Incentive for Professional Educators program

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offering up to $15,000 in loan repayment assistance
‣ Improving healthcare access through grants for rural hospitals, startup medical practices, and enhanced Medicaid reimbursements

HB 723 exempts certain industrial machinery and equipment used by food wholesalers in rural counties from state sales tax. The bill creates a formula for restricting the state from purchasing land in rural counties, providing some exemptions. HB 723 increases appropriations to the Small County Road Assistance Program to $50 million and designates funds for the Small County Outreach Program. Further, the bill creates a "Rural District Graduate Placement Incentive Pilot Program" to award bonuses to rural school districts and charter schools that successfully prepare and place graduates with in-demand industry certifications.

Both bills have an effective date of July 1, 2026. (Wagoner)

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Land Use Regulations (Support)
HB 217 (Abbott) and **CS/SB 218** (Gaetz) propose a narrow change to last session's SB 180 (Chapter 2025-190), which placed limits on local land-use, planning, and permitting authority after a major disaster. The bills would redefine the term "impacted local government" so that the retroactive restrictions in Section 28 of SB 180 apply only to counties that FEMA designated for both Public Assistance and Individual Assistance following Hurricanes Helene, Debby, or Milton. This change would exclude 13 counties and the municipalities within them from the retroactive and forward-looking restrictions in that section. The counties no longer covered would be Monroe, Nassau, Gadsden, Liberty, Calhoun, Jackson, Bay, Washington, Holmes, Walton, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, and Escambia. The bills do not amend

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Section 18 of SB 180, which continues to apply prospectively statewide and allows these restrictions to be triggered by any future hurricane occurring within 100 miles of a county.

CS/SB 218 was amended to apply the changes prospectively rather than retrospectively, as originally proposed. (Singer)

Land Use Regulations for Local Governments Affected by Natural Disasters (Support SB 840, Oppose HB 1465)
SB 840 (DiCeglie) and **HB 1465** (Andrade) amend sections 18 and 28 from last session's SB 180 (Chapter 2025-190), which placed limits on local land-use, planning, and permitting authority after a major disaster. The bills take different approaches to refining those limitations, resulting in distinct municipal impacts.

SB 840 narrows the definition of "impacted local government" from counties within 100 miles of a hurricane's track to those within 50 miles, and limits applicability to counties included in a federal major disaster declaration and municipalities within those counties. The bill also refines the scope of actions an impacted local government may not enforce for one year after landfall to be:

- Actions that delay the repair or reconstruction of hurricane-damaged improvements;
- Requiring repair or reconstruction of a hurricane-damaged improvement to comply with any comprehensive plan or land development regulation amendment that first became effective after landfall; or
- More restrictive procedural changes that extend development review timelines.

SB 840 clarifies circumstances under which post-storm land use actions may still be enforced, including when an application is initiated by a private property owner for

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property they own, when adoption is required to comply with state or federal law, when approved for an area of critical state concern, or when implementing floodplain management standards consistent with the National Flood Insurance Program. The bill further limits these prohibitions to properties damaged to an extent that requires a repair or reconstruction permit, and authorizes local governments to require documentation demonstrating hurricane damage.

SB 840 removes the private right of action, injunctive relief, and one-sided attorney fee provisions previously included in section 18. The bill also clarifies that this section may not be construed to restrict a local government from adopting or enforcing changes to the Florida Building Code or local technical amendments.

For section 28 of SB 180, SB 840 revises the temporary land-use freeze applicable to counties and municipalities affected by Hurricanes Debby, Helene, and Milton. The bill shortens the prohibition period, moving the end date for the moratorium and "more restrictive or burdensome" land-use and procedural restrictions from October 1, 2027, to June 30, 2026, and revises the section's expiration date accordingly. All other elements of section 28, including retroactive application to August 1, 2024, the nullification of noncompliant local actions, and the existing notice-and-cure framework, remain in place.

HB 1465 does not narrow the geographic definition of "impacted local government" and retains the existing standard based on counties located within 100 miles of a hurricane's track and the municipalities within those counties. Rather than narrowing applicability, the bill expands and specifies the scope of local actions subject to post-storm limitations by defining the terms "burdensome" and "restrictive." These definitions expressly include actions that decrease allowable density, intensity, floor area ratio, or the amount of property available for development; actions that

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increase impact fees by more than 25% over a two-year period; actions that restrict or limit the use or future use of property in a manner that negatively affects economic value; and actions or inaction that create additional reviews, extend review timelines, or delay final action on pending applications.

HB 1465 also expands the circumstances under which local government actions may still be enforced during the post-storm period by authorizing enforcement of certain comprehensive plan or land development regulation amendments initiated by a county or municipality when necessary to comply with changes in state or federal law, when submitted to address compliance deficiencies under the Evaluation and Appraisal Review process, or when the application substantially increases allowable density or intensity throughout the jurisdiction, implements a form-based code, and does not substantially restrict development outside an urban service area.

In addition, HB 1465 imposes new application-processing requirements not included in SB 840. The bill requires that applications for site plans, development permits, development orders, or comprehensive plan amendments that are pending as of March 31, 2026, be processed and considered under the regulations in effect at the time the application was filed, notwithstanding the adoption of more restrictive or burdensome local regulations while the application remains pending. This requirement applies during the post-storm restriction period and limits the effect of subsequently adopted local land-use or procedural changes on pending applications.

Unlike SB 840, HB 1465 retains and expands the private enforcement framework in section 28 of SB 180. The bill authorizes residents, business owners, or property owners to bring civil actions for declaratory and injunctive relief for violations of the section, provides for preliminary injunctive relief during litigation, and preserves one-

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sided attorney fee provisions, subject to a notice-and-cure process that allows a local government to withdraw or repeal a challenged action within specified timeframes to avoid liability. (Singer)

Other Bills of Interest
HB 1527 (Chamberlin) and **SB 1584** (Martin) – Senate Confirmation of Gubernatorial Appointments and Legislative Approval of Extended States of Emergency

ENERGY

Prohibited Governmental Policies Regulating Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Oppose)
CS/HB 1217 (Snyder) and **CS/SB 1628** (Ávila) prohibit governmental entities, including municipalities, from adopting or requiring the adoption of "net-zero" policies and from using government funds, imposing taxes, fees, penalties, or assessments, or implementing programs that support, implement, or advance such policies. Both bills expressly prohibit inclusion of net-zero policies in comprehensive plans, land development regulations, transportation plans, or other adopted local policies; prohibit procurement or purchasing preferences based solely on carbon intensity or fuel source; prohibit participation in cap-and-trade or similar emissions trading programs; and require annual compliance affidavits signed under penalty of perjury. Both bills amend ss. 125.01, 166.021, and 166.201, F.S., to condition county and municipal planning, zoning, taxation, and fee authority on compliance with these prohibitions, effective July 1, 2026. This language was incorporated into the Senate tax package; see the summary for SPB 7046 for further information.

CS/SB 1628 differs from CS/HB 1217 by assigning the annual compliance affidavit requirement to the Department of Environmental Protection rather than the Department of Revenue, by expressly applying the prohibitions to community

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development districts, improvement districts, and homeowners' associations, and by including more detailed statutory definitions and express prohibitions on paying dues to non-governmental organizations that support net-zero policies. SB 1628 also conditions county comprehensive planning and zoning authority on compliance with newly created section 377.817, F.S., and specifies applicability to proposed governmental actions taken on or after July 1, 2026.

CS/HB 1217 was amended to revise and restructure several provisions of the bill, while still maintaining its core prohibitions, including the prohibition on governmental entities, including municipalities, from adopting or requiring the adoption of "net-zero" policies and from using government funds, imposing taxes, fees, penalties, or assessments, or implementing programs that support, implement, or advance such policies. The bill removes several statutory definitions and narrows others, including the definition of "net-zero policy." The bill also adds clarifying carve-out language for municipal utilities and for governmental entities implementing specific energy policies or regional air and water pollution control policies. (Singer)

Other Bills of Interest
HB 193 (Boyles) and **SB 200** (Bradley) – Utilities
HB 545 (Gerwig) and **SB 602** (Bernard) – Watercraft Restrictions Based on Energy Source
HB 1145 (Maggard) and **SB 1482** (Bernard) – Electric Utility 10-Year Site Plans

ETHICS AND ELECTIONS

Employee Protections (Monitor)
CS/SB 92 (Gaetz) and **HB 139** (Maney) prohibit public employers or independent contractors from taking retaliatory personnel action against an employee who

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reports to the Florida Commission on Ethics a violation of the state ethics code or violation of Article II, Section 8(f) of the Florida Constitution (prohibiting lobbying for compensation by current public officers and former public officers for six years following service in a public position). The bills specify that reports of such violations are protected activities and classify adverse (retaliatory) personnel actions taken against a reporting individual by a public officer, employee, or local government attorney as a breach of the public trust. In addition, the bills prohibit public employers and independent contractors from taking retaliatory personal action against any employee who discloses information to the Florida Commission on Ethics relating to an alleged breach of the public trust or alleged violation of Article II, Section 8(f). The bills define and describe the prohibited adverse personnel actions and specify the types of information disclosed by employees subject to the bills' protections. The bills specify procedures, timeframes, and available remedies for employees subject to prohibited adverse personnel actions. The bills authorize the filing of a civil action in circuit court following exhaustion of any administrative remedies and specify that available remedies in such an action must include the following: reinstatement to position or its equivalent, or front pay; reinstatement of fringe benefits and seniority rights; compensation for lost wages, benefits, or other lost remuneration; payment of costs and attorney fees to a prevailing employee or prevailing employer (for frivolous actions); injunctive relief; and temporary reinstatement (temporary reinstatement does not apply to an employee of a municipality). The bills allow employers to assert an affirmative defense that the personnel action would have been taken absent the employee's exercise of his or her rights under the bills. (O'Hara)

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Ethics for Public Employees (Monitor)
SB 572 (Harrell) and **HB 603** (Lopez) revise the current law definition of the term "relative" in the Florida Code of Ethics to include foster parents and foster children of a public official or employee. (O'Hara)

Other Bills of Interest
SB 62 (Arrington) and **HB 91** (Tant) – Candidate Qualification
SB 620 (Mayfield) and **HB 535** (Benarroch) – Candidate Qualifying
HB 27 (Holcomb) – Term Limits for Members of Boards of County Commissioners and District School Boards
SB 126 (Gaetz) and **HB 187** (Andrade) – Public Service Commission
SB 460 (Polsky) and **HB 597** (Gottlieb) – Special Elections
HB 991 (Persons-Mulicka) and **SB 1334** (Grall) – Elections
HB 6011 (Benarroch) and **SB 964** (Wright) – Financial Disclosures, Gifts or Honoraria
SB 1622 (Rodriguez) and **HB 1369** (Antone) – Penalties for Late-filed Disclosures
SB 1598 (Bracy Davis) – Elections
SB 1416 (Polsky) and **HB 1191** (Cross) – Elections During Emergencies

FINANCE AND TAXATION

Accrued Save-Our-Homes Property Tax Benefit for Non-school Property Tax (Oppose)
HJR 211 (Overdorf) is a proposed constitutional amendment seeking to remove the $500,000 cap on the transferable Save-Our-Homes benefit (portability) for county and municipal levies, allowing for the full accrued benefit to apply upon establishing a new homestead. This bill also includes a new prohibition for counties and municipalities from lowering their total budgeted law enforcement funding below the higher level from either the 2025-26 or 2026-27 fiscal year. (Chapman)

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Ad Valorem Taxation (Oppose)
HB 215 (Albert) is a proposed bill seeking to revise Save-Our-Homes portability benefits for married persons establishing a joint homestead to apply up to a combined $500,000 limit on portable accrued benefits to reduce the newly assessed taxable value for non-school property tax levies (cities, counties, special districts). The bill also prohibits increasing the prior year's millage rate of a taxing authority without a two-thirds majority vote. (Chapman)

Ad Valorem Tax Exemption for Disabled Veterans (Monitor)
HB 393 (Woodson) and **CS/SB 450** (Polsky) propose to remove the cap on the amount of an ad valorem tax exemption that may be transferred to the surviving spouse of a disabled veteran and revise the dates from which the exemption is granted. The bills also seek to eliminate the limitation on the amount of the tax exemption the surviving spouse may transfer to a new homestead.

CS/SB 450 was amended to set a cap at no more than 120% of the ad valorem exemption amount that may be transferred to the surviving spouse. (Chapman)

Ad Valorem Tax Exemption for Nonprofit Homes for the Aged (Monitor)
HB 1131 (Smith) and **SB 1430** (Wright) would change the rules about who can get a property tax break for nonprofit homes for older adults. The bills would let more Florida limited partnerships qualify if they are connected to a nonprofit organization. To qualify, the partnership's main owner must be a nonprofit group or be fully owned by a nonprofit group, and that nonprofit must be a charity approved by the IRS. The nonprofit does not have to be licensed as a care facility. These new rules would start with property taxes calculated in 2027. (Chapman)

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Ad Valorem Tax Levies (Oppose)
HB 789 (Chamberlin) is the implementing bill for HJR 787, which seeks to remove the authority of counties and school districts to levy ad valorem property taxes. Exceptions to this elimination of the ad valorem tax levies are for millage rates dedicated to debt service until such time as the debt service is paid off. The bill repeals various sections related to school district funding, including required local effort calculations for the Florida Education Finance Program. (Chapman)

Ad Valorem Tax Revenue in Fiscally Constrained Counties (Support)
HB 799 (Tuck) and **SB 932** (McClain) would require the Legislature to appropriate funds to fiscally constrained counties to offset ad valorem tax revenue reduction resulting from future constitutional amendments reducing or eliminating property tax levies. The bills establish an application process to seek revenue replacement, specify a calculation of 95% of the estimated reduction of taxable value multiplied by the lower of the 2026 or current-year millage rate, and revert unused funds back to the State if a county fails to apply.

While these measures do not directly impact cities, the League supports them as an important acknowledgment that any reduction in ad valorem tax revenue should be paired with a revenue replacement mechanism, including potential future amendments applicable to municipalities. (Chapman)

Assessed Home Value Homestead Exemption of Non-school Property Tax (Oppose)
HJR 207 (Abbott) is a proposed constitutional amendment that would provide a homestead exemption equal to the amount of 25% of the property's assessed value and applied after the existing exemptions for non-school property tax levies (cities,

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counties, special districts). The 25% calculation is not adjusted for inflation. This bill also includes a new prohibition for counties and municipalities from lowering their total budgeted law enforcement funding below the higher level from either the 2025-26 or 2026-27 fiscal year. (Chapman)

Assessed Value of Non-Homestead Property (Oppose)
HJR 903 (Grow) is a proposed constitutional amendment seeking to lower the adjustment in annual assessment values for non-homestead properties from the current cap of 10% to a maximum annual increase of 3% in assessed value. (Chapman)

Assessment of Homestead Property (Oppose)
HB 69 (Holcomb) is the implementing bill for HB 67 (Holcomb). If approved by the voters on the 2026 General Election ballot, HB 69 would ensure that annual assessed taxable values on homestead properties do not exceed 1.5% or CPI, whichever is lower. (Chapman)

Assessment of Homestead Property (Oppose)
SB 280 (Bernard) is the implementing bill for SJR 278, limiting the assessed value increase for non-school property tax levies (cities, counties, special districts) on homestead property acquired by a new owner under certain conditions. The bill also caps the assessed value at no more than 150% of the prior year's assessment if the property's previous assessed value was under $500,000, and the new owner qualifies for a homestead exemption. The standard homestead assessment limitations for subsequent years after the initial transfer are retained. (Chapman)

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Assessment of Inherited Homestead Property (Monitor)
HJR 793 (Alvarez, J.) and **SJR 1210** (Rodriguez) are joint resolutions proposing to amend the constitution to authorize the Legislature to exclude inherited homestead property transfers from being treated as changes in ownership for property tax assessments. (Chapman)

Assessment of Property Owned and Used by Small Businesses (Oppose)
SB 284 (Bernard) is the implementing bill for **SJR 282**. The bill creates an assessment limitation for real property owned and used by small businesses, capping annual changes in assessed value for non-school property tax levies (cities, counties, special districts). The bill provides for a definition of small business by referencing section 288.703, Florida Statutes. Applying this definition, small businesses that own real property would see their assessed value of real property is limited to an annual increase of 3% or the Consumer Price Index change, whichever is lower. The bills also require the lowering of assessed value to market value if the calculated assessment exceeds market value. The properties will be re-evaluated/re-assessed upon the change of ownership or if the property no longer meets the definition of being used by a small business. (Chapman)

Assessment of Property with Decreasing Just Valuation (Oppose)
HJR 1411 (Hunschofsky) and **SJR 1610** (Polsky) seek to change the Florida Constitution so that if a home's market value goes down from one year to the next, the assessed value used for property taxes cannot go up. This would apply to both homestead and non-homestead property. These bills still allow increases in assessed value if the property has changes, like improvements or additions. These changes would start on January 1, 2027, if voters approve the amendment. (Chapman)

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HB 1413 (Hunschofsky) and **SB 1608** (Polsky) are the implementing bills for HJR 1411 and SJR 1610, which propose to amend the constitution to block increases in the assessed value of homestead property when its market (just) value falls below the prior year's value. The bills would also prevent increases in assessed value for non-homestead residential property, for all levies other than school districts, when the property's market (just) value declines. Further, the bills restrict increases in assessed value for non-residential real property, for all levies other than school districts, when its market (just) value decreases. (Chapman)

Assessments Levied on Recreational Vehicle Parks (Monitor)
HB 39 (Nix) and **CS/CS/SB 118** (Truenow) propose changes to the methodology by which local taxing authorities may levy special assessments on recreational vehicle parks. The bills clarify that counties, municipalities, and special districts may levy a non-ad valorem special assessment on recreational vehicle parks, prohibiting assessments against more than 400 square feet for each recreational vehicle parking space or campsite. This language was amended into the Senate tax package. See the summary for SB 7046 for more information. (Chapman)

Automatic Dependent Surveillance Broadcasts (Monitor)
CS/HB 387 (Bankson) and **CS/CS/SB 422** (Wright) seek to prohibit airports from using an airplane's ADS-B information to ascertain an airplane's location in order to generate or collect fees from aircraft owners or operators within Florida. The prohibition applies to fees assessed for landings, including touch-and-go landings, aircraft departures, or entry into a specified radius of an airport. This prohibition is extended to both public and private airports. (Chapman)

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Corporations (Monitor)
HB 1511 (LaMarca) creates a new statutory framework establishing a New Corporation Tax Refund. The bill authorizes that a corporation is eligible to receive a refund of all taxes paid during its first taxable year, with the refund issued in the corporation's third taxable year. The bill also reduces the fees for filing the articles of incorporation. (Chapman)

County and School District Ad Valorem Taxing Authority (Oppose)
HJR 787 (Chamberlin) is a proposed constitutional amendment seeking to remove the authority of counties and school districts to levy ad valorem property taxes. This amendment would continue to allow municipalities to levy ad valorem property taxes. (Chapman)

Deferred and Unpaid Taxes (Monitor)
HB 957 (Long) seeks to limit homestead tax deferrals to properties valued at $1 million or less and increases the minimum value of tax certificates for public sale. The bill also raises the minimum unpaid tax threshold from $250 to $500 for certificates sold at public auctions or through electronic bidding processes. (Chapman)

Disclosure of Estimated Ad Valorem Taxes (Support)
CS/HB 827 (Anderson) and **CS/SB 856** (DiCeglie) propose to require online property listings to include estimated ad valorem taxes should the property be sold at the listed rate, rather than displaying the current owner's taxes to give prospective buyers an accurate picture of future tax liabilities. The disclosure must also include disclaimers about variations in local tax rates, exemptions, and other tax benefits, and bars the online platform from displaying current or past ad valorem taxes

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except for historical context. As amended, the bills postpone the date the bills take effect from July 1, 2026, to February 1, 2027. (Chapman)

Distribution of Funds to Homestead Property Owners (Monitor)
HB 71 (Holcomb) creates a Homestead Property Tax Relief Program that will provide $1,000 payments to eligible homesteaders beginning in 2026 through 2030. The program will be administered by the State's Chief Financial Officer in coordination with the Florida Department of Financial Services and County Property Appraisers. While the exact source of the funds for the program is not identified, it is logical the funding for the program would be appropriated by the State from their general fund to the Department of Financial Services each year for the life of the program. The program is to be repealed on January 1, 2031. (Chapman)

Elimination of Non-school Property Tax for Homesteads (Oppose)
HJR 201 (Steele) is a proposed constitutional amendment seeking to eliminate all non-school (local government) property tax levies on qualifying homestead properties. This bill also includes a new prohibition for counties and municipalities from lowering their total budgeted law enforcement funding below the higher level from either the 2025-26 or 2026-27 fiscal year. (Chapman)
Elimination of Non-school Property Tax for Homesteads for Persons Age 65 or Older (Oppose)
HJR 205 (Porras) is a proposed constitutional amendment seeking to fully exempt homestead properties from non-school property taxes if the owners of the property are 65 years old or older. This bill also includes a new prohibition for counties and municipalities from lowering their total budgeted law enforcement funding below the higher level from either the 2025-26 or 2026-27 fiscal year. (Chapman)

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Homestead Assessment Limitation Transfer (Monitor)
SB 1184 (Rodriguez) and **HB 6027** (Fabricio) seek to clarify Florida's homestead property tax rules. The bills remove confusing wording that suggested a homeowner could only transfer tax savings from their most recent home. Instead, the law would clearly match the Florida Constitution, which allows homeowners to transfer their homestead tax savings from a home they owned within the past three years. This change does not create a new benefit but ensures the written law matches what the Constitution already allows and avoids confusion for homeowners and property appraisers. (Chapman)

Homestead Exemptions (Monitor)
CS/SB 110 (Arrington) and **CS/HB 227** (Maney) update state law to clarify who can be considered the owner of a home for purposes of receiving the homestead property tax exemption. The bill confirms that certain people—such as those buying a home under a recorded contract for deed, long-term residential leaseholders, or residents of cooperative housing—are treated as having ownership for homestead exemption purposes.

The bill is described as clarifying existing law rather than expanding eligibility. However, if the change is interpreted broadly, it could allow more properties to qualify for the exemption, slightly reducing the local property tax base.

The bills were amended to clarify that 98-year or longer leases still qualify for the exemption even if the lease includes a terminating provision. (Chapman)

Homestead Property Exemption for Persons Age 65 or Older (Oppose)
SJR 270 (Bernard) is a proposed constitutional amendment to create a uniform exemption to fully exempt persons aged 65 or older and whose household income

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does not exceed $350,000 annually from non-school property tax levies (cities, counties, special districts). The household income is indexed to adjust for the average cost-of-living increases annually. Persons who are partially or totally disabled veterans aged 65 or older who do not qualify for this new exemption will continue to receive existing tax discounts under law. (Chapman)

SB 272 (Bernard) is the implementing bill for SJR 270. Key provisions of the implementing bill are that it reduces the permanent residency requirement from 25 years to five years for seniors seeking the exemption for non-school property tax levies (cities, counties, special districts). Raises the household income threshold from $20,000 per year to $350,000 adjusted annually for cost of living. Excludes school district levies from the full property tax exemption. Revised disabled veterans' exemptions to exclude those who qualify under this new full homestead exemption. (Chapman)

Homestead Property Tax Benefits for Long-term Owners (Oppose)
SJR 274 (Bernard) is a constitutional amendment proposing preventing the assessed value of homestead property for non-school property tax levies (cities, counties, special districts) from increasing after 20 years, and grants an additional homestead tax exemption for those residing in their homestead for 30 years or more. Stops any increase in assessed homestead value after 20 continuous years of ownership and residency. Grants a new 50% homestead tax exemption, excluding school district levies, for owners residing on their property for 30 years or more. Allows periods of ownership and residency on multiple homes to be aggregated in reaching the 20-year and 30-year thresholds. (Chapman)

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Homestead Property Tax Benefits for Long-term Owners and Permanent Residents (Oppose)

SB 276 (Bernard) is the implementing bill for SJR 274 and seeks to expand homestead property tax benefits for non-school property tax levies (cities, counties, special districts) for Florida homeowners who have maintained ownership and residency for at least 20 or 30 years. Sets a new assessment limitation for homestead properties owned and used continuously as a permanent residence for 20 years or more, freezing the assessed value determined in the 20th year of ownership and residency. Allows owners to aggregate time from multiple homestead properties to meet the 20-year threshold for the new assessment limit. Creates a new homestead exemption (s. 196.078, Florida Statutes) for taxpayers who have held legal or beneficial title and used the property as a permanent residence for 30 years or more, granting a 50% reduction in assessed value (excluding school taxes). Authorizes the property appraiser to track and verify eligibility based on aggregated periods of ownership and residency, and permits the Department of Revenue to issue emergency rules for administration. (Chapman)

Homestead Tax Exemptions (Monitor)

HB 1545 (McFarland) proposes to exempt routine maintenance from triggering a property tax reassessment and revises penalties and interest rates for unlawful homestead exemptions. Specifically mentioned in the bill is that maintenance or repair of homestead property, including roof or window replacement, does not constitute a 'change, addition, or improvement' for purposes of property assessment. Further, the bill replaces the fixed 15% interest rate and 50% penalty with an interest rate tied to section 213.235, Florida Statutes, plus a penalty of up to 50% of unpaid taxes for improperly claimed homestead exemptions. (Chapman)

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Large Scale County Destination Marketing Organizations (Support)
HB 6007 (Eskamani) and **SB 454** (Smith) propose to remove the statutory requirement that at least 40% of Tourism Development dollars be allocated to tourism promotion and advertising. (Chapman)

Limitation on the Assessed Value of New Homestead Property (Oppose)
SJR 278 (Bernard) is a proposed constitutional amendment limiting the assessed value of new homestead property for non-school property tax levies (cities, counties, special districts) that was under $500,000 before a change of ownership to no more than 150% of the previous year's assessed value. (Chapman)

Limitation on the Assessed Value of Property Owned and Used for Commercial Purposes by Small Businesses (Opposed)
SJR 282 (Bernard) limits annual increases in the assessed value for non-school property tax levies (cities, counties, special districts) of commercial real property owned by small businesses to 3% or the Consumer Price Index, whichever is lower. The bill adds a new subsection to Article VII, Section 4, Florida Constitution, capping the annual increase on certain small business commercial property assessments. This includes defining a commercial property and its uses by a small business to qualify for the assessment cap. (Chapman)

Local Business Tax Receipts (Monitor)
SB 1176 (Rodriguez) and **HB 1397** (Rizo) would make new rules for people or businesses that need a local business tax receipt and do business that is controlled by U.S. federal sanctions. These bills would require those applicants to show they have a current license or permission from the U.S. Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) before they can obtain or renew their tax receipt. If a business renews

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online, it can meet this rule by providing a digital certification instead of paper proof to the business tax receipt-issuing agency. (Chapman)

Local Business Taxes (Oppose)
CS/HB 103 (Botana) and **SB 122** (Truenow) propose to repeal Chapter 205, Florida Statutes, and eliminate the ability for local governments to levy local business tax. One exception is included in the bill for local governments that collect a local business tax through the use of gross sales receipts.

CS/HB 103 was amended to include a limited exemption from the repeal for counties that levied an additional business tax under section 205.033(6), Florida Statutes. The condition of this exemption entails that a county which has selected by ordinance to levy an additional business tax up to 50% of the original local business tax rate, must place the proceeds of that tax in an interest-bearing account, and distribute the funds to an economic development organization each fiscal year for the purpose of implementing the county's overall comprehensive economic development strategy. Eligible counties may continue to levy the tax if the rates are in effect January 1, 2026. The revenues must continue to be deposited into a separate interest-bearing account and distributed annually for the designated economic development entity. (Chapman)

Local Business Taxes (Oppose)
SB 650 (Bernard) proposes to repeal Chapter 205, Florida Statutes, and eliminate the ability for local governments to levy local business tax. One exception is included in the bill for certain counties to continue collecting a local business tax through the use of a gross sales receipt. (Chapman)

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Maximum Millage Rates for the 2027-2028 Fiscal Year (Oppose)
HB 149 (Chamberlin) seeks to mandate county governments and school districts that levy property taxes to set their millage rates to generate the same revenue as in Fiscal Year 2023-24. The section is repealed on January 1, 2029. (Chapman)

Modification of Limitations on Property Assessment Increases (Oppose)
CS/CS/HJR 213 (Griffitts) proposes a constitutional amendment to change the assessment valuation caps for non-school property tax levies (cities, counties, special districts) from being adjusted each year, with homestead properties capped at 3% or the Consumer Price Index (CPI), whichever is lower, and non-homestead properties capped at 10% or CPI, whichever is lower. This amendment would change the assessment valuation changes from each year to every three years, with homestead properties capped at 3% or CPI, whichever is lower, and non-homestead properties capped at 15% or CPI, whichever is lower. This bill also includes a new prohibition for counties and municipalities from lowering their total budgeted law enforcement funding below the higher level from either the 2025-26 or 2026-27 fiscal year.
CS/CS/HJR 213 was amended to include a prohibition on reducing law enforcement, firefighter, and other first-responder budgets, aiming to protect these services from potential budget cuts due to the loss of ad valorem revenues.

CS/CS/HJR 213 was amended to prohibit assessment increases for non-school taxes when a property's just value has decreased since the last assessment change. This prohibition does not apply when changes, additions, reductions, or improvements to the property occur. (Chapman)

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Elimination of Non-school Property for Homesteads (Oppose)
CS/CS/HJR 203 (Miller) as amended, proposes a constitutional amendment to substantially revise the taxation of homestead property by eliminating non-school ad valorem taxes levied by counties, municipalities, and special districts on homestead property, subject to voter approval. As amended on the floor, the joint resolution replaces earlier phased-in exemption proposals with an immediate exemption from all non-school ad valorem taxation on homestead property beginning January 1, 2027. School district ad valorem taxes are not affected.

The proposed amendment also establishes a constitutional funding maintenance requirement applicable to local governments by prohibiting counties and municipalities from reducing total budgeted funding for law enforcement, firefighters, or other first-responder services below the greater of the funding levels adopted for the 2025-2026 or 2026-2027 fiscal years. This limitation would apply notwithstanding reductions in local government revenues resulting from the elimination of non-school ad valorem taxes.

If approved by voters, the amendment would significantly reduce or eliminate a primary municipal general revenue source while simultaneously restricting local government budget flexibility with respect to public safety expenditures. (Chapman)

Property Insurance Relief Homestead Exemption of Non-school Property Tax (Oppose)
CS/CS/HJR 209 (Busatta) is a proposed constitutional amendment to establish a new $100,000 homestead exemption from non-school ad valorem tax levies for homestead properties that are covered by multi-peril property insurance policies.

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This exemption is adjusted for inflation annually. This bill also includes a new prohibition for counties and municipalities from lowering their total budgeted law enforcement funding below the higher level from either the 2025-26 or 2026-27 fiscal year. CS/CS/HJR 209 was amended to increase the new exemption amount from $100,000 to a $200,000 exemption and specifies how the exemption will be applied to the assessed value. CS/CS/HJR 209 is further amended to include a prohibition on reducing law enforcement, firefighter, and other first-responder budgets, aiming to protect these services from potential budget cuts due to the loss of ad valorem revenues. (Chapman)

Reduction of Annual Assessment Increases for Homestead Property (Oppose)
HJR 67 (Holcomb) proposes an amendment to the State Constitution that reduces the current annual cap on increases to the assessed taxable value of a homestead property from the current 3% or the Consumer Price Index (CPI), whichever is lower, to 1.5% or CPI. Lowering the cap on annual increases to the assessed value of homestead property would substantially limit future growth in municipal property tax revenues, even as market values rise. (Chapman)

Space Florida (Monitor)
CS/CS/CS/HB 1177 (Sirois) and **SB 1512** (Burgess) expand tax exemptions for defense and aerospace operations and revise contracting procedures for Space Florida. The bills broaden existing ad valorem tax exemptions to cover additional property used for qualifying defense and aerospace operations, reducing the property tax liability for these properties. The bills also exempt certain government-owned property leased to private entities for defense or aerospace purposes from specified lease-related taxes. In addition, the bills create a new sales tax exemption for certain defense and aerospace machinery and equipment when leased under qualifying

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arrangements. Collectively, these changes could result in reduced local tax revenues in jurisdictions with significant defense or aerospace activity.

CS/CS/CS HB 1177 was amended to significantly narrow the scope of the bill. The bill now defines the term "strategic spaceport" in relation to deepwater commercial navigation and requires the governing board of a seaport located within five miles of a strategic spaceport to coordinate with Space Florida regarding certain changes. The bill also amends the statutory duties of Space Florida, including requiring the expansion of its independent board of directors to include a representative from the Jacksonville Aviation Authority. (Chapman)

Tax/Sales Taxes (Oppose)
HB 791 (Chamberlin) proposes to increase the general sales tax rate from 6% to 9% with a dedicated 1/3 allocation of revenue to fund the Florida Education Finance Program. The bill creates a new 5% surtax on property transactions and requires the Department of Revenue to distribute those proceeds to the counties where the property is located. (Chapman)

Tax Referenda (Monitor)
SB 1320 (Martin) and **HB 1439** (Sapp) seek to create a local government spending analysis requirement for certain county tax increase referendums. The bills define 'local government spending analysis' as a statement assessing county government spending. There is also a requirement to include this analysis on county tax-increase referendums. Lastly, the bills authorize the Department of Financial Services to establish rules for implementing the spending analysis. (Chapman)

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Taxation (Monitor)

CS/SPB 7046 (Senate Committee on Finance and Tax) is a comprehensive tax package that includes several provisions affecting local governments. The bill revises the methodology by which local taxing authorities may levy special assessments on recreational vehicle parks by clarifying that counties, municipalities, and special districts may not levy special assessments on more than 400 square feet per recreational vehicle parking space or campsite, beginning with the 2026 assessment roll.

The bill also revises the affordable housing property tax exemption provisions by making it more difficult for local governments to opt out of the exemption on qualifying multifamily affordable housing properties. It establishes new standards that must be met before a local government may adopt an opt-out ordinance or resolution and extends the required timeframe during which the number of affordable housing units must exceed the number of renter households from one year to three consecutive years. The bill further allows certain qualifying multifamily affordable housing projects that obtained final site approval within four years preceding the adoption of an opt-out ordinance or resolution to continue receiving the exemption, with these provisions applying to the 2027 property tax roll.

The bill also revises the method by which certain taxing authorities calculate and adopt millage rates by requiring that if a taxing authority levied zero mills in the prior year, any millage adopted in the following year must receive formal approval, either through a unanimous vote of the governing body or by a three-fourths vote if the governing body consists of nine members or more, or by referendum before it may be imposed. In addition, the bill amends the statutory definition of a fiscally

constrained county to expand eligibility to include any county in which one mill would generate no more than $10 million in revenue, revises the distribution formulas for certain revenues allocated to fiscally constrained counties, and imposes additional restrictions on the use of those distributed funds.

The bill establishes a new sales tax exemption for liquefied petroleum gas tanks with a capacity of 20 pounds or less and creates a new sales tax holiday for hunting, fishing, and camping supplies from September 7, 2026, through December 21, 2026, outlining qualifying items and authorizing the Department of Revenue to adopt emergency rules as necessary. These new statewide sales tax exemptions and temporary sales tax holidays may have indirect impacts on municipal sales tax revenues.

The bill also creates a new section of Florida Statutes prohibiting governmental entities, including municipalities, from adopting or requiring "net-zero" policies, from using public funds or imposing taxes, fees, penalties, or assessments to advance such policies, and from incorporating net-zero requirements into comprehensive plans, land development regulations, transportation plans, procurement policies, or similar local actions. The provision also prohibits participation in cap-and-trade or similar emissions trading programs and requires annual compliance affidavits to the Department of Environmental Protection, effective January 1, 2027.

Finally, the bill amends the definition of "school operational purposes" to include all charter schools, not just those sponsored by a school district, with the change applying to the 2026 property tax roll.

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CS/SPB 7046 was amended to add several new provisions. The bill creates a sales tax exemption for electricity used for an EV charging station and amends state tax definitions to classify electricity sold to an electric vehicle charging operator as a sale for resale, making the operator's purchase of electricity a non-taxable wholesale transaction. They also exclude EV charging operators from the definition of "distribution company" for purposes of the state gross receipts tax.

A new provision was added that revises the cap on the amount of a disabled veteran's property tax exemption that may be transferred to a surviving spouse, limiting the transfer to no more than 120% of the original exemption amount. The bill also revises the date on which the exemption takes effect.

The bill creates a sales tax exemption for tangible personal property purchased by contractors working directly for a state university when such property is incorporated into a university public works project. The bill clarifies the process of applying for the exemption, including required documentation and refund procedures. The bill also directs the Department of Revenue to adopt rules governing the administration of the exemption.

HB 7031 (House Committee on Ways and Means) is a is a comprehensive tax package that includes several provisions affecting local governments. The bill expands the list of taxing authorities exempt from contributing ad valorem tax increment revenues to community redevelopment agencies (CRAs) redevelopment trust funds by adding children's services councils created under s. 125.901, F.S., to the existing exemption list.

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HB 7073 modifies statutory s. 193.155 F.S., homestead portability calculation language to conform with the State Constitution by removing the word "immediate" from the statutory language. Changes will apply beginning with the 2027 ad valorem tax roll. Creates a 3% annual assessment cap for qualifying mobile home parks where 75% of lots have written rental agreements (≥1 year), and ad valorem taxes are contractually passed through to tenants. If a property loses eligibility, it transitions to non-homestead cap rules (10% cap). The new mobile home assessment provisions apply beginning with the 2027 tax roll.

The bill expands and clarifies definition of "governmental purpose" for exemption purposes, particularly adding defense or aerospace uses, to include private company leases of property for an approved defense or aerospace project authorized by Space Florida's board. These changes to s. 196.012 apply beginning 2027 tax roll.

HB 7031 adds exemption from homestead abandonment rule for U.S. diplomatic, intelligence, consular, or foreign service officers stationed abroad with official documentation required to be filed by parties seeking the exemption. This would be effective on the 2027 tax roll.

The bill requires disapproval notices for applicants seeking homestead exemptions to be served before TRIM notice mailing if additional information arises after July 1. Allows affordable housing property that originally qualified while owned by the state to retain exemption after sale to a private owner, if the property continues in the qualifying use and the property owner files an annual application to verify the continued use as an affordable housing property. The exemption procedure changes

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apply to 2026 tax roll with the affordable housing provision applying to the 2027 tax roll.

The bill also revises the method by which certain taxing authorities calculate and adopt millage rates by requiring that if a taxing authority levied zero mills in the prior year, any millage adopted in the following year must receive formal approval, either through a unanimous vote of the governing body or by a three-fourths vote if the governing body consists of nine members or more, or by referendum before it may be imposed.

The bill modifies tax collection requirements for vacation rental platforms by requiring the platforms (e.g., online marketplaces) to collect and remit transient rental taxes when facilitating vacation rental transactions. The tax collections apply to sales taxes, convention development taxes, local tourist development taxes, and discretionary sales surtaxes.

Included are also several provisions pertaining to sales taxes. The bill exempts propane tanks ≤20 lbs. to be exempt from sales taxes. The dates for the Back-to-School Sales Tax Holiday are proposed in the bill. Also, the bill establishes the Home Hardening Products Refund Program by creating a refund (not point-of-sale exemption) up to $500 per homestead property (≤$700,000 just value) for impact-resistant doors, garage doors, and windows for the time frame of July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2028.

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Additionally, the bill creates ss. 420.951–420.952 in Florida Statues. The program authorizes tax credits for housing-related contributions by an Employer allowing credits against multiple state taxes if certain conditions are met.
Creates exemption from specified tax for certain flood insurance coverage. This section is repealed on June 30, 2029, unless reenacted by the Legislature. If not reenacted, the provision will revert to the statutory provision in effect on June 30, 2026.

Online real estate listing platforms are proposed to have a new requirement for online real estate listing platforms by mandating they must display estimated ad valorem taxes (not current owner's taxes) to enhance disclosure information for prospective buyers. The bill prohibits using current owner tax for projections.
Lastly, the bill includes additional sales tax exemptions for firearm accessories and continues the Hunting, Fishing, and Camping Sales Tax holiday. These new statewide sales tax exemptions and temporary sales tax holidays may have indirect impacts on municipal sales tax revenues. (Chapman)

Tourist Development Tax (Support)
SB 458 (Smith) seeks to lower the required percentage of tourism development taxes that must be used for promoting and advertising tourism from 40% to 20%. (Chapman)

Tourist Development Tax (Support)
SB 456 (Smith) proposes to add public safety improvement to the authorized uses of tourist development tax revenues. The bill extends the authorized use of revenue to

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the creation of workforce housing, including land acquisition, design, and engineering. (Chapman)

Tourist Development Tax Uses (Support)
SB 976 (Smith) seeks to include commuter rail operations as an authorized use of tourism development tax revenues for qualifying commuter rail services. (Chapman)

Transfer of Homestead Property by Inheritance (Monitor)
HB 795 (Alvarez, J.) and **SB 1212** (Rodriguez) are the implementing bills for **HJR 793** and **SJR 1210**, should they be approved by referendum. The bills exempt certain inherited homestead property transfers from being treated as changes in ownership if the inheritor establishes a homestead status within one year. The effect of the bills would be that qualifying inherited property would not be reassessed as if it were sold to another party, and the existing assessed value would continue as though no change of ownership occurred. (Chapman)

Other Bills of Interest
HB 175 (Barnaby) – Issuers of Digital Assets
HB 183 (Barnaby) – Investments and Deposits of Public Funds
HB 185 (Dunkley) – Sales Tax Exemption for Home Hardening Products
HB 311 (Edmonds) and **SB 1672** (McClain) – Tax Credits for Contributions to Assist Homebuyers
SB 314 (Burton) – Issuers of Digital Assets
SB 434 (Leek) and **HB 617** (Overdorf) – Assessment of Property Used for Residential Purposes
HB 6009 (Fabricio) – Documentary Stamp Exemption
HB 665 (Daniels) – Sales Tax Exemption for Motor Vehicles Sold to Veterans
SB 752 (DiCeglie) – Taxation of First Time Homebuyers

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SB 446 (Smith) – Large Scale County Destination Marketing Organizations
HB 951 (McFarland) and **SB 1074** (Gaetz) – One-cent Piece
HB 847 (Bankson) and **SB 1076** (Calatayud) – Research and Development Tax Credit
HB 1137 (Robinson, W.) and **SB 678** (Mayfield) – Excise Tax Deductions on Alcoholic Beverages
HB 1257 (Nixon) – Tax/Documentary Stamp Tax to Fund Down Payment Assistance

GENERAL

Local Government Enforcement Actions (Oppose)
CS/HB 105 (Brackett) and **SB 588** (McClain) apply to municipalities, counties, and special districts. The bills establish a uniform method for regulatory enforcement and create an investigative process and certain legal remedies for persons subject to local government enforcement action. "Enforcement action" is defined as any decision, determination, demand, inspection, citation, order, denial, interpretation, or other regulatory action taken by a local government entity or employee. The bills prohibit a local government or local government employee from initiating or threatening to initiate any enforcement action that is determined to be "arbitrary or unreasonable" by a court. The bills authorize a person subject to an enforcement action to submit a request for a review of such action by the local government. The local government, within 30 days of receiving such request, must provide a written response. If the local government fails to issue a written response within the prescribed timeframe, the bills authorize the person subject to the enforcement action to file legal action against the local government to determine whether the enforcement action is arbitrary or unreasonable. The action must be filed within 180 days after the enforcement action. The bills specify that an enforcement action is arbitrary or unreasonable if it: 1) is not supported by applicable law, rule, or adopted policy; 2) deviates from a prior determination or interpretation without written

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justification; 3) unreasonably delays or obstructs lawful development, permitting, or other business activity; or 4) imposes requirements or conditions not authorized by general law, ordinance, or regulation. The bills authorize a court to award attorney fees and costs to a prevailing plaintiff, award damages not to exceed $50,000 per occurrence, and issue injunctive relief. The bills authorize local governments to establish rules addressing the review of enforcement actions. In addition, the bills specify that a person or employee who, in good faith, discloses information relating to an arbitrary or unreasonable enforcement action is not subject to retaliation and is afforded protection under the Florida Whistleblower Act. The bills specify that remedies are the "sole authority" for challenges to arbitrary or unreasonable enforcement actions by a local government or local government employee, and void any conflicting local government ordinance, rule, or policy that prohibits or restricts a local government or local government employee from complying with it. CS/HB 105 was amended to exclude from the bill the following actions: proprietary activities, actions by law enforcement, workers compensation, employment or personnel actions, procurement, franchises, the adoption or amendment of budgets, including revenue sources necessary to fund the budget, emergency actions, the issuance or refinancing of debt, actions or decisions that apply equally to all similarly situated persons, and reasonable interpretations made by the government of existing rules, ordinances, resolutions, statutes, or regulations. In addition, CS/HB 105 was amended to include actions by building officials and fire marshals. (O'Hara)

Other Bills of Interest
SB 1172 (Arrington) – Administrative Procedures
HB 1341 (Plakon) and **SB 1394** (Martin) – Department of Business and Professional Regulation

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

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Abandoned Cemeteries (Monitor)
SB 1248 (Davis) and **HB 1479** (Driskell) require that when credible evidence shows an abandoned cemetery is located on, under, or adjacent to private property, the state must be granted an easement for ingress and egress so that the cemetery can be maintained, researched, and noninvasively searched at reasonable times and in a reasonable manner after notice to the property owner. The bills expand current rights of relatives and descendants to access and maintain historic burial sites by explicitly providing state access rights for preservation and research purposes. (Cruz)

Administrative Efficiency in Public Schools (Monitor)
SB 320 (Simon) removes statutory requirements that currently require district school boards to coordinate with local governments to ensure consistency between school district educational facilities plans and local government comprehensive plans. Instead, local government review of tentative school district facilities plans is made optional rather than mandatory. These changes reduce formal coordination requirements between school districts and local governments in the educational facilities planning process. (Cruz)

Agricultural Enclaves (Oppose)
CS/CS/CS/SB 686 (McClain) and **CS/CS/HB 691** (Botana), as amended, substantially revise the statutory framework governing the development of agricultural enclaves. The bills revise the statutory definition of "agricultural enclave," including ownership, acreage thresholds, surrounding development criteria, and population limitations.

These revisions are temporary and are scheduled to expire on January 1, 2028, at which time the statutes revert to prior law unless reenacted by the Legislature. Because agricultural enclaves are defined as unincorporated parcels of land, the bills primarily apply to counties rather than municipalities.

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The bills expand eligibility for certification of agricultural enclaves and limit local government discretion over development of qualifying agricultural lands. Property owners may apply to the county for certification of a parcel or parcels as an agricultural enclave if adjacent parcels or developments permit the same or greater density or intensity as the proposed development. CS/CS/CS/SB 686 further authorizes applications to be submitted by an owner's agent or controlling entity and clarifies that an applicant may not rely on the perimeter of another parcel previously certified as an agricultural enclave to satisfy enclave qualification requirements.

The bills establish mandatory timelines for county review. Within 30 days after receiving an application, the county must issue a written report determining whether the parcel meets statutory criteria, and within 30 days thereafter must hold a public hearing to approve or deny certification. If the county fails to act within 90 days after receipt of the application, the parcel is deemed certified as an agricultural enclave by operation of law. Any denial must include written findings of fact and conclusions of law and is subject to judicial review.

Once certified, the property owner may submit development plans for single-family residential development consistent with the uses, density, or intensity permitted on adjacent parcels or developments. Such development must be treated as a conforming use regardless of the county's comprehensive plan, future land use designation, or zoning classification. The bills prohibit counties from imposing regulations on agricultural enclave developments that are more burdensome than those applied to comparable developments and require enclaves adjacent to an urban service district to be treated as though located within that district. Development approval must proceed pursuant to a mutually agreed written

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schedule, which may be administrative in nature, may not exceed 180 days, and may not require additional quasi-judicial hearings or public hearings.

Both bills also authorize certified agricultural enclaves located adjacent to an interstate highway to be developed for commercial, industrial, or single-family residential uses when adjacent parcels or developments allow comparable density or intensity. The legislation establishes a rebuttable presumption that related comprehensive plan amendments do not constitute urban sprawl and creates a structured negotiation and state review process if agreement on plan amendments cannot be reached.

The bills preserve existing statutory protections for certain sensitive areas, including areas of critical state concern, the Everglades Protection Area, the Wekiva Study Area, military installations and ranges, and lands encumbered by recorded conservation easements. CS/CS/CS/SB 686 additionally encourages, but does not require, local governments to incorporate site design measures that maintain habitat permeability where development may affect an established wildlife corridor. (Cruz)

Blue Ribbon Projects (Oppose)
CS/CS/CS/HB 299 (Melo, Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee) and **CS/CS/CS/SB 354** (McClain) establish a new statewide framework for approval of extremely large master-planned developments known as "blue ribbon projects," significantly altering existing growth-management and local land-use approval processes for qualifying projects. To qualify, a project must consist of large contiguous acreage under common ownership, the majority of which may not be located within a municipality.

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As amended, both the House and Senate bills now require a minimum project size of 15,000 contiguous acres. At least 60% of project lands must be designated as reserve area for conservation, agriculture, wildlife corridors, or similar resource-based uses, with no more than 40% eligible for development. Residential density within development areas may reach 12 units per gross acre, and at least 20% of residential units in each phase must consist of affordable housing, missing-middle housing, or housing for Florida Hometown Heroes participants.

Reserve areas are limited to conservation, agricultural, and resource-based uses and may not include golf courses, data centers, or solar farms. The Senate bill further provides that development areas may not contain data centers, expanding the restriction beyond reserve areas.

The required 60% reserve area is not equivalent to a conservation easement. Land within the reserve area may continue to be used for agriculture, ranching, silviculture, and other working-land uses unless separately placed under a conservation easement, meaning the designation does not necessarily result in permanent preservation.

As amended, the House and Senate bills now take the same general approval approach, placing primary approval authority with the local government. A landowner must apply directly to the local government for approval of a blue ribbon plan, which must undergo two publicly noticed hearings—one before the local planning agency and one before the governing body—similar to the process for comprehensive plan amendments.

Upon approval, the local government must adopt the blue ribbon plan as a site-specific comprehensive plan text amendment and depict a blue ribbon project

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overlay on the future land use map. The approved plan governs development of the property in lieu of otherwise applicable comprehensive plan provisions and land development regulations. Qualifying plans are presumed consistent with the comprehensive plan, subject to rebuttal by the local governing body upon a finding of substantial inconsistency.

A blue ribbon project may include land located within multiple local government jurisdictions, including both counties and municipalities; however, the majority of the project acreage may not be located within a municipality. If a project spans more than one jurisdiction, the applicant must obtain approval of the blue ribbon plan from each local government with jurisdiction over the affected land, and each jurisdiction must process the application through the procedures established in the bill. As a result, a blue ribbon project may include land within a city, but municipal approval is required for the portion of the project located within the municipality.

Both bills provide long-term vesting of development rights and impact mitigation for at least 50 years, extendable by an additional 25 years if at least half of the development area is built within the initial vesting period. Approved blue ribbon plans must be recorded in the public records and run with the land. Projects may be located on land with any existing future land use or zoning designation, and approved plans supersede otherwise applicable local comprehensive plan provisions and land development regulations governing the property. Applicants are also authorized to use private providers for plan review and building inspections.

The bills also establish specific infrastructure and planning requirements within the blue ribbon plan, including conceptual plans for transportation, water and wastewater service, parks and recreation, and natural resource protection, along with phased development and public facility mitigation strategies. If a project

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contributes land, funding, or construction of public facilities, the developer must receive dollar-for-dollar credits against impact fees, mobility fees, proportionate share payments, or similar exactions imposed by the local government.

The appeal framework allows an applicant to challenge a local government denial by filing a de novo action in circuit court, with the court prohibited from applying a deferential standard to the local government's decision. Approval of a blue ribbon plan may be appealed in the same manner as other comprehensive plan amendments.

Although the amended bills retain public hearings and formal comprehensive plan adoption at the local level, they substantially limit traditional local growth-management discretion by allowing qualifying projects to proceed independent of existing land-use designations and development standards, substituting a statutorily prescribed planning framework for locally adopted regulations governing these large-scale developments. (Cruz)

Charter Schools (Monitor)
SB 1100 (Massullo, Jr.) amends Florida's charter school statutes to expand who may sponsor certain types of charter schools by authorizing Florida College System institutions and state universities to serve as sponsors for "job engine" charter schools, and to allow municipalities to apply to convert existing public schools to charter status under that framework. The bill also requires that specified tax revenues from the school district attendance zone be provided annually to the sponsor of a job engine charter school. (Cruz)

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Charter School Facilities (Monitor)
CS/HB 1147 (Nix) and **CS/SB 824** (Truenow) deal with unimproved real property owned by school districts. CS/SB 824 requires Florida school districts that own "vacant land" under certain circumstances to offer it first to qualified charter school operators before marketing or conveying it to others, and to award the parcel to the operator submitting the most advantageous proposal within statutory timeframes. The bills aim to accelerate school facility development and to prioritize charter operators' access to unused district land.

CS/HB 1147 requires school districts to submit to the state an inventory of unimproved land owned by the district. The state will compile a report from submitted inventories to determine statewide land use or planning. (Cruz)

Data Center Transparency and Reporting (Monitor)
HB 1517 (Joseph) establishes additional disclosure and reporting requirements related to the development and operation of data centers. The bill requires applicants seeking approval for new data centers to provide detailed information regarding facility operations and resource usage and requires certain existing data centers to publicly disclose specified operational information. The Department of Environmental Protection is directed to publish required disclosures and adopt rules to implement reporting requirements. The bill also limits eligibility for certain tax incentives or exemptions based on compliance with the disclosure provisions. (Cruz)

Data Centers (Monitor)
CS/CS/SB 484 (Avila) and **CS/HB 1007** (Griffitts) establish a statewide regulatory framework addressing transparency, electric utility service, land use considerations, and water-use permitting for data centers and other large-load electricity customers.

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The bills prohibit state and local government agencies from entering into nondisclosure agreements or contractual provisions that restrict disclosure of information related to proposed data center developments, rendering such agreements void and subject to civil penalties. The legislation also requires economic development agencies to disclose when a recruitment or expansion project involves a data center, limiting the use of confidentiality protections typically applied to economic development negotiations.

The bills create s. 163.326, F.S., expressly providing that local governments retain authority over comprehensive planning and land development regulations applicable to data centers and other "large load customers." However, the bills prohibit a data center or other large-load customer from being classified as an electric substation for purposes of local substation siting laws.

CS/HB 1007 additionally prohibits a local government from issuing a construction permit for a new data center or related support facilities located within five miles of residential property or a school, measured from the parcel boundary. This restriction does not apply to existing data centers unless expansion results in the facility qualifying as a large-scale data center and may be waived only by a unanimous vote of the governing body of the affected local government.

Both bills direct the Florida Public Service Commission to establish minimum tariff and service requirements for large-load customers, generally defined as facilities with an anticipated electrical demand of 50 megawatts or greater at a single location. These requirements are intended to ensure that large-load customers bear the full cost of electric infrastructure and service and that those costs are not shifted to other ratepayers. The bills also prohibit utilities from knowingly providing electric

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service to certain foreign entities and prevent customers from dividing electrical demand to avoid classification as a large-load customer.

The legislation further establishes a permitting framework governing consumptive water use by large-scale data centers. Water management districts or the Department of Environmental Protection may not approve permits if proposed withdrawals would harm water resources or conflict with applicable local zoning regulations or comprehensive plans. Applicants must demonstrate reasonable-beneficial water use, utilize reclaimed water where feasible, submit detailed water-use and conservation information, and obtain approval following a public hearing. (Cruz)

Department of Financial Services (Monitor)
CS/CS/HB 1221 (LaMarca) and **CS/CS/CS/SB 1452** (Truenow) are comprehensive legislative proposals relating to programs and operations of the Department of Financial Services. The bills address a variety of administrative and financial matters, including updates to financial management systems, insurance and financial regulatory provisions, and the state's unclaimed property program. As amended, the bills contain provisions affecting municipal regulatory authority and local government employment practices, migrant worker housing, and recovery residences.

The bills provide that a single-family or two-family dwelling may not be considered to have undergone a "change of occupancy" under the Florida Building Code solely because the dwelling is used as a certified recovery residence (sober living home), certain small nonprofit-operated supportive housing for individuals with mental health disorders, or residential migrant housing permitted by the Department of Health. The bill further prohibits reclassification of such dwellings for purposes of

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enforcing the Florida Fire Prevention Code based solely on these uses. Because local governments commonly rely on occupancy reclassification to trigger enhanced inspections and life-safety compliance requirements, these provisions limit municipal authority to apply additional building and fire code standards to qualifying migrant housing and recovery residences.

The bills also create a limited exception to state anti-nepotism laws, allowing a public official, including municipal officials, to appoint, employ, promote, or advance a relative as a firefighter when the hiring or promotion occurs through a competitive process established in a collective bargaining agreement. This provision directly affects municipal fire department hiring and promotional practices. (Cruz)

Education (Oppose)
CS/CS/CS/HB 1071 (Trabulsy) and **CS/CS/SB 7036** (Simon) are comprehensive education bills addressing a range of K-12 policy issues. Of relevance to municipalities, the bills preempt cities and counties from requiring public school districts or charter schools to implement a specific campus safety option through local ordinance, development order, or permitting condition.

Under current law, school districts and charter schools may satisfy statutory school safety requirements by selecting one of several authorized options, including a school resource officer, school safety officer, participation in the school guardian program, or a school security guard. The bills preempt local governments from requiring a school district or charter school to implement a specific campus safety option, leaving that decision exclusively to the school district or charter school.

In addition, the bills address local zoning regulation of small private schools. As amended, CS/CS/CS/HB 1071 provides that a private school enrolling 150 or fewer

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students is a permitted use in commercial and mixed-use zoning districts and may not be required to obtain a rezoning, special exception, or comprehensive plan amendment, nor be subject to local mitigation requirements.

CS/CS/SB 7036 includes the same zoning preemption of small private schools but differs from the House bill by preserving limited local government authority to require proportionate mitigation measures directly related to vehicular traffic circulation and pedestrian safety impacts associated with the school site. (Cruz)

Educational Facilities (Monitor)
SB 424 (Rouson) repeals requirements that school districts make underused, vacant, or surplus school facilities available to schools of hope at no cost and eliminates provisions allowing mandatory co-location in public school facilities. Correspondingly, local governments are no longer subject to provisions limiting their ability to apply local building or site-development requirements tied to schools of hope operating in district facilities. (Cruz)

Food Insecure Areas (Support)
HB 337 (Rayner) and **SB 852** (Jones) empower cities and counties to support the development of "small-footprint grocery stores" in areas officially designated as food deserts. A "food insecure area" is defined as a location identified by the Office of Economic and Demographic Research where poverty levels are high and residents live more than one mile (urban) or ten miles (rural) from a supermarket. A "small-footprint grocery store" must derive at least 30% of its sales from nutrient-dense foods such as fresh produce, whole grains, nuts, beans, and low-fat dairy products.

The bills give local governments the option but do not require them to adopt land development regulations or comprehensive plan provisions that specifically allow

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these smaller grocery stores in food-insecure areas. This authority is permissive and exists "notwithstanding any other restrictions," meaning cities may choose to authorize these uses even if current zoning or future land use designations would not otherwise allow them.

Local governments may also require certain reporting from these grocery stores, such as data on food offerings or sales of nutrient-dense products, to help track whether the stores are meeting the goal of improving access to healthy foods. (Cruz)

Historic Cemeteries Program (Monitor)
SB 34 (Sharief) and **CS/CS/HB 425** (Aristide) relate to the Historic Cemeteries Program, which was established to help preserve and restore historic cemeteries, including African-American burial sites.

As amended, CS/CS/HB 425 requires a county or municipality to administratively approve an application to rezone or change the land use designation of excess vacant land owned by a historic African-American cemetery that is recorded in the Florida Master Site File, if the land is being sold (or under contract for sale) for the express purpose of funding the cemetery's long-term maintenance and upkeep.

As amended, the House bill modifies the approval standard. Rather than requiring the new designation to match the most permissive adjacent land use, the bill now requires approval of a rezoning or land use change "to allow development consistent and compatible with adjacent land uses," and authorizes the county or municipality to use reasonable discretion in determining the new zoning or land use designation, so long as it is consistent and compatible with the surrounding area.

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SB 34 requires the local government where the cemetery is located to approve an application to change the land use designation and zoning of the excess property when the cemetery sells (or contracts to sell) the land for the express purpose of funding the cemetery's long-term maintenance and upkeep. SB 34 further requires the new land use category and zoning district to "match the most permissive" adjacent land use category and zoning district, which eliminates local discretion over the resulting designation. (Cruz)

Hyperscale Data Centers (Monitor)
HB 1007 (Griffitts) creates a comprehensive statutory framework regulating the siting, approval, and operation of hyperscale data centers and creates restrictions on where they can be located, preempting local land use authority and establishing additional procedural requirements for review and approval of these facilities.

A hyperscale data center is a very large, high-power data center that uses 25+ megawatts of electricity (enough to power thousands of homes) to run massive computing systems for companies that support cloud services, AI, websites, and online storage on a global scale.

Under the bill, hyperscale data centers are prohibited uses after July 1, 2026 in agricultural, conservation, environmental stewardship, mixed-use, and residential land-use categories and in certain waters, and local comprehensive plans and land development regulations must include specific provisions addressing them; local governments must conduct public hearings, provide broad notice, and request concurrence from the Governor and Cabinet (siting board) before construction and operation can proceed.

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The legislation also prohibits governmental entities from offering economic incentives to such centers, restricts utility rate structures to prevent cost shifting to other customers, requires water-use disclosures and hearings for consumptive-use permits, and includes noise-abatement standards for construction near rights-of-way.

For cities, HB 1007 directly affects local zoning and permitting authority over hyperscale data centers by imposing state-level definitions, establishing prohibited land-use categories, and requiring public hearings and state siting approval before local governments may issue an effective approval for those facilities. (Cruz)

Impact Fees (Oppose)
CS/SB 548 (McClain) and **CS/CS/HB 1139** (Gentry) substantially revise Florida's impact fee framework by imposing new substantive and procedural constraints on how local governments, school districts, and special districts calculate, justify, and increase impact fees. The bills define and mandate the use of a "plan-based methodology" for demonstrated-need studies, requiring the use of the most recent localized data and extending growth projections from five to 10 years. This change may increase the cost, complexity, and administrative time required to prepare or update impact fee studies needed to increase existing impact fees.

The bills narrow the ability of local governments to rely on "extraordinary circumstances" to increase impact fees beyond statutory phase-in limits. They eliminate the prior multi-factor test and instead require a demonstrated-need study that expressly identifies the extraordinary circumstances, the specific infrastructure necessitating the increase, and an implementation timeline for the improvements. The bills retain some current law requirements for extraordinary-circumstance impact fee increases, including that local governments hold at least two publicly

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noticed workshops and approve any such increase by a unanimous vote of the governing body.

Both bills prohibit the use of data older than four years, disallow certain deductions when calculating increased impact fees, and cap extraordinary-circumstance impact fee increases beyond phase-in limits to no more than 100% of the current fee, phased in over a four-year period. These restrictions apply regardless of whether a jurisdiction has historically kept impact fees low, limiting the ability of cities to adjust fees to reflect inflation or changing growth conditions.

The bills also impose new coordination mandates on counties and municipalities that assess transportation impact fees. Local governments charging transportation impact fees must enter into interlocal agreements using a plan-based methodology to coordinate mitigation and fee collection, with existing agreements required to expire by October 1, 2031. This sunset requirement forces the renegotiation of long-standing agreements to ensure consistency with current law and current growth and infrastructure needs.

In addition, both bills expand litigation exposure for local governments by revising impact fee challenge provisions. Courts are prohibited from applying a deferential standard of review, prevailing challengers may recover attorney fees and costs in specified circumstances, and local governments must refund any impact fee overpayments, with interest, within 90 days after a final judgment. (Cruz)

Local Land Planning and Development (Oppose)
CS/CS/CS/HB 927 (Sapp) and **CS/CS/SB 1138** (Massullo), as amended, establish a new statutory framework governing administrative land development review by requiring certain counties and municipalities to implement a development

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preapplication consulting services program and to utilize qualified private-sector contractors to supplement local government review of specified development approvals.

The bills apply to counties with populations of 75,000 or more, excluding counties located within an area of critical state concern, and municipalities with populations of 10,000 or more. Local governments that already operate substantially similar preapplication review programs as of July 1, 2026, are not required to modify those programs.

The bills require covered local governments, by January 1, 2027, to make development preapplication consultation services available at an applicant's request. These services may be performed either by local government staff or through the use of a qualified contractor or qualified contractor firm authorized under newly created s. 163.3169, F.S.

The preapplication review process is limited to administratively approved permits governed by objective, nondiscretionary standards and expressly designated by the local government for staff-level approval. Eligible permits include site plan or development plan approvals and subdivision approvals, including comparable administrative approvals such as permits related to trees, landscaping, signs, and minor development modifications. The program does not apply to building permits or to applications requiring discretionary approval by an appointed board or governing body.

The preapplication consultation process requires review and precertification of application completeness and compliance with applicable land development regulations before formal processing.

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When an applicant elects to use the program, the local government must confirm receipt of the proposed development application and issue a written notice identifying any deficiencies within five business days. If no deficiency notice is issued within that period, the application is deemed complete by operation of law. Upon submission of a complete application, the local government must approve, approve with conditions, or deny the application within 45 days. If final action is not taken within that 45-day timeframe and the local government fails to respond within 10 days after written notice from the applicant, the application is deemed approved without conditions, although compliance with other applicable laws remains required.

Applicants who do not elect to use the preapplication program remain subject to existing statutory review timelines, including 120-day or 180-day decision deadlines depending on whether a public hearing is required, along with statutory limits on requests for additional information and mandatory fee refunds when deadlines are missed.

The bills create s. 163.3169, F.S., requiring covered local governments to establish a registry of at least four qualified contractors or two qualified contractor firms to supplement local government staff resources. Qualified contractors are licensed or certified professionals who demonstrate knowledge and experience with applicable development approvals and include engineers, surveyors or mappers, architects, landscape architects, and certain experienced or certified urban planners. Qualified contractor firms are business entities providing these services through appropriately licensed professionals. Qualified contractors may perform preapplication consulting services, assist in processing and expediting preliminary plat and related plan reviews, and support administrative approval of plats and replats under Chapter 177.

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Local governments are prohibited from placing their own employees on their registry, but may enter into interlocal agreements to share qualified personnel with other jurisdictions. If a local government fails to establish or maintain the required registry, an applicant may retain a qualified contractor or firm of the applicant's choosing, provided no conflict exists. In such cases, the local government may not condition, delay, or deny the applicant's use of the contractor and must provide access to public records and information reasonably necessary to perform the authorized review, subject to confidentiality protections and proprietary software limitations.

The bills include an express exemption providing that the qualified contractor review framework does not apply to properties listed in or contributing to the National Register of Historic Places, locally designated historic landmarks or districts, or properties subject to historic preservation review, thereby preserving local historic preservation authority.

The bills also amend s. 177.071 and 177.073, F.S., to further limit local government authority in subdivision and plat review. They prohibit cities and counties from imposing procedural requirements or approval conditions for administrative plats or replats that exceed or conflict with those expressly authorized in state law. Local governments must accept certain forms of financial assurance that meet objective statutory standards and must allow applicants to use qualified contractors to assist in processing and expediting preliminary plat and related administrative reviews.

The bills also prohibit a local government from conditioning, delaying, or denying a building permit based on compliance with an environmental condition unless that condition is expressly required by adopted land development regulations, the local comprehensive plan, a recorded regulatory covenant or similar instrument, a

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decision of a zoning or other quasi-judicial board, or applicable state or federal law. In addition, the bills revise provisions governing subdivision processing, phased developments, and vesting of preliminary plats. While the bills do not authorize qualified contractors to make discretionary land use decisions or replace elected or appointed decision-makers, they significantly expand state preemption in administrative subdivision and permitting processes and reduce local flexibility in how those reviews are administered. (Cruz)

Military Installations and Ranges (Monitor)
HB 1141 (Mooney) strengthens coordination between local governments and nearby military installations by requiring earlier information sharing on proposed land-use and development actions that could affect military operations. For cities, this means additional notice and consultation steps during planning, zoning, and development review to help prevent incompatible development near bases and ranges. (Cruz)

Preemption to the State (Oppose)
SB 1444 (Martin) and **HB 1227** (Oliver) broadly expand state preemption over local regulatory authority in multiple subject areas.

The bills preempt all local regulation that substantially burdens the free exercise of religion and require religious services and gatherings to be allowed in residential and commercial zoning districts, regardless of local land-use restrictions. Local governments would also be limited in regulating temporary parking associated with religious attendance. Any conflicting local ordinances, regulations, or policies would be void and unenforceable, although the bills expressly preserve the applicability of generally applicable building codes, fire safety standards, and health regulations.

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Beyond religious gatherings, the bills impose additional preemptions affecting local permitting and land-use regulation. Local governments would be prohibited from denying a certificate of occupancy solely due to noncompliance with Florida-Friendly Landscaping requirements. The bills also require local governments to issue permits for certain post-hurricane repairs to single-family homes for up to one year following an emergency declaration and prohibit the denial of permits to alter, modify, or repair a home when less than 50% of the structure or value is affected and the building footprint remains unchanged.

The legislation further expands permit exemptions for residential property by eliminating permit requirements for playground equipment, fences, and irrigation systems, and by exempting work valued under $7,500 from permitting, excluding electrical, plumbing, and structural work.

The bills also restrict local regulation of private clubs by prohibiting differential treatment compared to other businesses, limiting regulation of non-member events, guest access, and internal governance, and creating a private cause of action that includes a waiver of sovereign immunity.

Finally, the bills preempt local regulation of vehicle and truck parking of home-based businesses on residential parcels larger than two acres and the parking of trailers or heavy equipment on residential parcels larger than five acres. (Cruz)

Private School Zoning (Oppose)
CS/CS/HB 833 (Cassel) and **SB 1264** (Calatayud) address local zoning regulation of small private schools. The bills provide that a private school enrolling 150 or fewer students is a permitted use in commercial and mixed-use zoning districts and may not be required to obtain a rezoning, special exception, variance, or comprehensive

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plan amendment in order to operate in those districts. The bills also prohibit local governments from imposing site-specific mitigation requirements as a condition of approval. In addition, the legislation establishes uniform fire-safety and Florida Building Code standards applicable to these schools.

As amended in the House, the bill no longer fully prohibits local governments from imposing mitigation requirements, but instead authorizes counties and municipalities to require proportionate mitigation measures necessary to address vehicular traffic and pedestrian safety impacts associated with the school. Such mitigation must be limited to impacts directly attributable to the operation of the private school and may be no greater in cost or scope than mitigation required of other uses in the same zoning district. A school may submit a traffic study demonstrating that it will not create disproportionate traffic or pedestrian safety impacts in lieu of implementing mitigation measures, and the bill provides an immediate right of action in circuit court for injunctive relief if a local government fails to comply with these requirements.

The substantive provisions of these bills were subsequently amended into **CS/CS/CS/HB 1071** (Trabulsy) and **CS/CS/SB 7036** (Simon). (Cruz)

Public Records/Data Center Confidentiality (Monitor)
CS/SB 1118 (Avila) is the public records companion bill to CS/CS/SB 484 and creates a public records exemption for certain information related to proposed data center developments. The bill authorizes a county or municipality, upon written request, to maintain the confidentiality of records revealing a person's plans, intentions, or interest in locating a data center within its jurisdiction prior to submission of a formal development application. Such information is confidential and exempt from public

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records requirements for up to 12 months, although the local government must still disclose that the project involves a data center.

The bill also exempts proprietary confidential business information related to a data center, including business plans, security measures, audits, and competitively sensitive information, from public disclosure while the information remains confidential in nature. The exemption is subject to Open Government Sunset Review and is scheduled to repeal October 2, 2031, unless reenacted. The bill takes effect only if CS/CS/SB 484 or similar legislation becomes law. (Cruz)

Transportation Concurrency (Monitor)
HB 97 (Grow) and SB 324 (McClain) amend section 163.3180, Florida Statutes, to revise transportation concurrency requirements for small counties. Current law requires all local governments that impose transportation concurrency to include a capital improvements element in their comprehensive plan identifying the public facilities needed to meet adopted level-of-service standards within a five-year period. The bills modify this requirement for small counties (those with populations of 150,000 or fewer) by allowing their capital improvement element to identify facilities necessary either to meet adopted levels of service during a five-year period or to maintain current levels of service.

This change gives small counties greater flexibility in transportation planning by permitting them to maintain existing service levels rather than plan for infrastructure improvements to meet adopted standards. Cities located within small counties may be indirectly affected if county transportation planning becomes less focused on system expansion or upgrades that also serve municipal areas. (Cruz)

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Palm Beach County Annexations (Monitor)
CS/HB 4071 (Snyder) is a local bill that applies only to municipalities within Palm Beach County and governs the provision of fire rescue and emergency medical services (EMS) when unincorporated property is annexed into a municipality. The bill provides that, for real property annexed on or after January 1, 2027, the Palm Beach County municipal service taxing unit (MSTU) whose primary purpose is to provide fire rescue and EMS must remain the service provider for the annexed property for a period of six years, notwithstanding general law, special act, municipal charter, or local ordinance to the contrary.

Upon annexation by a municipality that does not already include its entire jurisdiction within the county fire rescue MSTU through a charter provision, ordinance, or interlocal agreement, the MSTU's geographic boundaries must contract to exclude the annexed property, and the county may not levy ad valorem taxes through the MSTU on that annexed property. However, during the six-year period, the annexing municipality must annually pay the county, for the benefit of the MSTU, a service price equal to the actual cost of providing fire rescue and EMS to the annexed property.

The county, through the MSTU, remains the authority having jurisdiction during the transition period and may continue to collect the same fire rescue impact fees from the annexed property that were collected prior to annexation. At the conclusion of the six-year term, fire rescue and EMS services automatically transfer to the annexing municipality, annual service price payments cease, and the county's authority to collect impact fees in the annexed area ends, unless: (1) the annexing municipality advises that it will not provide the services; (2) the parties enter into an interlocal agreement providing for continued county services; or (3) data developed through

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required good-faith negotiations supports either an earlier transition or an extension of the six-year term through a mutually approved interlocal agreement.

The bill requires the county and annexing municipality to engage in good-faith negotiations during the annexation process regarding the timing of service transition and the expenditure of capital and operational assets in the annexed area. Any agreement to shorten or extend the six-year transition period must be supported by substantiated data demonstrating cost and level-of-service impacts, including objective response time data, staffing levels, fire suppression outcomes, and overall service depth.

If the county and annexing municipality are unable to reach an interlocal agreement, either party must initiate the conflict resolution procedures under Chapter 164, Florida Statutes, and, if unresolved, may file an action in circuit court.

As amended on the floor, the bill does not apply to any property being annexed that constitutes an enclave of 10 acres or less, as defined in s. 171.031(5)(a), F.S. (Cruz)

Other Bills of Interest
HB 713 (Gonzalez Pittman) and **SB 798** (Burgess) – Allowing Sheriffs' Offices to Occupy Any Location Within County Lines
HB 6023 (Gantt) and **SB 424** (Rouson) – Educational Facilities
HB 335 (Kendall) and **SB 916** – Spaceport Operations
SB 1738 (Yarborough) – Educational Facilities
SB 1646 (Simon) and **HB 1321** (Conerly) – Educational Facilities
SB 1232 (Arrington) and **HB 1111** (Skidmore) - Recording of Instruments Conveying Real Property

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HOUSING

Affordable Housing (Support)
SB 756 (Davis) and **HB 675** (Driskell) require the affordable units in a Live Local Act project to remain affordable for at least 50 years (current law requires only 30 years). In addition, the bills require that any development incentives offered to an affordable housing development under Section 166.04151(4), Florida Statutes, be used for the construction of affordable housing. The bills also revise the 75% property tax exemption for affordable rental units in qualifying multifamily projects in section 196.1978(3)(d), Florida Statutes. Current law allows this exemption for units that will be used to house persons whose annual household income is between 80-120% of the median annual adjusted gross income for households within the metropolitan statistical area. The bills reduce this range to between 80-100%. The bills also revise the "opt out" provisions in Section 196.1978(3)(o) for this tax exemptions. Current law allows a taxing authority to opt out of the exemption if the authority is within a jurisdiction where the number of available affordable units is greater than the number of renter households in the 0-120% AMI category. The bills adjust the 0-120% AMI range to 0-100%. The bills also exempt first-time homebuyers from payment of the documentary stamp tax on real estate transfers and from taxes imposed on promissory notes or nonnegotiable notes pursuant to Section 201.08, Florida Statutes. (O'Hara)

Affordable Housing/Live Local Act (Monitor SB 1548, Oppose HB 1389)
SB 1548 (Calatayud) and **CS/CS/HB 1389** (Redondo) amend the Live Local Act (LLA) and the Florida Fair Housing Act. The bills require municipalities and counties to authorize LLA projects on property owned by a county, municipality, or school board. It prohibits the application of dimensional regulations, such as step-backs or setbacks, to an LLA project that would have the effect of reducing the project's

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building height below the height authorized by the LLA. The bills clarify that farms and farm operations are not commercial or industrial uses for purposes of the LLA. The bills allow an LLA applicant to choose which version of the LLA they wish to proceed under. Lastly, the bills amend the Florida Fair Housing Act to include governmental entities and agencies within the definition of the term "person" under the Act. The bills specify that it is unlawful for any person to discriminate in land use permitting and development decisions based on how a project is funded or whether it is intended to provide affordable housing. The bills waive sovereign immunity in suits for discriminatory housing practices under the Act.

CS/CS/HB 1389 was amended to expand the Act to include parcels greater than three acres owned by a church with a public house of worship on it for at least five years. This expands the Act to include church property located within residential areas. The house of worship must continue on the property after the development is constructed.

CS/CS/HB 1389 also prohibits a local government from applying setback or step-back requirements to a Live Local project that exceeds the minimum setbacks and step-backs applicable in the underlying zoning district.

In addition, CS/CS/HB 1389 eliminates the authority of a local government to opt out of the ad valorem tax exemption for multifamily housing projects that provide a percentage of affordable units, even if there is no shortage of affordable housing units within the local government.

Finally, the bill requires local governments to adopt an ordinance by December 2026 to allow accessory dwelling units to be constructed on any residential property. The government may regulate the permitting, construction and use of the ADU, but it

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may not prohibit the ADU's use as a vacation rental. The local government may not increase parking requirements for the ADU, and it may not require the primary residence to be owner-occupied. The local government may not require approval of the ADU to be subject to any public hearing, zoning, conditional use, or special exception requirement. (O'Hara)

Affordable Housing/Live Local Act (Support)
SB 962 (Bradley) and **HB 837** (Busatta) revise the definitions of "Commercial Use," "Mixed Use," and "Industrial Use" within the Live Local Act to exclude farms or farm operations and any uses associated therewith, including the packaging and sale of products raised on the premises. (O'Hara)

Affordable Housing "Missing Middle" Property Tax Exemption (Oppose)
SB 1520 (Calatayud) modifies the "missing middle" property tax exemption authorized in section 196.1978, Florida Statutes, for certain "newly constructed" multifamily rental projects that provide affordable or moderate-income housing. The bill revises the conditions under which a local government may opt out of the tax exemption. To qualify for the opt-out, the local government must demonstrate, pursuant to the preceding three annual housing reports from the Shimberg Center, that sufficient rental units were available. In addition, the bill allows the owner of a property that received a final site plan approval within one year before a local government enacts an ordinance to opt out of the tax exemption to receive the tax exemption notwithstanding the enactment of such ordinance. (O'Hara)

Affordable Housing "Missing Middle" Property Tax Exemptions (Oppose)
SB 1350 (McClain) modifies the 75% and 100% property tax exemptions authorized in section 196.1978, Florida Statutes, for certain "newly constructed" multifamily rental projects that provide affordable or moderate-income housing. The bill revises the

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conditions under which a local government may opt out of the tax exemption. To qualify for the opt-out, the local government must demonstrate, pursuant to the preceding three annual housing reports from the Shimberg Center, that sufficient rental units were available. The bill further specifies the conditions for the timing of any renewal of the opt-out by a local government. In addition, a property that submitted a certification notice request to the Florida Housing Finance Corporation (FHFC) prior to adoption of an opt-out ordinance by a local government is exempt from the opt-out ordinance if the FHFC later issues the certification. The bill revises the definition of "newly constructed" to specify that the construction must be completed two years, rather than five years, prior to the owner's application for tax exemption. In addition, the bill defines the term "LURA" to mean a land use restriction agreement having a term of at least three years, and that is recorded in the public records. The LURA must specify that the property is to be used to provide housing for persons meeting the income thresholds defined in state law for extremely-low, low, and moderate-income. The bill allows properties subject to a LURA to be eligible for the 75% or 100% property tax exemption. For LURA-restricted properties, the bill specifies that an annual compliance report and statement from the FHFC are presumptive evidence that such portions of the property meet the income and rent limits required by law. Local governments are authorized to produce compliance reports for LURA-restricted properties. In addition, properties subject to a LURA are presumed eligible for a certification from FHFC for the term of the LURA. The bill specifies conditions upon which a property appraiser must issue a verification letter for the exemption and provides that an owner issued a verification letter before a local government adopts an ordinance opting out of the exemption shall be exempt from the ordinance for so long as the property continues to meet conditions for the tax exemption. The amendments to section 196.1978 made by the bill first apply to the 2027 tax roll. Section 196.1978 expires July 1, 2028. (O'Hara)

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Housing – Accessory Dwelling Units (Monitor)
CS/CS/SB 48 (Gaetz) and **CS/HB 313** (Nix) require local governments to adopt an ordinance by December 1, 2026, to allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs) by right in any area zoned for single-family residential use. The local government may not require an ADU applicant to undergo any type of discretionary review or public hearing as a condition of approval. The ordinance must apply prospectively to ADUs approved after the date the ordinance is adopted. The ordinance may regulate the permitting, construction, and use of an ADU. However, the ordinance may not:

- Prohibit rental or lease of the ADU, except to prohibit rental of an ADU approved after the effective date of the ordinance for a term of less than one month
    - Note: CS/HB 313 does NOT allow local governments to prohibit ADU rentals for terms less than 30 days.
- Require the parcel owner to reside in the primary dwelling unit
- Increase parking requirements on any parcel that can accommodate an additional motor vehicle on a driveway without impeding access to the primary dwelling unit
- Require replacement parking if a garage, carport, or covered parking structure is converted to an ADU

The ADU must be assessed separately for ad valorem tax purposes if the primary residence is homesteaded property. CS/CS/SB 48 exempts Monroe County from its mandatory ADU provisions due to the county's state-imposed limits on the number of dwelling units. The bills authorize local governments to provide density bonus incentives to any landowner who voluntarily donates real property to the local government for the purpose of providing housing that is affordable for military families receiving the basic allowance for housing. The bills also direct the Office of

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Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability to evaluate the efficiency of using mezzanine finance to stimulate the construction of owner-occupied affordable housing. (O'Hara)

Local Housing Assistance Plans (Monitor)
HB 267 (Stark) and **SB 594** (Burton) expand the list of persons eligible to receive assistance under a local housing assistance plan to include persons who own mobile homes in mobile home parks and authorize local housing assistance plans to allocate funds for rental assistance to such persons. The bills direct counties and SHIP-eligible municipalities to include in their local housing assistance plans the provision of funds for lot rental assistance to mobile homeowners in mobile home parks and revise the criteria for awards made to eligible sponsors or persons to include mobile home lot rental assistance and the construction, rehabilitation, or repair of mobile homes. The bills prohibit counties and SHIP-eligible cities from discriminating between types of housing when awarding funds from the local housing distribution pursuant to section 420.9075, Florida Statutes. (O'Hara)

Mobile Home Parks (Monitor)
SB 652 (Bernard) and **HB 853** (Long) revise the general obligations of mobile home park owners and mobile homeowners. The bills require mobile home park owners to require mobile home owners to do the following: maintain a current registration sticker on the home; maintain records regarding the owner of each home in the park and provide the records to municipal and county code enforcement upon request; and require each home owner and other persons on the premises to maintain the home and its lot in accordance with all applicable building, housing, fire, and health codes. The bills delete current law requirements that a mobile homeowner is responsible for all fines imposed by a local government for noncompliance with local codes and authorize local governments to adopt and enforce local codes or

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ordinances to ensure compliance of park owners and homeowners with Sections 723.022 and 723.023, Florida Statutes. (O'Hara)

Public Employee Housing Benefits (Support)
HB 1065 (Grow) and **SB 1432** (Calatayud) authorize a public employer to provide an employee a one-time payout of his or her sick or annual leave, or combination thereof, to assist with the purchase of a primary residence upon meeting specified conditions. The employee must maintain a balance of at least 21 days of accrued sick leave following payout. (O'Hara)

Rent of Affordable Housing Units (Support)
SB 664 (Bernard) prohibits a landlord who has received federal, state, or local funding or tax incentives because of a dwelling unit's status as an affordable housing unit from increasing the base rent of a unit during the term of a rental agreement. (O'Hara)

Other Bills of Interest
HB 489 (Owen) and **SB 1348** (Calatayud) – Terminology Associated with Fla. Housing Finance Corp.
HB 755 (Mooney) and **SB 934** (Rodriguez) – Areas of Critical State Concern
SB 716 (Jones) and **HB 811** (Daley) – Rental Agreements for Residential Tenancies
SB 956 (Bradley) – Multifamily Residential Properties
HB 1481 (Rosenwald) and **SB 1602** (Wright) – Housing for Veterans
HB 1493 (Joseph) and **SB 1726** (Smith) – Housing

LAND USE

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Infill Redevelopment (Oppose)
CS/HB 979 (Borrero) and **CS/SB 1434** (Calatayud) apply to the redevelopment of "environmentally impacted" land within Palm Beach, Broward, and Miami-Dade counties and the municipalities within them. The term "environmentally impacted" land means a parcel with environmental contamination or pollution that has undergone a Phase II Environmental Assessment and has been remediated prior to or concurrent with development of the property. The term also includes a Brownfield parcel. The term does not include designated agricultural land, land used for public park purposes, land outside an urban growth boundary, or land within a quarter mile of a military installation. The bills require a city or county to permit such property to be developed to the average density of adjacent residential zoning districts within the same jurisdiction that permits residential uses by right. A local government must approve subdivision of the parcel if it meets the requirements of Chapter 177. Development of the property must satisfy concurrency requirements of the local government. If the parcel includes recreational facilities or areas reserved for recreational use and such facilities are adjacent to single-family homes on all sides, the developer must: 1) establish the facilities have not been in use for at least 12 months; 2) pay double the parks or recreational impact fee to compensate for loss of this use or space; 3) notify adjacent property owners that they may elect to purchase the recreational facilities or areas. Development applications for these parcels must be administratively approved, and each local government must post its policies relating to such approvals on its website. The bills provide that a local government may not adopt or enforce a regulation that would have the effect of prohibiting, limiting, or restricting development of the property. Provisions apply retroactively to the extent any current local regulations would prohibit the development entitlements conferred by the bill. The bills prohibit local governments from adopting or enforcing more burdensome or restrictive requirements or procedures for the development of qualifying parcels. (O'Hara)

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Land Use and Development Regulations (Monitor)
CS/CS/SB 208 (McClain) and **CS/CS/CS/HB 399** (Borrero) address fees associated with development orders, residential land use compatibility, zoning requirements for offsite constructed homes, and various provisions to benefit specific developments. The bills require that any application fee associated with a development permit or development order be related to the direct and reasonable indirect costs associated with processing the application. Fees must be published on the municipality's fee schedule and may not be based on a percentage of construction costs, site costs, or project valuation.

The bills also impose new requirements on local governments relating to the review of certain residential developments. They require local government comprehensive plans and land development to include factors for assessing the compatibility of allowable residential uses within a residential zoning district and future land use category.

Land development regulations must incorporate objective design standards or other measures for mitigating or minimizing potential incompatibility. The bills require local governments to identify each area of incompatibility before recommending denial of an application for rezoning, subdivision, or site plan approval on compatibility grounds.

The bills prohibit local governments from denying an application on compatibility grounds if the applicant has proposed mitigation measures, unless the denial includes written findings stating that the proposed mitigation measures are inadequate and no feasible mitigation measures exist.

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The bills require the denial of an application on compatibility grounds to specify with particularity the area or areas of incompatibility. References to "community character" or "neighborhood feel" are not independently sufficient to support a denial of an application on compatibility grounds.

The bills require an off-site constructed home (a home with components manufactured off-site but assembled on-site) to be permitted by right in any zoning district where single-family homes are allowed. The bills prohibit local governments from treating an off-site constructed home differently or more restrictively than a single-family site-built dwelling. A local government may, however, apply generally applicable setback, aesthetic, and other standards that also apply to on-site single-family homes. In addition, the bills require any residential manufactured building to be placed on any lot in a mobile home park.

The bills require a public school interlocal agreement between a municipality and a school district to address reasonable access to public easements and rights-of-way necessary for siting and improvements to public and charter school facilities.

The bills require the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability to conduct a study on the effect of removing the Urban Development Boundary or similar boundaries in Miami-Dade County and other counties. In addition, the bill states that, notwithstanding any county charter, the exclusive method for the transmittal and adoption of an amendment to the Future Land Use Element of a comprehensive plan must be by majority vote of the members of the governing body.

CS/CS/HB 399 also prohibits any vote other than a simple majority to amend the future land use element of a comprehensive plan, notwithstanding any county

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charter to the contrary. The bill also requires a local government to administratively approve an application for special exception or variance submitted by a large destination resort (defined in the bill) for the modification of an existing structure upon meeting specified conditions. (O'Hara)

Local Government Land Development Regulations and Orders (Oppose)
SB 948 (McClain) and **CS/HB 1143** (Nix) prohibit the application of certain land development regulations to residential lots, require approval of townhomes and fourplexes on all residential lots, impose shot clocks and administrative approval requirements for all types of development permits and development orders, require administrative approval of lot splits, require local governments to prove the validity of their land development regulations by demonstrating the regulation satisfies a compelling governmental interest, and authorize lawsuits against local governments with attorney fee awards to prevailing plaintiffs.

CS/HB 1143 was substantially amended to remove the cause of action component and limit administrative approval requirements to apply only to applications for lot splits and subdivisions of property. It was also narrowed to apply only to the following counties and the municipalities within them: Broward, Miami-Dade, Palm Beach, Pinellas, Orange, Seminole, Volusia, Hillsborough, Duval, Lee, Sarasota, Pasco, Brevard, St. Lucie, and Manatee. SB 948 remains unchanged and is further summarized below.

Land Use Deregulation for Residential Parcels Served by Water & Sewer
The bills create a new section 163.3254, F.S., which prohibits local government land development regulations that:

- Prohibit, limit, or otherwise restrict the development of residential dwelling units (defined as single-family, duplex, triplex, fourplex, or townhome)

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- Require minimum lot sizes greater than 1,200 square feet for existing lots or lots created by lot split or subdivision
- Define "residential unit" to exclude townhomes, duplexes, triplexes or fourplexes
- Require minimum setbacks greater than zero feet for side; 10 feet for rear; or 20 feet for front (requires zero feet for front if the lot fronts a shared space)
- Require lot dimensions exceeding 20 feet
- Require more than 30% of the lot to be reserved for open space or permeable surface
- Impose building height restrictions of less than three stories or 35 feet
- Require a maximum floor area ratio of less than three
- Require owner occupancy
- Impose a minimum dwelling size greater than what is required by the Florida Building Code
- Impose a maximum residential density that is more restrictive than what is allowed under the bill
- Prohibit lots from fronting a shared space instead of a public right-of-way, and for such lots may not require parking minimums greater than one space per unit if the lot is 4,000 square feet or less, and may not require any minimum parking requirements for lots located within 1/2 mile of a permanent public transit stop (defined as a stop for commuter rail or rapid transit)

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Administrative Lot Splits
Land development regulations governing lot splits (defined as dividing a parcel into eight or fewer lots) are limited to:

- Requiring submission of relevant documentation and payment of a fee for the cost of reviewing the documentation;
- Requiring compliance with land development regulations that govern lots not created by a lot split
- Requiring that the parent parcel was not created by lot split or subdivision within the preceding 12 months

"Shot Clocks" and Administrative Approval for ALL Development Orders and Development Permits Except Building Permits
The bills create section 163.3254(6) to govern the review of applications for lots splits and residential development. The process:

- Confirm receipt of an application by the next business day
- Seven business days to review the application and issue notice of completeness or notice of any deficiencies
- Sixty days for applicant to correct any deficiencies
- Seven days after resubmittal of information by applicant to issue notice of completeness or identify remaining deficiencies
- Twenty days to *administratively approve* application once it's deemed complete
- A denial must include written findings

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- Applicant (but not the local government) may request a 60-day time extension
- If the local government fails to meet any required timeframe, the application is *deemed approved*
- Local government must refund the entire application fee for failure to meet the seven-day period to deem an application complete or identify further deficiencies

Land Development Regulations Applicable to Residential Lots Must Serve a Compelling Governmental Interest
The bills prohibit the adoption of land development regulations applicable to residential lots unless the regulation furthers a compelling governmental interest and is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest.

- Exemptions for regulations that prevent or abate a nuisance, enforce a license, permit, or authorization, enforce a federal law requirement, or result from a final judicial decision
- Ambiguities must be construed in favor of the right to acquire and possess land.
- "Compelling governmental interest" is defined as an interest that has a substantial connection to protecting public safety, health, or reasonable enjoyments and expectations of property, such as requiring structural integrity, safe plumbing, safe electricity, or preventing nuisances.

Lawsuits Against Local Governments

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An affected property owner or association may sue a local government to enforce the requirements of the newly created section 163.3254 (relating to regulations applicable to residential lots, lot splits, and procedures for development permits and orders).

- The proceeding is de novo and subject to preponderance of evidence standard
- Local government has the burden to demonstrate by clear and convincing evidence that the land development regulation at issue furthers a compelling governmental interest and that it is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest.
- Court may order declaratory relief, mandamus relief, injunctive relief, or remand
- Prevailing plaintiff recovers attorney fees and costs, including appellate
- Waives sovereign immunity

Application to Deed-restricted Communities
Homeowner Association and similar deed-restricted communities are exempted from the bill's requirements. (O'Hara)

Transportation Infrastructure Land Development Regulations (Oppose)
HB 1183 (Cross) and **CS/SB 1342** (Rouson) impose substantial development mandates on rural cities as well as cities that have bus rapid transit, rail service, commuter rail, intercity rail service, or fixed guideway transportation systems. The rural portions of the bill apply to either the county seat or the highest population municipality within the following counties: Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes,

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Jackson, Liberty, Wakulla, Washington, and Walton. The Senate bill was amended to delete the provisions relating to rural municipalities and to delete provisions that would have required local government land use regulations to serve a compelling governmental interest.

Rural Municipality Mandates
HB 1183 requires the highest population municipality in a rural county to establish a "Liveable Urban Village" (LUV) by December 1, 2026, which is defined as an area where residential development is allowed on any lots zoned for commercial, industrial, or mixed use. Within an LUV, a municipality may not: restrict building height to less than four stories; impose maximum floor area ratios of less than 3.0 for residential and less than 2.0 for commercial; impose any side setback; impose a front setback greater than 20 feet or rear setback greater than 10 feet; impose minimum parking requirements of more than one space per unit. Seventy percent of every lot within an LUV must be built upon or covered with an impermeable surface.

Mandates for Cities with Transit or Rail Service
The bills require counties and cities to establish Tier 1 and Tier 2 Transit Oriented Development Zones (TOD) by December 1, 2026. Tier 1 TOD consists of all lots within a quarter mile of a transit or rail stop or station. Tier 2 TOD consists of all lots between a quarter mile and half a mile of a transit or rail stop or station.
Tier 1 TOD Zone Mandates
A local government may not impose: building height restrictions of less than eight stories (or four stories for lots adjacent to certain single-family areas); maximum floor area ratios of less than six for residential or less than three for commercial; any minimum side, front, or rear setback; any minimum parking requirement; and any requirement that greater than 10% of a lot be reserved for open space or permeable

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surface. Height and floor area ratio minimums are doubled for counties greater than 800,000 and cities greater than 75,000 in population.

Tier 2 TOD Zone Mandates

A local government may not impose: building height restrictions of less than four stories (or three stories if adjacent to certain single family residences); a maximum floor area ratio of less than three for residential or less than three for commercial; any minimum side, front, or rear setback; no minimum parking requirement; and any requirement that more than 20% of a lot be reserved for open space or permeable surface. Height and floor area ratio minimums are doubled for counties greater than 800,000 and cities greater than 75,000 in population.

Additional Development Mandates Tier 1 & 2 TOD Zones

For all lots within these areas, a local government must zone the lots for mixed use and authorize commercial uses. A local government may not impose any restriction or prohibition on any type of single-family or multifamily use, a maximum density requirement, or a minimum dwelling unit size.

Authorizes Lawsuits against Local Governments and Shifts Legal Burden to Local Governments

The bills allow any aggrieved or adversely affected property owner or housing organization to sue a local government for damages to force compliance with the bill's requirements. A prevailing plaintiff may recover attorney fees and costs. In any legal proceeding, the local government has the burden to prove, by clear and convincing evidence, that the local government's regulation furthers a compelling governmental interest and that it is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest. (O'Hara)

NATURAL RESOURCES AND PUBLIC LAND

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Beach Management (Monitor)
CS/HB 1297 (Greco) and **CS/SB 636** (Leek) require the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to update criteria for designating "critically eroded beaches," including consideration of repeated local, private, or grant-funded repair efforts. The bills mandate automatic designation for beaches meeting specified dune and seabed conditions when local governments have a dedicated financial plan to preserve required matching funds.

The bills authorize DEP's secretary to require certain coastal local governments to develop "local strategic beach management plans" that analyze compound flooding, property values, environmental conditions, and engineering recommendations. Municipalities subject to this requirement would assume new analytical, planning, and coordination responsibilities and may need to integrate these plans with local comprehensive plans and budgeting processes. The bills also expands the scope of areas that may be designated as areas of critical state concern, which could affect municipal permitting, development review, and long-term land-use planning in newly eligible coastal or low-elevation areas. (Singer)

Public Waters (Monitor)
CS/HB 669 (Gossett-Seidman) and **SB 1042** (Rodriguez) seek to amend public water permitting and beach water health advisory processes that affect counties, municipalities, and special districts. The bills prohibit a county, municipality, or special district from applying for a permit to establish or maintain a public mooring field outside its territorial boundaries and prohibit counties from applying for such permits within incorporated areas, with limited grandfathering for permits issued before December 31, 2025. CS/HB 669 was amended to remove the limited grandfathering date.

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The bills also require the Department of Health (DOH) to adopt and enforce rules for bacteriological sampling of beach waters and public bathing places, and set minimum rule requirements. Counties, municipalities, and special districts (or the state if it owns the waters) must issue health advisories within 24 hours after sampling shows standards are not met, notify the Department of Environmental Protection and local television affiliates of advisories, and close affected waters or bathing places until water quality is restored. Local governments and special districts will need to notify DOH of unsafe water quality incidents within 24 hours and are responsible for posting and maintaining health advisory signage at affected beach access points and conspicuous areas around affected waters. CS/HB 669 was amended to no longer include these requirements. (Singer)

Other Bills of Interest
HB 1161 (Botana) and **SB 1636** (Martin) – Big Cypress Basin

OTHER

Adoption and Display of Flags by Governmental Entities (Monitor)
HB 347 (Borrero) and **SB 426** (Yarborough) prohibit governmental entities from displaying or allowing the display of any flag that does not represent a publicly recognized governmental entity or educational institution of Florida, another state, or the United States. It also prohibits local governments from adopting ordinances that authorize their flags to display or promote any political viewpoint or ideology. Violations are subject to a civil fine of $500 per day. (Wagoner)

Clerks of Court (Oppose)
CS/HB 925 (Trabulsy) and **SB 1322** (Martin) are comprehensive bills dealing with the reallocation of court-related fees and penalties related to remittances to the clerk's

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fine and forfeiture trust fund. Of concern to cities is the provision to cut the allocation relating to the "disposition of civil penalties" from its current 50.8% distribution to 28.2% and increase the allocation going to the clerk's trust fund from 5.6% to 28.2%. As a result, cities may receive less revenue from civil traffic citations and similar penalties than they do under current statutory distributions because the penalty-share formulas are adjusted to favor retention by clerks. (Wagoner)

Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (Oppose)
CS/CS/CS/SB 290 (Truenow) and **CS/CS/HB 433** (D. Alvarez) are comprehensive bills relating to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS). Of note to municipalities, the bills define "gasoline-powered farm equipment" and "gasoline-powered landscape equipment" and preempt municipalities from enacting or enforcing a resolution, ordinance, rule, or policy, or from taking any action that restricts or prohibits the use of such equipment. The bills prohibit municipalities from creating different standards for such equipment or distinguishing such equipment from any electric or similar equipment in a retail, manufacturer, or distributor setting. However, the bills do not prohibit municipalities from encouraging the voluntary use of alternative farm or landscape equipment.

The bills also direct the Acquisition and Restoration Council to determine whether any lands surplused by a local governmental entity on or after January 1, 2024, are suitable for bona fide agricultural purposes and, if so, prohibit local governmental entities from transferring future development rights for any such surplused lands.

The bills also add a requirement that, for a new biosolids land application site permit or permit renewal issued after July 1, 2020, the permittee must ensure that only Class AA biosolids are applied to the soil. The bills establish July 1, 2028, as the deadline by which biosolids land application site permits must comply with the requirement that

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only Class AA biosolids be applied to the soil. For local governments that do not transport biosolids outside their own county, the bills provide a later compliance deadline of July 1, 2031. The bills clarify that these provisions do not prohibit a local government from transporting class B biosolids outside its jurisdiction to a Class AA biosolids treatment facility or a waste-to-energy facility located within another local government's boundaries.

The bills create new definitions for "ecologically significant parcel" and "low-density municipality" and establish a statewide density cap for qualifying properties. Under the new framework, residential development on ecologically significant parcels within low-density municipalities may not exceed one dwelling unit per 20 acres unless the limitation is waived by a unanimous vote of the municipal governing body or the development is limited to housing for family members. These provisions override local zoning and comprehensive plan policies for these parcels in the affected municipalities.

The bills also modify agritourism law by adding a new definition of "rural event venue" and specifically prohibit local governments from requiring rural event venue permits or licenses on agricultural land. (Singer)

Department of Environmental Protection (Oppose)
CS/CS/CS/HB 1417 (LaMarca) and **CS/CS/CS/SB 1510** (Massullo) make extensive revisions to Florida's environmental governance and program administration, with multiple implications for municipalities. The bills also amend eligibility criteria for reduced local cost shares under the Statewide Flooding and Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan by expanding eligibility to municipalities or counties located within a statutorily defined rural community. The bills also add additional design standards for

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operational-phase stormwater management systems servicing solar facilities located in the Northwest Florida Water Management District.

The bills also revise the annual deadline for major sources of air pollution to pay operating license fees to DEP to June 30 of each year.

CS/CS/CS/SB 1510 differs from the House bill in that it includes several provisions not included in the House version. While both bills eliminate the Environmental Regulation Commission, CS/CS/CS/SB 1510 includes provisions that transfer its powers and duties to the Acquisition and Restoration Council. The bill also expands and assigns the Council to administer and oversee the Florida Communities Trust. The bill revises legislative intent language for the trust, removes references to local government involvement in conservation land acquisition and stewardship, and eliminates the trust's authority to award loans to local governments, limiting assistance to grants.

The bill also expands the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) authority over onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems (OSTDS), including permitting, inspection, maintenance, reporting, and enforcement. Municipalities would be prohibited from issuing building or plumbing permits or approving occupancy for structures served by onsite systems unless DEP has provided the required approvals, and would be preempted from requiring inspections or imposing permitting conditions at the point of property sale beyond those authorized in statute.

CS/CS/CS/SB 1510 was also amended to include a provision that revises the applicability of graywater technology incentives for developers of multifamily building projects. (Singer)

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Department of Health (Monitor)
CS/HB 733 (Gerwig) and **CS/CS/CS/SB 902** (Garcia) prohibit medical marijuana treatment centers' (MMTC) cultivation and processing facilities from being located within 500 feet of parks, child-care facilities, early learning facilities, or schools, and provide that once a facility is approved, subsequent establishment of those uses does not affect its continued operation. For dispensing facilities, the same restrictions apply unless a local government approves the location through a formal public proceeding. Facilities approved by July 1, 2026, would be exempt from these preemptions. CS/CS/CS/SB 902 was amended to define "park" for purposes of MMTC facility placement restrictions and required the Department of Health to develop an evidence-based pamphlet on the nutritional needs of preterm infants, to be provided to parents or guardians of infants receiving care in a hospital NICU. (Wagoner)

Electric Bicycles, Scooters, and Motorcycles (Support)
CS/HB 243 (Benarroch) and **CS/CS/SB 382** (Truenow) establish new statewide operating requirements for electric bicycles on shared-use pathways, sidewalks, and other pedestrian-designated areas, including yielding to pedestrians, providing an audible signal when overtaking, and limiting speed to 10 miles per hour when within 50 feet of a pedestrian. Violations are designated as noncriminal traffic infractions. Municipalities with parks, shared-use paths, sidewalks, and pedestrian facilities may need to review local ordinances, signage, and enforcement practices for consistency with the new statutory standards, and municipal law enforcement would enforce the new nonmoving violations.

The bills create the Electric Bicycle Safety Task Force within the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, with required representation from the Florida League of Cities and other stakeholders. The bills direct the task force to meet

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regionally and submit legislative recommendations by October 1, 2026, before the task force is set to expire. The bills also require the Florida Highway Patrol and every municipal police department to maintain detailed records of electric bicycle crashes beginning 30 days after the bill becomes law and to submit a report of such crashes to the department by October 15, 2026, covering incidents through September 30, 2026. These provisions impose new temporary data-collection, recordkeeping, and reporting responsibilities on municipal police departments. CS/CS/SB 382 was amended to expand the scope of the task force to include all micromobility devices, such as motorized scooters and electric bicycles. (Singer)

Expenditure of Public Funds by Local Governments (Oppose)
HB 1251 (Shoaf) prohibits a city, county, or other local government from expending public funds to retain or pay an external, contract lobbyist for representation before the Florida legislative or executive branch, but it does not prohibit a local government from employing or compensating in-house staff who perform legislative advocacy or governmental-affairs functions as part of their official duties. The bill also prohibits outside persons or entities from accepting local government public funds to conduct lobbying on matters the bill places off-limits for public expenditures. Additionally, the bill authorizes any member of the public to file a complaint with the Florida Commission on Ethics alleging improper expenditures, requires the Commission to investigate and report findings to the presiding officers of the Legislature and the affected local government, and directs the Commission to adopt rules to administer and enforce the new restrictions. (Wagoner)

Foreign Influence (Monitor)
CS/CS/CS/HB 905 (Persons-Mulicka) and **CS/CS/SB 1178** (Grall) create the "Foreign Interference Restriction and Enforcement Act" and establish new restrictions intended to limit foreign influence from "foreign countries of concern," including

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China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, Cuba, Venezuela (Maduro regime), and Syria. The legislation affects state and local government contracting, ethics requirements for public officials, and certain political and economic activities within the state.

The bills prohibit governmental entities, including municipalities, from knowingly entering into contracts involving information technology or access to personal identifying information with a "foreign source of concern." This includes entities owned by, controlled by, or headquartered in a foreign country of concern. Beginning July 1, 2026, local governments may not extend or renew such contracts and may not accept bids or proposals for such contracts unless the vendor provides a sworn affidavit certifying that it is not a foreign source of concern. The Department of Management Services may authorize an otherwise prohibited contract if it determines in writing that no reasonable alternative exists, the risk of not entering into the contract would be greater to public health, safety, or economic security, and mitigation measures are implemented.

The bills amend the Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees to prohibit public officers, agency employees, and local government attorneys from soliciting or accepting anything of value from a designated foreign terrorist organization, a foreign country of concern, or any person acting on behalf of such entities.

The legislation authorizes a tax collector or local governing authority issuing business tax receipts to request sworn affidavits regarding whether a business is doing business with Cuba in violation of federal law, and allows revocation or refusal to renew a business tax receipt if such activity is occurring.

CS/CS/SB 1178 also requires lobbyists registering to lobby the Legislature, executive branch agencies, or water management districts to disclose whether their principal

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is a foreign country of concern or an entity substantially owned or controlled by one. These disclosure requirements apply to state-level lobbying registrations and do not directly affect local government lobbying ordinances.

The House bill additionally creates registration requirements for agents of foreign countries of concern and foreign-supported political organizations engaging in political activity within the state and includes additional provisions relating to critical infrastructure, sister-city activities with foreign countries of concern, and certain adoption and surrogacy agreements. (Wagoner)

Gambling (Monitor)
CS/CS/CS/HB 189 (Trabulsy), **HB 591** (Jacques), **CS/SB 204** (Bradley), **SB 1164** (Yarborough), and **CS/CS/SB 1580** (Martin) are comprehensive bills dealing with gaming. Of concern to cities, CS/CS/CS/HB 189, HB 591, SB 1164, and CS/CS/SB 1580 all preempt local governments from enacting or enforcing ordinances or local rules relating to gaming, gambling, lotteries, or any other activities as defined in section 546.10, Florida Statutes. CS/CS/SB 1580 was amended to provide that the local government preemption does not apply to a local land use or zoning regulation that prohibits gaming, gambling, lotteries, or any activity described in section 546.10 or chapter 849, Florida Statutes. (Wagoner)

Legal Notices (Support)
CS/CS/SB 380 (Trumbull) and **CS/CS/HB 1009** (Griffitts) expand where electronic legal notices may be posted. Current law allows cities and counties to satisfy certain legal notice requirements by posting on the county's designated website instead of publishing notices in a newspaper. Both CS/CS/SB 380 and CS/CS/HB 1009 were amended to define that clerks of court, tax collectors, and cities are considered a "governmental agency" that may use online posting to meet their own notice

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requirements. Most importantly, these bills authorize any governmental entity to post required legal notices on its own website. For cities, this means they are no longer limited to using the county's website as their online option and may instead post notices directly on their municipal website. CS/CS/HB 1009 was amended to provide that any public bid advertisement posted by a governmental or special governmental agency on a publicly accessible website must be made available to the general public at no cost. (Wagoner)

Local Administration of Vessel Restrictions (Support)
CS/CS/HB 1103 (Andrade) and **CS/SB 1682** (Trumbull) authorize counties and municipalities, in coordination with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, to adopt local ordinances to manage vessels at risk of becoming derelict, enforce long-term anchoring permit requirements, and address derelict and migrant vessels through administrative code enforcement rather than criminal proceedings. The bills also expand local enforcement authority, while CS/SB 1682 establishes grant programs for vessel removal and disposal and allows local governments to access technical assistance and pursue cost recovery under state standards. CS/CS/HB 1103 and CS/SB 1682 reduce the number of new moorings required before certain domiciled vessels in Monroe County must be relocated. (Wagoner)

Local Licensing of Home Caregivers (Support)
HB 555 (Skidmore) and **SB 580** (Harrell) authorize cities to license home caregivers within their jurisdictions. (Wagoner)

Official Actions of Local Governments (Oppose)
CS/CS/HB 1001 (Black) and **CS/CS/SB 1134** (Yarborough) prohibit counties and municipalities from taking any official actions related to diversity, equity, and

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inclusion (DEI) and void any existing ordinances, resolutions, rules, and regulations relating to DEI. The bills define DEI as classifying individuals based on race, color, sex, national origin, gender identity, or sexual orientation and promoting preferential treatment or adopting policies based on these classifications. The bills define what actions constitute as acting in an official capacity, which includes any performance or appearance of performance of an assigned function, duty, or responsibility by a public officer or employee. The legislation establishes penalties for violations, including holding local elected officials, or public officers or employees acting in an official capacity, accountable for misfeasance or malfeasance in office if they willfully engage in prohibited DEI-related actions. Additionally, the bills create a cause of action allowing residents to file lawsuits against counties or municipalities for violations. Notably, the legislation prohibits municipalities and counties from recovering attorney fees even if they prevail in such lawsuits. The bills provide that a county or municipality may not expend any funds to establish or staff a DEI office or to employ, contract, or otherwise engage a person to serve as a DEI officer. The bills prohibit a municipality from providing or authorizing municipal funds to be used by employees, contractors, volunteers, vendors, or agents to promote DEI initiatives. Lastly, the bills require a potential recipient of a county or municipal grant or contract to certify that they do not and will not use the awarded funds for DEI instruction materials for employees, contractors, volunteers, vendors, or agents. The bills provide that this requirement applies to any contract between a county or municipality and a DEI officer in existence on January 1, 2027, and applies to all other contracts executed or renewed after January 1, 2027.

The bills were amended to clarify that the bills do not prohibit counties and municipalities from recognizing, promoting, or honoring events and individuals related to black history and patriotic and national observances recognized by state and federal law. The amended bills also allow counties and municipalities to issue

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event permits in a content-neutral manner and provide public safety services. (Wagoner)

Parking on Public Property (Oppose)
HB 323 (Steele) and **SB 910** (Mayfield) create new provisions governing parking on public property. The bills create new definitions and require cities to refund or credit drivers for any unused portion of paid parking time. The bills provide that immediate towing or citation of vehicles is prohibited for a certain amount of time after a parked car's paid-for time has elapsed. Lastly, the bills prohibit a city from leasing out public land to a private entity that charges a fee for parking. (Wagoner)

Protection of Historic Monuments and Memorials (Monitor)
HB 455 (Black) and **SB 496** (McClain) prohibit local governments from removing, damaging, or altering historic Florida monuments or memorials. The bills define these monuments broadly, including long-standing public statues, plaques, flags, markers, and military memorials that have been in place for at least 25 years. The Department of State would be responsible for ensuring uniform statewide protection of these sites. The bills also create penalties for local officials who knowingly violate the law, including civil fines of up to $1,000 per violation and potential court-ordered remedies. Aggrieved parties may sue to enforce compliance. A narrow exception allows temporary removal or relocation for military needs, construction, or infrastructure work, as long as the monument is protected and restored afterward. The bills take effect upon becoming law. (Wagoner)

Recovery Residence Accountability and Protection Act (Monitor)
SB 1290 (Harrell) and **HB 1165** (Rosenwald) would create the Recovery Residence Accountability and Protection Act of 2025, requiring all recovery residences—including single-family, multifamily, and community housing—to obtain and

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maintain state certification through the Department of Children and Families. The bills revise administrator qualifications and impose uniform statewide operational and oversight standards. For cities, the primary impact is indirect but meaningful, as mandatory state certification may intersect with local zoning, occupancy limits, and code enforcement practices for residential properties. (Wagoner)

Removal, Storage, and Cleanup of Electric Vehicles (Monitor)
HB 37 (Nix) and **CS/CS/CS/SB 260** (Burgess) require counties to set a daily administration fee for the proper storage of electric vehicles involved in accidents. Municipalities may also establish such a fee, provided it does not exceed three times the county rate established under section 166.043(c), Florida Statutes. HB 37 provides that the fee applies when the vehicle owner or operator is incapacitated, unavailable, or does not consent to the vehicle's removal, requiring law enforcement to arrange towing and storage, while CS/CS/SB 260 adds that the vehicle must also have visible battery or battery-compartment damage or have been submerged in saltwater. CS/CS/SB 260 provides that the daily fee for qualifying vehicles may last until the appropriate local agency determines that the damaged battery is safe and not in danger of starting a fire. The Senate bill also requires a wrecker service or towing-storage wrecker or operator to collect and submit data related to the storage of damaged or submerged electric vehicles to the State Fire Marshal. The bills define "daily administration fee" and "proper storage," and take effect July 1, 2026. (Wagoner)

Residential Living Arrangements (Monitor)
SB 1238 (Harrell) and **HB 1193** (Long) are comprehensive bills regulating the operation of community residential homes and recovery communities. The bills establish that a community residence is a residential use of property and that a family community residence or transitional community residence must be treated as a residential use

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allowed in specified zoning districts if certain statutory requirements are met, and it provides that a proposed community residence may receive a reasonable accommodation from local government if the sponsoring entity demonstrates compliance with criteria set forth in the bill.

In sum, the bills preempt or restricts local land use/zoning authority by (1) defining these facilities as residential uses permitted in specified zoning districts, (2) mandating reasonable accommodations when statutory criteria are met, (3) imposing state-level spacing and siting standards, and (4) setting procedural timing requirements that limit how and when local governments may act on these applications. (Wagoner)

Unauthorized Aliens (Monitor)
CS/HB 1307 (Jacques), **SB 1380** (Martin) and **SB 1542** (Pizzo) address illegal immigration through restrictions on benefits, employment verification, and government contracting. HB 1307 prohibits government and certain private entities from providing down payment assistance to unauthorized aliens, limits eligibility for state-issued licenses and certifications, and requires that governmental procedures, instruction, and testing be conducted only in English. SB 1542 expands mandatory E-Verify use to all private employers and expressly includes public agencies, requiring cities to verify employment eligibility for all new hires. The bill also imposes public contracting requirements, requiring cities to terminate contracts with vendors they reasonably believe have knowingly employed unauthorized aliens and barring future contracts with those entities. Finally, SB 1542 authorizes municipal law enforcement agencies to use E-Verify to investigate the immigration status of detained individuals, potentially affecting local law enforcement operations and coordination with federal authorities. (Wagoner)

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Unauthorized Aliens (Monitor)
SB 1380 (Martin) is a comprehensive bill titled Unauthorized Aliens that imposes new restrictions and requirements relating to individuals who are not lawfully present in the United States. For cities, the key impacts are tied to housing, down-payment assistance, and local government involvement in related programs. The bill prohibits state and local governmental entities from providing down-payment assistance or silent second mortgage help to unauthorized aliens. If an unauthorized alien is discovered to have received downpayment assistance, they must immediately repay the assistance to the appropriate entity. If the unauthorized alien does not repay the assistance, then the governmental entity must initiate foreclosure proceedings. (Wagoner)

Other Bills of Interest
HB 637 (Griffitts) and **SB 386** (Trumbull) – Farm Equipment
SB 322 (McClain) and **HB 431** (Albert) – Construction
HB 657 (Porras) – Community Associations
HB 607 (Yarkosky) – Industries and Professional Activities

PERSONNEL AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Governmental Agencies and Personnel (Monitor)
HB 593 (Andrade) makes multiple changes affecting state and local government ethics, political activity, travel reimbursement, settlements, and governance. The bill would prohibit state agencies from giving settlement money to third parties and would require notice to the Legislature and the Attorney General about any settlement agreements. The bill would tighten restrictions on public officers and employees using official authority to solicit political contributions; limit travel and per

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diem reimbursements for certain high-level state officials; define "office" for constitutional dual-officeholding purposes; expand lobbying restrictions and enforcement related to water management districts; and remove the prohibition on state residency requirements for university board of trustees members. (Chapman)

Local Government Salaries and Benefits (Oppose)
HB 1125 (Giallombardo) requires that any increase in salary, retirement benefits, or other compensation for members of governing bodies be approved by a local referendum to be held at a general election during a presidential election year. The bill would require that any increase in salary, retirement benefits, or other compensation for county commissioners, municipal governing body members, or special district governing board members be approved by a local referendum, and the costs of those referendum elections would be borne by the local government entity. This significantly limits municipal flexibility by delaying compensation decisions until general elections, potentially by multiple years. (Chapman)

Public Employees Relations Commission (Monitor)
CS/CS/SB 1296 (Martin) and **CS/CS/HB 995** (Persons-Mulicka) both make major changes to Florida's public employee union laws, but they do not do everything the same way. Both bills update how final orders are issued under state law, change how workers join or leave unions, tighten rules for union registration and reporting, and revise bargaining, decertification, and impasse processes. However, there are important differences. CS/SB 1296 limits when employees can cancel union membership by setting a 30-day revocation window, gives the Legislature more power to step in and settle bargaining disputes, and creates automatic penalties like, decertifying unions that do not meet reporting rules or minimum membership

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levels. It also adds stronger limits on paid union activities and increases penalties for strikes and other violations. CS/HB 995 is more flexible than CS/SB 1296 in some areas. It allows employees to leave a union at any time and requires union dues to stop right away after they quit. It adds more detailed rules about bargaining units and grievance processes, shortens some hearing timelines, and requires equal access to government facilities during union elections. While it still tightens reporting and membership rules, it focuses more on procedures and timelines rather than expanding legislative control. In short, both bills move in the same direction, but CS/SB 1296 takes a tougher approach with tighter deadlines and stronger enforcement provisions, while CS/HB 995 gives employees more freedom to leave unions and adds more detail about how disputes and elections must be handled.

CS/SB 1296 was amended to add clarifying language to several provisions in the original bill. The bill also expands the definitions of "membership dues," "membership dues deduction," and "employee organization activities." (Chapman)

Public Officers and Employees (Monitor)

SB 802 (Mayfield) imposes new residency and citizenship requirements for senior executive-branch officials, members of state commissions and boards, and higher education governing boards, with offices deemed vacant if the requirements are not met. The bill also tightens ethics laws by prohibiting public officers and employees from using official authority to solicit political contributions, restricting travel and per diem reimbursements for certain high-level officials, defining "office" for constitutional dual-officeholding purposes, and expanding lobbying prohibitions and enforcement related to water management districts. (Chapman)

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Workforce Notice Requirements (Monitor)
HB 1495 (Sapp) and **SB 1698** (McClain) revise the powers and procedures of the Public Employees Relations Commission (PERC), which oversees public-sector labor relations and collective bargaining disputes. The bills make changes to how unfair labor practice complaints, representation petitions, and related proceedings are processed and adjudicated by PERC. For cities, the impact is indirect but relevant, as any changes to PERC procedures can affect how municipal labor disputes, bargaining unit issues, and union certification matters are handled. Cities may need to adjust their labor relations strategies and coordination with counsel to account for revised timelines, standards, or processes at PERC. (Chapman)

Other Bills of Interest
SB 136 (Polsky) – Protection for Public Employees who use Medical Marijuana as Qualified Patients
SB 348 (Smith) – Statewide Health Care Coverage
SB 358 (Smith) – Division of Labor Standards
SB 842 (Jones) and **HB 1095** (Spencer) – Local Government Official Salaries
HB 641 (Plakon) – Gender Identity Employment Practices
HB 915 (Tant) and **SB 1016** (Bradley) - Medical Assistance Eligibility for Working Persons with Disabilities
HB 987 (Nixon) – Department of Labor
SB 1112 (Garcia) – Labor Pool Act
HB 1187 (Gonzalez Pittman) and **SB 1216** (Rodriguez) – Public School Personnel Compensation
SB 1720 (Calatayud) – Public School Personnel Compensation
HB 1289 (Yarkosky) and **SB 1304** (Martin) – Special Risk Class

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SB 1298 (Martin) and **HB 997** (Persons-Mulicka) – Public Records/Public Employees Relations Commission
SB 618 (Truenow) and **HB 1243** (Conerly) Worker's Compensation Insurance

PROCUREMENT

Department of Commerce (Monitor)
HB 741 (Owen) and **SB 998** (Yarborough) are comprehensive legislative proposals relating to the Department of Commerce. The bills restructure Florida's administration of federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding by repealing the existing statutory framework for the Florida Small Cities CDBG Program and replacing it with a broader Community Development Block Grant Program administered by the Department of Commerce. In doing so, the bills remove numerous program-specific requirements previously set in statute, including legislative intent, application criteria, grant ceilings, administrative cost limits, and other Small Cities-only guardrails, shifting those details to agency discretion and rulemaking authority.

Under the revised structure, the Department of Commerce becomes the designated state entity responsible for receiving and administering all federal CDBG funding from HUD, including standard allocations as well as supplemental federal funds for disaster recovery, long-term recovery, and infrastructure restoration tied to federally declared disasters. The agency is granted broad discretion to award grants consistent with federal law and HUD guidance and is authorized to adopt rules to administer the program. The bills also strengthen state enforcement authority for employment eligibility compliance, including expanded E-Verify enforcement, enhanced recordkeeping, defined standards for "noncompliance," and authorization

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for escalating penalties such as fines, suspensions, and recovery of enforcement costs for repeated violations.

Additionally, the bills create a new exemption from state reversionary-interest requirements for land conveyed to federal agencies at less than appraised value, eliminating automatic reversion to the Board of Trustees if the land ceases to be used as a military-installation buffer or if the installation closes. (Cruz)

Prohibited Uses of Public Funds by Political Subdivisions (Oppose)
HB 605 (Steele) prohibits political subdivisions from using public funds to financially support not-for-profit entities or organizations. For purposes of the prohibition, the bill defines a "not-for-profit entity or organization" as a Florida not-for-profit corporation incorporated under chapter 617 and approved by the Secretary of State. The term "political subdivision" is defined by cross-reference to existing ethics law and includes counties, municipalities, districts, and other local governmental entities.

Under the bill, political subdivisions are broadly barred from providing public funding to qualifying not-for-profit entities, regardless of the purpose of the funding or the services provided, unless a specific statutory exception applies. The bill includes a limited exception allowing political subdivisions to use public funds to support rural hospitals, as defined in Section 395.602(2), Florida Statutes. No other exceptions are provided. (Cruz)

Other Bills of Interest
HB 197 (Jacques) and **SB 1278** (Martin) – Requiring all employers to use the E-Verify system
HB 687 (Driskell) and **SB 780** (Berman) – Government Waste and Misconduct

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PUBLIC MEETINGS

Public Meetings (Support)
CS/CS/HB 655 (Duggan) and **CS/CS/SB 332** (Bradley) allow local governments, after receiving a Bert Harris Act claim, to hold a private meeting with their attorneys during the 90-day pre-suit notice period to discuss the claim. The purpose is to allow elected officials to receive confidential legal advice that may help resolve claims more efficiently and potentially avoid litigation. A transcript of any private meeting must later be made public once the claim is settled, or if no settlement or lawsuit occurs, after the statute of limitations has expired. (Singer)

Release of Conservation Easements (Monitor)
CS/HB 673 (Duggan) and **SB 938** (McClain) require water management districts to release certain conservation easements on privately owned property upon application by the fee simple owner if several specified criteria are met. The bills apply to parcels of 15 acres or less that are predominantly surrounded by impervious surfaces, lack historical or cultural significance, and are adjacent to similarly sized undeveloped parcels. As a condition of release, the property owner must obtain mitigation credits through the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method to offset wetland impacts. If developed, the bills will require the property owner to assume any stormwater requirements. The bills exclude conservation easements located within residential developments and proprietary easements held by water management districts.

Upon release of a qualifying easement, the property may be developed consistent with adjacent zoning, and ad valorem taxation must be based on just value rather than conservation use. Municipalities may experience impacts related to land use

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planning and zoning, as parcels previously restricted by conservation easements become eligible for development.

CS/HB 673 clarifies that a property owner assumes responsibility for all applicable requirements, including obtaining approval to modify any water management district permits, if the property is developed, rather than being limited solely to stormwater requirements. The amendment also specifies that the property owner must comply with all local ordinances, rather than only those related to stormwater management. Additionally, the bill clarifies the definition of a proprietary conservation easement. (Singer)

PUBLIC RECORDS

Disclosure of Public Servants' Personal Information (Support)
SB 1064 (Bradley) and **HB 1027** (Porras) permit current and former public servants (including law enforcement, judges, elected officials, and others) to send a written notice to data brokers to stop disclosing their "protected information" (like home address, phone, email, SSN, and similar identifiers), prohibit those brokers from releasing that information after receiving the notice, and create a civil cause of action with damages and fees if they fail to comply. (Wagoner)
Electronic Payment of Public Records Fees (Monitor)
SB 44 (Rouson) requires that an agency provide an electronic option for the payment of any fee associated with a request to inspect or copy public records. As defined in existing law, the term "agency" includes municipalities, as well as state, county, and other governmental entities. (Wagoner)

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Public Records (Oppose)
CS/HB 437 (Andrade) and **SB 770** (Rouson) update public records access rules covering fees, response times, and penalties for noncompliance. The bills expand the "actual cost of duplication" to include clerical, supervisory, and IT costs, excluding overhead. The bills require agencies to promptly acknowledge requests and respond within three business days with records, a timeline, or a denial citing legal exemptions. The bills prohibit fees if agencies fail to act within three days and ban charges for requests taking under 30 minutes or for redacted record inspections. The bills require written explanations for delays over 15 days or exemption claims. The bills also establish fines and misdemeanor penalties for violations, including out-of-state offenses. Lastly, the bills allow courts to impose fees on non-compliant agencies and reimburse attorney costs in some cases. CS/HB 437 was amended to delete a provision that would have required certain public-records and public-meeting exemptions to automatically sunset (expire) after 10 years unless the Legislature affirmatively reenacted them under the Open Government Sunset Review Act. (Wagoner)

Public Records/Body Camera Recordings (Monitor)
HB 511 (Partington) and **SB 506** (Burgess) create a public records exemption for body cameras worn by code inspectors. (Wagoner)

Public Records/Law Enforcement Officers Actively Engaged in Official Duty (Monitor)
CS/HB 627 (Berfield) and **SB 744** (Yarborough) amend Florida's public records law regarding law enforcement officers who are actively performing official duties. SB 744 provides that such law enforcement officers may not accept or process public records requests while engaged in those duties. CS/HB 627 provides that such an officer may choose to decline the public records request, leaving discretion to the

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law enforcement officer. Under the bills, if the officer has declined to process the public records request, the officer must instead verbally inform the requester that they cannot take the request and direct them to the appropriate custodian or official public records portal. SB 744 also makes it an obstruction of a law enforcement officer to knowingly and willfully attempt to force an officer to accept a records request under these circumstances. CS/HB 627 provides that such an offense is resisting an officer without violence. (Wagoner)

Public Records/Municipal Clerks and Staff (Support)
HB 247 (Campbell) and **SB 248** (Rodriguez) create a public records exemption for the personal information of municipal clerks and staff, and their spouses and children. (Wagoner)

Public Records/County and City Administrators and Managers (Support)
HB 263 (Rizo) and **SB 830** (Jones) create a public records exemption for the personal information of current county and city administrative officials, and their spouses and children. (Wagoner)

PUBLIC SAFETY

Carrying Weapons and Firearms (Support)
HB 321 (Hunschofsky) and **SB 406** (Polsky) create section 790.0135 to Florida Statutes to expressly prohibit any person—whether openly or concealed carrying a weapon or a firearm—from bringing such items into specific public locations, including meetings of a county, municipal, school district, or special district governing body, as well as meetings of the Legislature or its committees. This legislation follows recent court rulings in Florida that have created uncertainty regarding the scope of the state's open-carry restrictions and the legality of carrying long guns in public

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spaces, including at government meetings. The bills seek to clarify that all firearms, regardless of type or carry method, are prohibited in these settings to ensure public safety and maintain decorum at official proceedings. Violation of the prohibition is subject to criminal penalties. (Wagoner)

Code Inspector Body Cameras (Monitor)
CS/HB 509 (Partington) and **CS/SB 504** (Burgess) require that any governmental entity in Florida that permits its code inspectors to wear body-cameras must adopt formal policies and procedures governing use, maintenance, storage, retention, and release of video and audio data. The law mandates training for personnel and ensures recordings are retained in accordance with public records laws. The bills require periodic review of compliance and clarify that criminal wire-tapping statutes in Chapter 934 do not apply to such body-camera recordings by inspectors. CS/SB 504 was amended to require that all personnel who handle body-worn camera audio/video be trained in the entity's policies and procedures and that recorded audio/video data be retained according to the public-records requirements. (Wagoner)

Commercial Motor Vehicles Operated by Unauthorized Aliens (Monitor)
SB 86 (Gaetz) and **HB 1247** (Shoaf) require law enforcement to take into custody anyone operating a commercial motor vehicle who is determined to be an unauthorized alien, and to transfer that unauthorized alien into federal custody and impound the commercial motor vehicle. A $50,000 fine shall be assessed and payable to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. All costs and fees must be paid by the vehicle's owner before the commercial motor vehicle can be released. SB 86 requires any motor carrier that owns, leases, or operates a commercial vehicle driven by a person taken into custody to be prohibited from operating within the state. Whereas HB 1247 authorizes the assessment of a $50,000

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civil penalty against any motor carrier that permits an unauthorized alien to operate a commercial motor vehicle, if such authorization is discovered during an investigation, safety audit, or in the normal course of business. (Wagoner)

Complaints Against Law Enforcement and Correctional Officers (Monitor)
CS/HB 1283 (Fabricio) and **SB 1544** (Pizzo) revise how complaints against law enforcement and correctional officers are handled by requiring that complaints be in writing, signed under oath, and provided to the officer before any interrogation or personnel action occurs, with penalties for false complaints. The bills provide that if the complaint is accompanied by corroborating evidence, then the complainant's name and signature are not required. Municipal law enforcement agencies would likely need to adjust their reporting, notification, and personnel processes, and possibly train staff to handle affidavit-style complaints and to follow documentation protocols, in order to reduce legal liability tied to complaint handling. (Wagoner)

Fines for Violations Detected by Traffic Infraction Detectors (Monitor)
HB 521 (Yeager) and **CS/CS/SB 654** (DiCeglie) significantly reshape local traffic enforcement authority by explicitly authorizing counties and municipalities to issue civil fines for violations detected by automated traffic infraction detectors (such as red-light and speed cameras), provided the citations include photographic or electronic evidence of the alleged violation. The bills also repeal existing statutory provisions that govern the use of automated traffic infraction detectors (red light cameras) by local governments. This means that the distribution framework for the allocation of penalty revenue would also be repealed. CS/CS/SB 654 was amended to add technical references and language related to when the reporting of information is required to be submitted by a local government to the DHSMV. Additionally, the amendment removed references that contested traffic infractions must be done via an administrative hearing. Lastly, the amendment provided that

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traffic infractions cannot be used as character evidence under Florida's rules of Evidence. (Wagoner)

Firefighter Cancer Benefits and Prevention (Monitor)
CS/CS/HB 813 (Busatta) and **CS/CS/SB 984** (DiCeglie) revise Florida's firefighter cancer benefits statute, expanding the mandatory cancer-related benefits that employers must provide to firefighters.

CS/CS/SB 984 expands existing benefits by requiring a former employer to make employer-sponsored health plan coverage for cancer treatment available for up to 10 years after a firefighter terminates employment, provided the firefighter satisfied statutory eligibility requirements at the time of separation and is not subsequently employed as a firefighter. The Senate bill also requires a former employer to provide a one-time $25,000 cash payment upon a firefighter's initial cancer diagnosis occurring after employment as a firefighter, with eligibility for the payment continuing for up to 10 years following termination of employment under the same qualifying conditions.

In addition, CS/CS/SB 984 requires that line-of-duty death benefits related to cancer or complications arising from cancer treatment remain available to a firefighter's beneficiaries for one year following the firefighter's separation from employment, so long as eligibility criteria were met at the time of termination. The bill further includes a legislative finding that the expansion of benefits fulfills an important state interest.

CS/CS/HB 813 takes a narrower approach and addresses only death benefits, similarly requiring a former employer to provide line-of-duty death benefits for one year after a firefighter's separation from employment when death results from

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cancer or cancer treatment and eligibility requirements were met prior to separation. (Wagoner)

First Responders (Support)
HB 1129 (Alvarez, D.) and **SB 1286** (Wright) expand the state's existing law enforcement recruitment bonus program to include firefighters and establish a statewide Institute for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder to support first responders. It renames the program to include firefighters, adds newly hired firefighters to bonus eligibility, and clarifies standards for firefighter misconduct. The bills also authorize the Chief Financial Officer to oversee fire-related grant review panels and create the PTSD Institute to coordinate research, training, outreach, and policy development focused on first responder behavioral health. (Wagoner)

Public Safety (Oppose)
HB 1427 (Alvarez, D.) and **SB 1586** (DiCeglie) require every county and public agency within the county or region to provide 911 dispatch services through a centralized call center operated by the county or regional entity chosen by a unanimous vote of the Emergency Communications Center (ECC). The bills set deadlines for when these goals should be accomplished and direct the state to withhold emergency funding by 25% for each year a county fails to comply, starting on January 1, 2029. (Wagoner)

Seaport Security (Monitor)
SB 184 (Garcia) requires each seaport in the state to maintain an on-site station that is recognized by the State Fire Marshal. The bill sets out the requirements for staffing, certifications, and overall fleet to respond to an incident. The bill requires the Division of State Marshal and the Florida Ports Council to work together to create rules that will establish the minimum standards for staffing, training, and the establishment of fines. (Wagoner)

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Smoking in Public Places (Support)
HB 389 (Andrade) and **SB 986** (Gruters) define "public place" as any place to which the public has access. The bills broaden the definition of "smoking" and "vaping" to include marijuana products and further outline that smoking or vaping these products in a public place or custom smoking room is prohibited. (Wagoner)

Violation of State Immigration Law (Monitor)
HB 229 (Jacques) and **SB 304** (Martin) require the Florida Department of Law Enforcement to impose a $10,000 fine against local governments and law enforcement agencies that fail to comply with state immigration enforcement requirements. The funds collected from the fines will compensate victims of crimes committed by unauthorized aliens. The bills create a cause of action for wrongful death caused by an unauthorized alien if the local government entity or law enforcement agency's sanctuary policy is in violation of state law and contributed to the death. Lastly, the bills waive all sovereign immunity for tort cases brought under the new law. (Wagoner)

911 Public Safety Telecommunicator Employment-related Mental or Nervous Injuries (Opposed)
HB 451 (Holcomb) and **CS/SB 774** (Pizzo) classify 911 operators as first responders, allowing them to receive medical benefits for mental injuries when no physical injury occurs. Currently, only law enforcement officers and firefighters are eligible for this benefit. CS/SB 774 was amended to provide that the bill finds and declares that the act fulfills an important state interest. (Wagoner)

RESILIENCY

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Nature-based Solutions for Improving Coastal Resilience (Monitor)
CS/CS/SB 302 (Garcia) and **CS/HB 1035** (Mooney) require the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to establish statewide standards and a permitting framework for nature-based methods to improve coastal resiliency.

The bills require DEP to develop design guidelines and standards for optimal combinations of nature-based methods, including green or hybrid green-gray infrastructure, to address erosion, sea-level rise, and storm surge. Both bills require DEP to initiate rulemaking to establish a clear and consistent statewide permitting process under section 373.4131, Florida Statutes, including permit criteria and thresholds; monitoring, inspection, and reporting requirements; exemptions and general permits; emergency and abandonment provisions; and post-disaster permitting processes to replace failed coastal infrastructure with nature-based or hybrid solutions. CS/CS/SB 302 specifies that this rulemaking is subject to legislative ratification, while HB 1035 does not. CS/HB 1035 was amended to remove the DEP requirement to establish a clear statewide permitting process for nature-based methods for improving coastal resilience.

Both bills amend statutes governing aquatic preserves to expressly authorize living shorelines, nature-based solutions, and hybrid green-gray infrastructure within those preserves. The bills also identify ways local governments may participate in coastal resiliency projects, including mangrove, reef, and shoreline restoration, and require both DEP and local governments to promote public awareness and education on the value of nature-based solutions for coastal resiliency. While the bills are now substantively aligned in their regulatory approach and municipal impacts, CS/HB 1035 contains additional, more detailed amendments related to aquatic preserve management, whereas CS/CS/SB 302 incorporates similar authorizations through a narrower set of statutory changes. (Singer)

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Other Bills of Interest
HB 1305 (Barnaby) and **SB 992** (Rodriguez) – Resilient Buildings

RETIREMENT/PENSIONS ISSUES

Deferred Compensation Plans for Public Employees (Support)
SB 1018 (Truenow) and **SB 1403** (Salzman)authorize an automatic enrollment in public employees' deferred compensation plans. The bills would require a default investment choice for contributions when no employee election is made. The bills would allow local governments to adopt automatic enrollment arrangements, while requiring legislative approval for the state plan. (Chapman)

Roth Contribution Plans in Deferred Compensation Programs (Support)
SB 7010 (Government Oversight and Accountability Committee) is a proposal that would let state and local governments establish and contribute Roth Investment contributions into their deferred compensation plans. It adds new language that allows employees to make these qualified Roth contributions and removes the old rule that limited what workers could contribute to the state plan. It also officially approves the Chief Financial Officer's earlier decision to allow Roth contributions in the state's plan. All of these changes would also apply to past contributions, not just future ones. (Chapman)

Other Bills of Interest
SB 640 (Rodriguez) and **HB 647** (Borrero) – Senior Management Service Class
SB 1410 (Smith) and **HB 1441** (Dunkley) – Optional Retirement Programs
SB 1528 (Pizzo) – Transferring Years of Creditable Services (FRS)

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REVENUES AND BUDGETING

Department of Financial Services (Oppose)
HB 1303 (Miller) and **SB 1572** (DiCeglie) seek to formally establish the Florida Agency for Fiscal Oversight to audit local governments, impose fines for financial noncompliance, enhance whistle-blower protections, and expand contract transparency requirements. The identified goal of the Florida Agency for Fiscal Oversight within the Department of Financial Services is to identify unnecessary spending and conduct audits of local governments that propose new or increased taxes. The power to issue penalties such as administrative fines and withhold certain state funds from local governments that fail to provide requested fiscal information is authorized. A new requirement for annual financial ethics training for agency employees, elected officials, and volunteers is included. Whistle-blower protections are extended to those employees of local governments who report information to the new oversight agency. Additionally, there is a prohibition on agencies and vendors from entering into contracts that bar participation with or require nondisclosure arrangements for the oversight agency. Local governments are mandated to submit yearly Local Government Efficiency Reports to the Department of Financial Services. Counties are required to track and post contract information within the State secure contract tracking system or an approved alternative. (Wagoner)

Local Government Spending (Monitor)
CS/CS/HB 1329 (Benarroch) and **CS/CS/CS/SB 1566** (DiCeglie) expand statutory requirements governing online publication, accessibility, and public transparency of county and municipal budget information.

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Both bills further require local governments to conduct a "budget reduction exercise" at least 14 days before final budget adoption. During this exercise, the governing body must identify strategies to reduce the upcoming fiscal year budget by 10% compared to the current year budget without compromising essential public services or legal obligations. The results of this exercise must be posted online for public review.

The legislation also increases transparency requirements for budget amendments by requiring proposed amendments to be posted online before adoption and requiring adopted amendments to remain publicly available online for at least five years. The House bill requires that hearings on certain budget amendments be advertised at least seven days in advance, while the Senate bill maintains the existing two-to-five-day advertising window but requires proposed amendments to be posted online at least five days before adoption.

Key differences exist between the House and Senate bills.

CS/CS/HB 1329 includes additional public disclosure requirements not contained in the Senate bill. The House bill requires counties and municipalities to publish budget information in searchable formats that allow the public to view employee salaries and employee travel expenses associated with overnight travel or travel outside the jurisdiction. The House bill also provides exemptions for smaller jurisdictions. Counties with populations of 10,000 or fewer and revenues or expenditures below $10 million, and municipalities with populations of 5,000 or fewer and revenues or expenditures below $5 million, are exempt from certain online publication and budget exercise requirements but must submit financial information to the Department of Financial Services instead. The bill also allows these jurisdictions to request hardship waivers from the department.

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CS/CS/CS/SB 1566 contains several provisions not included in the House bill. The Senate bill requires counties and municipalities to prepare and publish quarterly summaries of employee compensation that include employee names, job titles, and salaries. The bill also requires local governments to publish a budget development calendar each year by January 30 outlining expected timelines for budget requests, property value estimates from the county property appraiser, budget workshops, public hearings, and the required budget reduction exercise. The bill specifies that publication of this calendar does not create a basis for legal challenges to the budget adoption process.

In addition to the transparency provisions contained in both bills, the Senate bill was amended to include the substantive provisions of **CS/SB 548** (McClain), which revise Florida's impact fee statutes. The bill defines "impact fee" and "plan-based methodology" and requires impact fee calculations to be based on demonstrated-need studies using recent, localized data and projecting infrastructure needs over a 10-year period. The bill also places additional conditions on impact fee increases, including limits on phase-in increases, unless a jurisdiction demonstrates "extraordinary circumstances," conducts at least two public workshops, and approves the increase by a unanimous vote of the governing body. The bill also establishes a process for refunding or crediting certain impact fee overpayments. These impact fee provisions are not included in the House bill. (Wagoner)

Other Bills of Interest

SB 400 (Garcia) – Carryforward Funding of Certain Managing Entities
SB 1038 (Gruters) and **HB 1039** (Snyder) – Florida Strategic Cryptocurrency Reserve
SB 1040 (Gruters) – Trust Funds
HB 1311 (Bankson) and **SB 1588** (Gruters) – Legal Tender

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HB 1415 (Holcomb) and **SB 1568** (DiCeglie) – Use of Digital Currency by the Department of Financial Services
SB 1612 (DiCeglie) and **HB 967** (Buchanan) – Electronic Payments to Local Governments

RIGHTS-OF-WAY

Railroad Crossing Safety (Monitor)
CS/HB 1323 (Tuck) and **CS/SB 1310** (Rodriguez) direct the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to conduct a statewide study on the effectiveness, feasibility, costs, and implementation considerations of advanced detection and monitoring technologies at public railroad-highway grade crossings, and to consult with affected local governments during the study. The bills do not impose installation, maintenance, or reporting requirements on municipalities.

SOLID WASTE

Auxiliary Containers (Monitor)
HB 575 (Weinberger)and **CS/SB 240** (Garcia) preempt the regulation of auxiliary containers to the state and repeals a current law that preempts the regulation of the use of sale of polystyrene products to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

The bills define "auxiliary container" as a bag, cup, bottle, can, or other packaging that is made of cloth, paper, or plastic, AND is designated for transporting, consuming, or protecting merchandise, food, or beverages from or at a public food service establishment or retailer. The bills also define "single-use" to mean designed

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to be used once and then discarded, and not designed for repeated use and sanitizing.

The bills provide that a local government may not enact any rule, regulation, or ordinance regarding the use, disposition, sale, prohibition, restriction, or tax of auxiliary containers that is inconsistent with state law. The preemption does not apply to rules, regulations, or ordinances that do any of the following:

- Restrict the use of glass auxiliary containers with the boundaries of any public property
- Restrict the use, sale, or distribution of single-use plastic auxiliary containers within the boundaries of any public property
- Restrict the use, sale, or distribution of auxiliary containers enacted before January 1, 2026

The bills require the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to develop a uniform ordinance for the use and disposal of single-use, nonrecyclable auxiliary containers which may be adopted and enforced by local governments. DEP must begin engaging with stakeholders by October 1, 2026, and finalize the uniform ordinance by October 1, 2027. The bills direct DEP to advance measures that:

- Limit the distribution and use of single-use, nonrecyclable auxiliary containers through bans, fees, or deposit systems
- Promote the use of recyclable or compostable auxiliary containers and encourage businesses to offer voluntary incentives for customers to bring reusable auxiliary containers
- Establish waste reduction and collection programs for single-use auxiliary containers
- Create enforcement mechanisms, including penalties, for businesses that do not comply with auxiliary container regulations (Singer)

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Local Regulation of Drinking Straws and Stirrers (Monitor)
HB 865 (Blanco) and **SB 958** (Bradley) create a new section of law establishing statewide standards governing when and how local governments may regulate drinking straws and stirrers. The bills seek to preempt local regulation in this area, but authorize counties and municipalities to regulate drinking straws and stirrers, provided such regulation permits products meeting specified material and third-party certification criteria established in statute.

Under the bills, any local regulation in this area must allow straws and stirrers that are renewable, certified as home or industrially compostable, and certified as marine biodegradable by recognized third-party standards organizations. The bills do not require a local government to adopt regulations on drinking straws or stirrers, but provide that any existing local ordinance that does not conform to these standards must be amended by January 1, 2027, to allow compliant products. The bills also exempt straws and stirrers used in prepackaged beverages and those used in hospitals, medical care facilities, and senior care facilities. (Singer)

Waste Management (Oppose)
HB 629 (Esposito) and **SB 766** (Martin) expand state preemption prohibiting local governments and local governmental agencies from enacting or enforcing ordinances or regulations governing the use, disposition, sale, prohibition, restriction, or taxation of auxiliary containers, as defined in statute. The bills define an auxiliary container as any reusable or single-use bag or other packaging made from common materials (such as plastic, paper, cloth, metal, or glass) that is used to transport, contain, consume, or protect merchandise, food, or beverages provided by a public food service establishment, food establishment, or retailer. The bills narrow the scope of this preemption by expressly authorizing local governments to restrict the use of glass auxiliary containers within the boundaries of public beaches. They

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also clarify that the preemption does not supersede local ordinances authorized under Florida Statutes 500.90, which includes a grandfathered exception for local ordinances regulating polystyrene products enacted before January 1, 2016, and preserves local authority to restrict the use of polystyrene products by individuals on public property, temporary vendors on public property, and entities engaged in contractual relationships with the local government, except where otherwise preempted by law.

The bills also amend definitions in Section 403.703, Florida Statutes, to expressly define "auxiliary container," and delete obsolete statutory language requiring the Department of Environmental Protection to review and update its 2010 report on retail bags and auxiliary containers. SB 766 further authorizes the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Division of Recreation and Parks to regulate auxiliary containers within state parks, while HB 629 provides this authority to DEP to adopt rules. (Singer)

Waste Facilities (Monitor)
CS/SB 1196 (Sharief) and **CS/HB 1089** (Bartleman) prohibit a local government and the Department of Environmental Protection from issuing a construction permit for a new solid waste disposal facility that uses an ash-producing incinerator, or for a waste-to-energy facility, if the proposed location is within two miles (measured from the stack) of an impoundment area authorized by Congress with at least 100 acres of effective interior storage for specified water storage/conservation and environmental functions. The prohibition does not apply to canals, or to any existing construction, current operation, or modification in existence as of July 1, 2026. Both bills were amended to add a third exemption to the permit prohibition for parcels in counties with a population of less than 1.7 million.

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CS/HB 1089 further amends the prohibition by reducing the setback distance for new solid waste disposal facilities that use ash-producing incinerators or waste-to-energy facilities from two miles to one mile from a federally authorized impoundment area. (Singer)

Other Bills of Interest
HB 1067 (Gentry) and **SB 912** (McClain) – Battery Collection and Recovery

SPECIAL DISTRICTS

Special Districts (Oppose)
HB 123 (Overdorf) is a comprehensive bill relating to special districts. Of note to municipalities, the bill prohibits municipalities from assuming fire-rescue services in an annexed area when those services are already provided by an independent special fire control district. After annexation, the fire control district remains the exclusive service provider, its geographical boundaries continue to include the annexed area, and it may continue to levy ad valorem taxes, impact fees, and user fees and assessments on property within the annexed area. (Singer)

Special Districts/Downtown Development Districts (Monitor)
CS/HB 273 (Johnson) and CS/CS/SB 214 (McClain) revise provisions related to special districts and the administration of state financial assistance in rural communities.

Both bills allow certain special districts located within rural communities or rural areas of opportunity to receive direct payment of invoices under state or federal financial assistance agreements when financial hardship is demonstrated. The Senate bill also requires state agencies to expedite payment requests from eligible

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counties, municipalities, and special districts. The bills also revise the definition of "rural community" within the Rural Economic Development Initiative to include certain special districts.

CS/HB 273 contains additional provisions not included in the Senate bill. The House bill establishes new requirements for downtown development districts in certain large municipalities. The bill requires voter approval and the adoption of a municipal ordinance before the boundaries of a downtown development district may be expanded. In addition, the bill will now require the annual budget of a downtown development district to be approved by a majority vote of the municipality's governing body. (Singer)

Other Bills of Interest
HB 1051 (J. Alvarez) and **SB 1180** (Arrington) – Community Development District Recall Elections

STORMWATER

Standards for Storm Water Systems (Oppose)
HB 239 (Grow) and **CS/SB 558** (Burgess) require all stormwater systems, when installing new storm pipe and storm structures, to adhere to the state Department of Transportation's annual *Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction*, specifically the sections on "Pipe Culverts" and "Pipe Liner." The bills also mandate that final inspections must be performed by a NASSCO Pipeline Assessment Certification Program (PACP) certified technician employed by a third-party licensed engineering firm that does not have a controlling interest in the company that installed the system. The bills specify that these standards supersede all existing and local standards in municipalities and counties.

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CS/SB 558 was amended to clarify that the stormwater system standards apply only to stormwater systems owned by counties and municipalities, rather than all stormwater systems statewide. It also specifies that while the FDOT's standards must be followed, the department is not required to review or approve installation plans, inspection videos, or inspection reports.

Additionally, CS/SB 558 further expands who may conduct inspections to include a general contractor, provided the contractor does not have controlling interests in the company. (Singer)

Stormwater Treatment (Monitor)
CS/CS/HB 1457 (Gonzalez Pittman) and **CS/CS/SB 848** (Truenow) revise the definition for "compensating stormwater treatment," and add new definitions for "enhancement credit" and "pollutant reduction allocation" to establish a clearer statewide framework governing compensating stormwater treatment and water quality enhancement activities. These changes may affect how municipalities plan or review stormwater systems.

The bills create a new prohibition preventing certain regional stormwater systems operated by non-local government entities, including those under contract with local governments, from providing stormwater treatment or achieving net improvements for specified seaport activities. The bills also establish new requirements for regional stormwater systems applying for an environmental resource permit, including proof of financial responsibility and defined drainage areas.

Additionally, the bills add new requirements directing Department of Environmental Protection to adopt rules for the establishment and operation of water quality

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enhancement areas. While rulemaking is underway, the bills authorized the issuance of provisional permits for water quality enhancement areas, allowing projects to move forward before the rules are in place. (Singer)

TORT LIABILITY

Causes of Action Based on Improvements to Real Property (Monitor)
SB 1592 (Gruters) and **HB 705** (Owen) amend Florida's statute of limitations and related deadlines for civil actions "founded on the design, planning, or construction of an improvement to real property" by clarifying when the limitations period begins and setting a clear outer deadline for filing claims; under the bills, the clock starts on the earliest completion event (such as issuance of a certificate of occupancy, final inspection, or abandonment of work) and generally must be brought within seven years thereafter, with each distinct structure treated separately for multi-building projects. By refining key definitions and triggers for accrual, the proposals aim to provide greater predictability and reduce litigation ambiguity across the construction industry. For municipalities, this affects local government construction, infrastructure, and permitting oversight because clearer accrual rules influence risk management, contract drafting, warranty enforcement, and potential liability exposure for government-led improvements, and may also affect how cities schedule inspections, issue certificates of occupancy, and manage long-term maintenance and recordkeeping for capital projects. (Cruz)

Sovereign Immunity of Public Transit Contractors in Tort Actions (Monitor)
HB 581 (Busatta) and **CS/SB 828** (Leek) amend Florida's sovereign immunity statute to designate contractors providing public transit services, and their employees, agents, and subcontractors, as agents of the state for purposes of tort liability when acting within the scope of their contracts. The bills apply to public transit services as

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defined in statute and take effect upon becoming law. The bills aim to reduce litigation exposure for public transit operators performing governmental functions, while preserving liability for acts outside contract scope or conducted in bad faith. CS/SB 828 was amended to remove subcontractors from the bill, meaning the bill only applies to contractors providing public transit services and their employees and agents. (Cruz)

Suits Against the Government (Oppose)
HB 145 (McFarland) makes major changes to Florida's sovereign-immunity laws, which limit the amount of damages that can be recovered in tort suits against the state and its political subdivisions, including municipalities. Under current law, cities and other governmental entities may be held liable for up to $200,000 per person and $300,000 per incident for negligence or other tort claims. Any amount above those caps can be paid only through a claims bill passed by the Legislature, and some insurance policies have conditioned payment on that legislative approval.

HB 145 would dramatically raise those limits and loosen key procedural safeguards. For causes of action that accrue on or after October 1, 2026, the liability caps would increase to $500,000 per person and $1 million per incident, and for claims accruing on or after October 1, 2031, the limits would further rise to $600,000 per person and $1.2 million per incident. Under Florida law, a claim "accrues" when the last element necessary to establish the cause of action occurs—typically the date the injury or damage happens—though in some cases, such as latent or undiscovered injuries, a claim may accrue later when the injury is or should have been discovered.

Beyond the higher monetary exposure, the bill contains several non-monetary provisions with serious financial consequences for government entities. It authorizes

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a subdivision of the state—including municipalities—to settle or pay a claim in excess of the statutory limits without further action by the Legislature, eliminating the requirement for a claims bill and eroding an important check on large settlements. It also provides that insurance policies may not condition payment of coverage or benefits on enactment of a claims bill, nullifying such provisions in existing policies and potentially obligating insurers (and indirectly, cities) to pay higher amounts automatically once a settlement is reached.

Procedurally, the bill shortens the time for filing and resolving claims. Claimants would have only 18 months (reduced from three years) to present a claim to the appropriate agency or to the Department of Financial Services before filing suit. The time period after which a failure to act on a claim is deemed a denial would be reduced from six months to four months, and the statute of limitations for negligence claims would shrink from four years to two years.

Overall, HB 145 would increase both the frequency and the cost of tort litigation against cities. The higher caps would substantially raise the potential value of settlements and judgments, while the removal of the claims-bill requirement and the insurance-payment restriction would strip away existing fiscal controls that protect local taxpayers. The bill would apply to causes of action accruing after October 1, 2026.

SB 1366 (Brodeur) is the Senate's proposal to reform Florida's sovereign-immunity statute and differs substantially from HB 145 in both scope and structure. As amended, the bill increases the statutory caps on governmental tort liability for causes of action accruing on or after October 1, 2026, to $350,000 per person and $500,000 per incident, while maintaining the requirement that any payment above

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those limits must be approved by the Legislature through a claims bill unless the excess is paid within available insurance coverage.

In addition to raising the caps, the bill revises several procedural provisions governing claims against state and local governments. It shortens the presuit notice period, requiring claimants to present a claim to the appropriate agency within 18 months after the claim accrues, rather than the current three-year period. It also revises the statute of limitations, requiring most negligence actions against governmental entities to be filed within two years, while retaining existing limitations periods for medical malpractice, wrongful death, and contribution claims. The bill further reduces the time for an agency or the Department of Financial Services to make a final disposition of a claim before it is deemed denied from six months to four months. (Cruz)

Other Bills of Interest
SB 1208 (Rodriguez) – Sovereign Immunity of County Constitutional Officers in Tort Actions

TRANSPORTATION

Advanced Air Mobility (Monitor)
CS/CS/CS/HB 1093 (Spencer) and **CS/CS/SB 1362** (Harrell) expand eligibility for public-private partnership funding to include vertiports and related charging systems. The bills also authorize FDOT to fund up to 100% of public or private vertiport project costs when federal funds are unavailable, or up to 80% of the nonfederal share when federal funds are available. (Singer)

Boating-restricted Areas (Support)

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CS/HB 1173 (Sirois) revises the authority of municipalities and counties to establish boating-restricted areas by ordinance. The bill specifies the types of boating-restricted areas local governments may adopt, including idle speed/no wake zones, slow speed/minimum wake zones, numerical speed limits, and vessel-exclusion zones, and enumerates the specific geographic and safety conditions under which each type of restriction may be established. The bill requires that the boundaries of locally adopted boating-restricted areas be clearly marked with uniform waterway markers consistent with state requirements.

The bill removes existing provisions requiring municipal and county boating-restricted ordinances to be reviewed and approved by the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission before taking effect. As a result, municipalities would no longer be subject to a state approval process for eligible boating-restricted ordinances, but would assume responsibility for ensuring that adopted restrictions meet the statutory criteria and marking requirements.

CS/HB 1173 was amended to narrow and clarify the bill's scope while continuing to authorize municipalities and counties to regulate vessel speed and operate in specified geographic areas and under specified safety conditions. The bill was also amended to retain current law requiring the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission review and approval before such ordinances can take effect. (Singer)

Commercial Service Airports (Oppose)
CS/CS/HB 919 (Weinberger) and **CS/CS/SB 706** (Mayfield) preempt local authority by requiring that "major commercial service airports" be named only as provided in statute. The bills define this category using federal medium- and large-hub classifications and assign statutory names to the following affected airports: Fort Lauderdale–Hollywood International Airport, Jacksonville International Airport, Miami

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International Airport, Orlando International Airport, Palm Beach International Airport, Southwest Florida International Airport, and Tampa International Airport.

The bills require the Department of Transportation to review airport classifications annually and notify the Legislature of any additions or removals. If an airport newly meets the federal classification, the naming preemption and resulting municipal compliance obligations would apply, requiring updates to local records, signage, and official documents to reflect the statutory name. Government records created on or after July 1, 2026, must also use the state-designated names.

The bills were amended to add procedural clarity and implementation details relating to the renaming and rebranding of an airport. They establish compliance expectations for political subdivisions implementing airport name changes and provide clarity on the timeline for when those changes must commence. (Singer)

Electric Vehicle Charging Taxation (Monitor)
HB 653 (Hodgers) and **CS/SB 680** (Mayfield) amend state tax definitions to classify electricity sold to an electric vehicle charging operator as a sale for resale, making the operator's purchase of electricity a non-taxable wholesale transaction. They also exclude EV charging operators from the definition of "distribution company" for purposes of the state gross receipts tax and apply these changes retroactively to January 1, 2019. These revisions are intended to ensure that only the final retail charging transaction is subject to state sales tax, avoiding tax being applied both when the operator purchases electricity and when the operator sells a charging session to the consumer.

For municipal electric utilities and municipally owned electric vehicle charging stations, the bills clarify that electricity sold to an EV charging station operator,

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including a city operating its own stations, is treated as a nontaxable sale for resale for purposes of state sales tax, and that the operator's sale of charging to the public is not "utility service" subject to the state gross receipts tax. The clarifications apply retroactively to January 1, 2019, and the bills do not amend statutes governing municipal public service taxes or franchise fees.

CS/SB 680 was amended to replace the original definitional approach with a new, explicit sales-and-use tax exemption under section 212.08, Florida Statutes. The bill still establishes a sales-and-use tax exemption for electricity sold to owners or operators of electric vehicle charging stations for the purpose of providing electric vehicle charging. The bill was further amended to clarify eligibility criteria, including separate metering and affidavit requirements, and establishes penalties for misuse of the exemption. CS/SB 680 also directs the Department of Revenue to adopt rules governing the affidavit and authorizes the department to adopt emergency rules as necessary. Lastly, the amendment removes the January 1, 2019 retroactive applicability. (Singer)

Electric Vehicle Registration Fees (Support)
SB 804 (Truenow) establishes an additional annual registration fee for electric vehicles and directs the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles to collect the fee and deposit the revenue into the State Transportation Trust Fund. The bill defines "battery electric vehicle" as a motor vehicle powered solely by an electric motor drawing current from rechargeable batteries and not equipped with an internal combustion engine. The bill requires the owner of a battery electric vehicle registered in this state to pay a $250 annual fee, collected at the time of initial registration and each renewal, in addition to existing license taxes and fees. All fees collected under this provision must be used for the planning, construction, maintenance, and repair of public roads and transportation infrastructure. (Singer)

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Golf Cart Crossings (Monitor)
CS/CS/HB 519 (Yeager) permits the operation of a golf cart for the purpose of crossing a highway of five lanes or more upon a golf cart crossing at a signalized intersection under certain conditions. The bill requires counties and municipalities in which the golf cart crossing is located to post appropriate signs at the signalized intersection to indicate that operation of a golf cart is allowed at the crossing. The bill also requires that individuals operating a golf cart under such circumstances must obtain a permit from the county or municipality in which the golf cart crossing is located.

CS/HB 519 was amended to allow the operation of a golf cart for the purpose of crossing a street or highway within a crosswalk at a signalized intersection, provided the intersection is located entirely within the boundaries of a single local government. The bill authorizes golf cart crossings only where a local government has designated the roadway for golf cart operation, approved golf cart use at the crosswalk, and posted appropriate signage. CS/HB 519 also removes the requirement for counties and municipalities to post signage and eliminates the requirement that individuals operating a golf cart under these circumstances obtain a permit. (Singer)

Transportation (Oppose)
CS/CS/HB 1233 (Griffitts) and **CS/CS/CS/SB 1220** (Massullo) are broad transportation policy bills that address emerging mobility technologies, drone delivery services, port and airport planning, and the authority of the Department of Transportation (FDOT). While the bills overlap substantially in their treatment of personal delivery devices, mobile carriers, and drone delivery services, each bill contains distinct provisions with differing municipal implications.

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The bills revise statutory definitions and authorize personal delivery devices and mobile carriers to operate on sidewalks, crosswalks, bicycle lanes, bicycle paths, and certain roadway shoulders, while prohibiting operation on limited-access facilities and the Florida Shared-Use Nonmotorized Trail Network. Municipalities retain authority to regulate safe operation, but may need to review local ordinances, pedestrian and bicycle safety policies, and enforcement practices for consistency with revised state standards. The bills also to prohibit local governments from levying operating fees or regulating advertising on personal delivery devices.

The bills preempt local governments from denying permits, business tax receipts, or land-use approvals for drone delivery services on commercial property based on drone port location, while allowing enforcement of generally applicable zoning standards and clarifying that drone delivery facilities do not reduce minimum parking requirements.

The bills also expand the FDOT's duties by directing it to coordinate with local governments on applications for federal funds. Under this provision, local governments would submit proposed federal applications to FDOT for review so the department can ensure projects align with the department's goals. CS/CS/HB 1233 clarifies that FDOT's role is advisory in nature, requiring the department to provide assistance to local governments but not requiring FDOT approval before submission. CS/CS/CS/SB 1220 was amended to remove the coordination requirement altogether, while still maintaining the language requiring FDOT approval for applications.

The bills require ports and commercial service airports to include strategies for obtaining and maintaining critical infrastructure resources, such as electricity, fuel, and water, within strategic plans and airport master plans, which may require

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coordination with host municipalities on land-use consistency and infrastructure capacity. The bills also amend statutes governing the Florida Shared-Use Nonmotorized Trail Network and authorizes Florida's participation in a multistate rapid rail transit compact, though it does not impose direct obligations on municipalities.

The bills add a definition for an "advanced air mobility corridor connection point" and authorize the FDOT to purchase, lease, or acquire property and materials for advanced air mobility purposes.

The bills expand an existing preemption relating to local government authority over communications facilities located in public rights-of-way. The bills limit the ability of local governments to impose certain permitting conditions, fees, or other requirements on communications service providers and prohibit local governments from requiring surveys, or other conditions as a condition of issuing a permit. Local governments may still require the submission of a bond or other financial instrument; however, they are prohibited from requiring a cash deposit or other escrow, payment, or exaction. The bills further prohibit a local government from limiting the number of permits issues to a provider for a single bond if the permits are closed within 45 days after the completion of work.

The bills also prohibit local governments from applying standard provisions relating to rights-of-ways owned and controlled by the local government regarding the placement of communications facilities. Local governments are similarly prohibited from applying standard provisions for public utility easements that are not within an area that is owned or controlled by the local government, unless a permitting delegation agreement exists between the local governments and the owner of the right-of-way or easement.

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The bills effectively narrow municipal and county authority even further over the placement, maintenance, regulation, and permitting of communications facilities in the right-of-way.

CS/CS/CS/SB 1220 includes several provisions not in CS/CS/HB 1233, such as the repeal of statutes authorizing digital proof of driver's licenses and electronic insurance verification, which may affect municipal law enforcement practices. The bill also revises the use of emergency vehicle cruise lights and updates yield requirements for emergency vehicles, which may have an impact on law enforcement.

The bill also directs the FDOT to conduct a new study on the long-term impacts of alternative fuel vehicles on state transportation revenues. The study must evaluate the feasibility of various transportation revenue models and analyze each model's advantages, disadvantages, and revenue impacts. FDOT must make the results of the study available by January 1, 2027.

CS/CS/HB 1233 establishes state policy and disclosure requirements related to the consideration of specified nonpecuniary factors, including environmental justice and climate-related considerations, in taxpayer-funded transportation project development, which may affect how municipalities document or publish transportation projects subject to federal requirements. The bill also makes several additional transportation-related changes that may affect municipal law enforcement practices, including revisions to maximum and minimum speed limits and the removal of license plate validation sticker requirements. (Singer)

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Transportation (Monitor)
CS/SB 1274 (DiCeglie) requires the Department of Transportation to increase the minimum perception-reaction time for steady yellow traffic signals in intersections equipped with a traffic infraction detector, which would affect signal timing at locally owned or operated intersections. The bill also imposes new reporting requirements and restricts the conversion of certain cargo-supporting facilities at municipal seaports located in designated spaceport counties.

The bill also creates the Next-generation Traffic Signal Modernization Grant Program, authorizing FDOT to cost-share with counties and municipalities to deploy advanced signal technologies, with ongoing maintenance responsibilities assigned to local governments for participating intersections.

The remaining provisions make technical updates to state transportation and enforcement laws, which may require local governments to review their enforcement practices and ordinances for consistency. (Singer)

Transportation (Monitor)
CS/CS/CS/HB 543 (McFarland) and **CS/CS/SB 1080** (DiCeglie) make broad revisions to transportation, motor vehicle, and traffic safety statutes with several direct municipal implications. However, the bills currently differ in several key provisions.

The bills require the Department of Transportation to increase the minimum perception-reaction time for steady yellow traffic signals in intersections equipped with a traffic infraction detector, which would affect signal timing at locally owned or operated intersections.

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The bills revise micromobility definitions, authorize private entities to install automated license plate recognition systems on private entities under specified conditions.

The bills also require that if a school zone uses a speed detection system to enforce restricted speed limits, the school zone must utilize flashing beacons to provide notice when the reduced speed limit is in effect. The bills establish a statutory framework authorizing counties and municipalities to enforce school zone speed limits through speed detection systems. The bills provide that a violation occurs when a driver exceeds the posted school zone speed limit by more than 10 miles per hour, set requirements on the placement and operation of such equipment, and require counties and municipalities to report the number of violations issued through the use of such systems annually.

Lastly, the bills require the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) serving Charlotte, Collier, and Lee Counties to submit a report evaluating the feasibility of consolidating into a single MPO.

CS/CS/SB 1080 also creates the Next-generation Traffic Signal Modernization Grant Program, authorizing FDOT to cost-share with counties and municipalities to deploy advanced signal technologies, with ongoing maintenance responsibilities assigned to local governments for participating intersections. The bill directs the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to conduct a statewide study on the effectiveness, feasibility, costs, and implementation considerations of advanced detection and monitoring technologies at public railroad-highway grade crossings, and to consult with affected local governments during the study. The bill does not impose installation, maintenance, or reporting requirements on municipalities as it relates to this study.

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CS/CS/CS/HB 543 further differs from the Senate bill in that is also establishes a new statewide exhaust noise standard, allows certain golf carts converted to low-speed vehicles to be titled and registered without a state inspection, and creates new citation, penalization, and towing exemptions for vehicles displaying a valid disabled parking permit to license plate when occupying more than one parking space under specified conditions. The bill also imposes new reporting requirements and restricts the conversion of certain cargo-supporting facilities at municipal seaports located in designated spaceport counties.

The bill authorizes operation of a golf cart for the purpose of crossing a street or highway within a crosswalk at a signalized intersection, provided the intersection is located entirely within the boundaries of a single local government. The bill also authorizes golf cart crossings only where a local government has designated the roadway for golf cart operation, approved golf cart use at the crosswalk, and posted appropriate signage.

The bill expands the use of school bus infraction detection systems to allow charter schools and private schools to utilize such systems, provided they are located within a school district that has already implemented a school bus infraction detection system.

The remaining provisions make largely technical and administrative revisions to transportation, motor vehicle, and enforcement statutes that do not create new municipal mandates but may require local governments to review ordinances, enforcement practices, and infrastructure policies for consistency with revised state law. (Singer)

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Other Bills of Interest
HB 101 (Gentry) and **SB 356** (Wright) – Utility Terrain Vehicles
HB 283 (Alvarez, J.) and **SB 498** (Rodriguez) – School Zone and Pedestrian Safety

UTILITIES

Advanced Nuclear Reactors (Monitor)
SB 1696 (McClain) grants to the Public Service Commission the sole authority to regulate advanced nuclear reactors. The bill imposes additional duties on the Florida Public Service Commission, the Department of Environmental Protection, and the Department of Health relating to advanced nuclear reactors and nuclear materials. The bill requires the PSC to consider certain factors before issuing certifications for the siting and operation of such facilities. (O'Hara)

Consumer Fairness in Utility Rates (Oppose)
HB 225 (Robinson, F.) eliminates existing section 180.191, Florida Statutes, which authorizes municipalities to levy surcharges on the provision of water and wastewater services to extraterritorial customers. The bill replaces current law with new language, entitled the "Consumer Fairness in Utility Rates Act of 2025." It specifies that a municipality operating a water or sewer utility that has a facility located within a recipient municipality must impose the same base rates, fees, and charges on consumers within the recipient municipality as it does on consumers within its municipal boundaries. The term "facility" means a water treatment facility, a wastewater treatment facility, a pumping station, a well, or other physical component of a utility system. The bill further provides that a municipality operating a utility that has a facility located within a recipient municipality may not impose a surcharge on consumers within the boundaries of the recipient municipality unless the surcharge is: directly tied to documented costs of service, maintenance, or

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infrastructure investment, and clearly disclosed to the consumer in writing at the time of billing. In addition, the surcharges may not be used as a general revenue source or profit margin. The bill requires the municipality to hold a public hearing to allow input from municipal and extraterritorial consumers before establishing or adjusting rates, fees, or surcharges. It requires a municipal utility to file an annual report to the Florida Public Service Commission detailing the use of surcharge revenues, and it specifies that the Public Service Commission must review consumer disputes over rates, fees, or surcharges. (O'Hara)

Local Utility Revenues (Oppose)
SB 1420 (DiCeglie) applies to county and municipal utilities providing water, wastewater, stormwater, electric, or gas service. The bill prohibits a county or municipal utility from transferring any utility revenues to fund general government functions or special projects that are not related to ongoing utility service. It specifies that any utility revenue surplus be returned to ratepayers. The bill permits utilities to reinvest utility revenues back into the utility and requires a utility, every five years, to develop a budget forecast and strategies for improvements and maintenance. It prohibits a county or municipality from charging a higher rate or from adding a surcharge for extraterritorial service that is greater than the cost of providing such services. Any violation of the bill's requirements is grounds for the withholding of state funds to which the utility may be entitled. The bill eliminates the first and second 25% surcharges for extraterritorial water and sewer service that is authorized under current law. A utility may charge separate rates, fees, and charges to extraterritorial customers after holding a public meeting, but such rates, fees, and charges may not be greater than 50% in excess of what is charged to customers within the municipality. (O'Hara)

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Municipal Water and Sewer Utility Rates (Oppose)
SB 1188 (Grall) prohibits a municipal water or sewer utility from imposing any surcharge on extraterritorial service provided to customers located within another municipality. It does not prohibit surcharges for extraterritorial service provided to customers located within an unincorporated area. (O'Hara)

Municipal Water and Sewer Utility Rates, Fees, and Charges (Oppose)
SB 940 (McClain) prohibits a municipal water or sewer utility from imposing any surcharge on any extraterritorial customers served by the utility. The bill authorizes the utility to charge extraterritorial customers the *same* rates, fees and charges that are imposed on customers within the municipality. In addition, after holding a public hearing, the municipal utility may charge extraterritorial customers rates, fees and charges that are just and equitable and based on the same factors used in fixing rates, fees, and charges for customers inside the municipality. The bill authorizes municipal water and sewer utilities to continue imposing an extraterritorial surcharge only to the extent necessary to comply with the terms of bond covenants in effect as of July 1, 2024. The surcharges must be phased out upon retirement, expiration, or refinancing of the debt obligation. Finally, the bill requires municipal water and sewer utilities to submit a rate study to the Department of Environmental Protection by January 1, 2028, and every seven years thereafter. The bill specifies the minimum requirements for the rate study and authorizes municipal utilities serving less than 10,000 customers to petition for an extension of time to complete the required rate study. Such extension of time may be granted upon a showing of undue financial or administrative burden by the municipal utility. (O'Hara)

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Municipal Electric and Gas Utilities/Enterprise Fund Transfers (Oppose)
HB 773 (Brackett) applies to municipal electric and gas utilities. Effective July 1, 2026, the bill limits the amount of utility earnings that may be transferred to the general fund of the municipality *for utility purposes* and *prohibits* any transfers to the general fund *for non-utility purposes*. If the utility service is provided to customers inside the municipality, the transfer amount is capped at 10% of the municipality's general fund. If the municipal utility serves extraterritorial customers, the amount transferred to the municipality's general fund must be based on the percentage of extraterritorial customers served but may not exceed 10% of the municipality's general fund. The transfer amount must decrease as the percentage of extraterritorial customers increases. The transfer amount must be approved in a local referendum by a vote of customers located within and outside the municipality. The transfer cap may be exceeded in the event of a disaster or emergency declared by the Governor, or by the passage of a resolution by a 4/5 vote of the governing body. The amount transferred pursuant to such resolution that exceeds the 10% cap must be repaid within three fiscal years. The bill *prohibits* the transfer of utility earnings to the general fund *for non-utility purposes*. A municipality that transfers utility funds in violation of this prohibition is ineligible for state funds for infrastructure under chapter 216, Florida Statutes. The bill requires a municipality that transfers a portion of its utility earnings to the general fund to disclose in its annual budget and financial report: 1) the amount and percentage of the transfers; 2) the percentage such amount represents of public utility earnings; and 2) the purpose of and reason for the transfer. (O'Hara)

Provision of Municipal Utility Service to Owners Outside the Municipal Limits (Oppose)
CS/CS/CS/SB 1014 (Mayfield) and **CS/CS/HB 1075** (Sirois) mandate that a municipal utility provide extraterritorial service. The bills differ slightly, but neither bill alters current law authorization relating to extraterritorial surcharges. CS/CS/CS/SB 1014

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prohibits a municipal water or sewer utility from refusing to extend service to property outside its municipal corporate limits on the sole basis that the customer does not consent to annexation. Upon an application for service to connect, a municipality must allow the service if: 1) the property is not within the service territory of another utility; 2) the utility has sufficient capacity (defined in the bill to include infrastructure, managerial, and financial considerations) to serve the property; or 3) the property is within one mile of a utility's main line. The bill applies to properties of any size, type, or use. The utility must provide a written response to an application for service within 90 days. If the utility has sufficient capacity to serve, the response must include the anticipated fees, charges, and other requirements to connect under the utility's existing fee structure. The bill allows a utility to establish minimum requirements for an application for service, including an estimate of the anticipated load for the property and any anticipated development, as well as an application fee. The bill allows a property owner to bring an action to enforce these requirements and authorizes recovery of attorney fees and costs by a prevailing plaintiff.

CS/CS/HB 1075 mandates a municipal utility to allow an extraterritorial property owner of any size or type or another municipality to connect with or use the utility's water, sewer, gas, or solid waste services if the utility has sufficient treatment, transmission, and distribution capacity and the requesting municipality or property owner pays all applicable rates, fees, and charges authorized by section 180.191, Florida Statutes. The utility may not condition service on consent to annex, unless the property as of July 2026 is subject to an annexation agreement, development agreement, or is located in an area subject to a joint planning agreement between the municipality and the county. The municipal utility must provide a written capacity determination within 30 days of receiving an application for connection. A denial of a request for connection may be appealed to the circuit court, and a prevailing plaintiff may recover attorney fees and costs. A utility is not required to

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pay attorney fees and costs if it proves by clear and convincing evidence that the denial was based on a good-faith engineering determination of insufficient capacity. If a private entity has been granted a franchise by a municipality to provide utility services, the entity may, but is not required to, allow an extraterritorial municipality or property owner to connect.

CS/CS/HB 1075 was further amended to force a municipality (including those without utilities) to approve any upgrade to a wastewater utility located on property within the municipality that is owned by another political subdivision, and the wastewater facility is either owned by that political subdivision or by a private utility. It prohibits a municipality from applying a comprehensive plan or regulation to the upgrade project that is more burdensome or restrictive than the comprehensive plan or regulations that applied at the time the infrastructure was originally installed.

In addition, CS/CS/HB 1075 would force a utility that provides extraterritorial water or wastewater service to enter an interlocal agreement with a county in which it provides such service if the county has designated an economic development zone and the zone is wholly or partially within the utility service area. The agreement must address the provision of water and wastewater service to the entire economic development zone and must: 1) define infrastructure service and maintenance responsibilities; 2) establish responsibilities for capacity expansion and cost allocation; 3) provide timelines for delivering the service; and 4) include provisions for dispute resolution to prevent unreasonable delay in providing the service. (O'Hara)

Public Works Employees Identification Cards (Monitor)

HB 75 (Woodson) directs a municipality, county, or other political subdivision to issue to each public works employee who is not on probation an identification card

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indicating that he or she is a first responder. The bill defines "public works employee" as a public employee whose primary duties involve construction, maintenance, repair, renovation, remodeling, or improvement of a building, highway, road, street, sewer, storm drain, water system, site development, irrigation system, reclamation project, gas or electrical distribution system, gas or electrical substation, or other facility, project, or portion thereof owned by the municipality, county, or political subdivision. (O'Hara)

Residential Utility Disconnections (Oppose)
SB 1576 (Smith) prohibits an electric utility or water utility from disconnecting service to residential customers for nonpayment of bills or fees during days of extreme heat or extreme cold, during a state of emergency. It requires such utilities to waive reconnection fees and late fees under similar conditions and requires that all notices of nonpayment of bills and fees provide an offer of bill payment assistance or provide information on other assistance or payment programs. (O'Hara)

Utility Services (Oppose)
CS/CS/HB 1451 (Busatta) and **CS/CS/SB 1724** (Martin) apply to extraterritorial service by municipal gas, electric, water, and sewer utilities. As filed, the bills provided that a utility that generates revenue from extraterritorial services may not use more than 10% of the gross revenues generated from such services to fund general government functions. This provision has been removed from both bills.

The bills eliminate statutory authority for utilities to impose an automatic 25% surcharge on extraterritorial water and sewer service. Instead, a water and sewer utility may, after holding a public hearing, set separate rates, fees, and charges for extraterritorial customers based on the same factors used to set rates, fees, and charges for customers within the municipality. Such separate rates, fees, and

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charges may not exceed the rates, fees, and charges for customers within the municipality by more than 25%. CS/CS/SB 1724 provides that utilities that have pledged currently authorized surcharge revenues for debt service may continue to impose the current law surcharge until such debt is retired or renewed. The effective date of this change in surcharge authority is July 1, 2026, in CS/CS/SB 1724, whereas CS/CS/HB 1451 specifies an effective date of July 1, 2027. CS/CS/HB 1451 further provides that a municipality providing extraterritorial water or wastewater services to another municipality through use of a water treatment or sewer treatment plant located within the other municipality must charge the same rates, fees, and charges for the customers of the other municipality as it charges for the utility's own municipal customers.

The bills specify that any agreement to provide extraterritorial utility service at retail must be written and that such an agreement may not become effective until the utility participates in a public meeting within the extraterritorial area to be served. The meeting must solicit public input on the following: rates, fees, and charges to be imposed for the services, including any differential in charges between extraterritorial customers and other customers; the nature of the services to be provided; and the extent to which revenues generated from the service will be used to fund nonutility government functions. The bills require such a public meeting to be conducted annually.

The bills impose an annual reporting requirement to the Florida Public Service Commission for utilities providing extraterritorial gas, electric, water, or wastewater service, beginning January 2028 (CS/CS/HB 1451 requires the report beginning January 2027). For each type of utility service provided, the report must specify:

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- The number and percentage of customers receiving extraterritorial service. CS/CS/HB 1451 also requires the utility to report the total number of utility customers.
- The volume and percentage of sales made to such customers and the gross revenues generated from such sales. CS/CS/HB 1451 also requires the utility to report the gross revenues generated from all sales.
- Whether the rates, fees, and charges imposed on extraterritorial customers are different from the rates, fees, and charges imposed on customers within the municipality and, if so, the amount and percentage of the differential. CS/CS/HB 1451 would further require this information for each customer class for which a differential exists.
- CS/CS/HB 1451 also requires the report to include the percentage and revenues generated from the provision of utility services that were used to fund or finance nonutility government functions or services of the municipality, and the percentage of the municipality's nonutility budget that was funded by such revenues.
- CS/CS/HB 1451 authorizes the Public Service Commission to impose penalties of up to $5,000 per day on utilities that fail to file the report.

The Public Service Commission must compile the reported information into an annual report submitted to the Governor and legislature. Finally, CS/CS/HB 1451 provides that the subject of a regional utilities authority created by the legislature through charter amendment after January 2023 (Gainesville Regional Utility) is expressly preempted to the state. (O'Hara)

Other Bills of Interest

HB 379 (Shoaf) – Rural Electric Cooperatives

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SB 1532 (Smith) – Florida Public Service Commission

WATER QUALITY AND WASTEWATER

Advanced Wastewater Treatment (Monitor)
HB 1167 (Cross) and **SB 1468** (Berman) require sewage disposal facilities with a permitted capacity greater than 1 million gallons per day to submit annual reports to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) beginning July 1, 2027. The required reporting includes facility age and upgrades, permitted and actual treatment volumes, current treatment levels and pollutant concentrations (including nutrients, specified PFAS compounds, and other contaminants of emerging concern), estimated pollutant loadings, disposal methods and discharges, wastewater spills since 2010, facility elevation, and location within floodplains, flood zones, or coastal high-hazard areas.

The bills also require DEP, in consultation with water management districts and sewage disposal facilities, to compile this information, submit an annual statewide report to the Governor and Legislature beginning December 31, 2027, and post the report on its website. Municipal wastewater utilities operating qualifying facilities would assume new recurring data-collection and reporting obligations, including reporting on historical wastewater spills and flood-risk characteristics of existing infrastructure. (Singer)

Biosolids Management (Monitor)
CS/CS/SB 1474 (Gaetz) and **CS/CS/HB 1285** (Boyles) prohibit the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) from issuing or renewing a permit for a biosolids land application site that authorizes the disposal or land application of septage as Class B biosolids if a qualifying wastewater treatment facility providing higher levels of

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septage treatment is located within 50 miles of the proposed site. The bills were amended to clarify this provision by adding a definition of septage that may not be land applied under the specified conditions. CS/CS/SB 1474 and CS/CS/HB 1285 were further amended to reduce the applicable distance from 50 miles to 30 miles.

The prohibition applies when the nearby facility is owned or operated by the federal government, the state, or a political subdivision, and is not defunct, repurposed, or at capacity.

For municipalities that own or operate wastewater treatment facilities that accept septage for higher levels of treatment, the bill establishes a statutory condition that DEP must consider when permitting or renewing nearby Class B biosolids land application sites. (Singer)

Biosolids Management (Monitor)
CS/CS/CS/SB 1294 (Bradley) and **CS/CS/HB 1245** (Shoaf) were amended to narrow the scope of the provisions. The bills now revise requirements governing the land application, distribution, and marketing of bulk Class AA biosolids fertilizer and compost products. The bills prohibit land application from exceeding the agronomic rate established by the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, and specify that bulk land application of biosolids must be conducted for beneficial reuse rather than for disposal, and add a new definition for “disposal.”

The bills establish a new recordkeeping requirement for owners or operators of land application sites where bulk agriculture land application of biosolids occurs, which includes a five-year retention period for records and detailed documentation standards. The bills authorize bulk Class AA biosolids products to be distributed or marketed as fertilizer or compost products only if they meet applicable registration

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and labeling requirements. Class AA biosolid compost products that do not claim plant nutrients or plant growth properties may be marketed or distributed for agricultural land application only if the product is enrolled in and certified under the U.S. Composting Council Seal of Testing Assurance Program. The bills further specify that the use of Class AA biosolids for agricultural land application is prohibited unless they meet the applicable requirements described above.

The bills also direct the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences to publish biennial recommended agronomic rates, which may inform municipal biosolids management and land application practices. The bills take effect November 1, 2026. (Singer)

Land and Water Management (Oppose)
CS/HB 479 (Maggard) and **SB 718** (McClain) as filed preempt the regulation of water quality, water quantity, pollution control, pollutant discharge prevention and removal, and wetlands, including any delineation, to the state. The preemption does not apply to an interagency or interlocal agreement between the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and any agency, water management district, or local government that conducts programs relating to or affecting the water resources of the state. The preemption does not impact the authority of a county or municipality to regulate and operate its own water system, wastewater system, or stormwater system. The bills provide that if DEP determines that a county or municipality is in violation of this provision, DEP must notify the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the violation, and the CFO must withhold any state funds to which the county or municipality may be entitled.

CS/HB 479 has been amended to narrow the original bill's broad preemption over water quality, water quantity, pollution control, pollutant discharge prevention and

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removal, and wetlands. Instead, it prohibits local governments from adopting or enforcing regulations that restrict upland activities outside of a wetland buffer zone established at a minimum of 15 feet and an average of 25 feet. By codifying a fixed buffer standard, the bill prevents local governments from adjusting buffer requirements to fit their wetland conditions. (Singer)

Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (Monitor)
HB 855 (Long) and **SB 1058** (Berman) are comprehensive bills aiming to update state law governing per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), including environmental cleanup standards, liability protections, and restrictions on firefighting foam, with direct implications for municipal utilities, property ownership, and fire services.

The bills revise the process for establishing PFAS cleanup target levels by requiring the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to adopt interim screening values by rule until the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency establishes final federal standards. The bills specify that DEP's interim standards are not legally enforceable unless ratified by the Legislature, and prohibit administrative or judicial enforcement actions based on unratified PFAS cleanup target levels. This limits near-term regulatory and liability exposure for municipalities that own or operate contaminated sites or water systems during the interim period.

The bills also establish a framework for bona fide prospective purchaser protections for PFAS contamination, which may reduce municipal liability when acquiring contaminated property if statutory conditions are met, and specify timelines and procedures for DEP review of related applications.

The bills also restrict the use of Class B firefighting foam containing intentionally added PFAS. Beginning January 1, 2027, fire service providers, including municipal fire

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departments, may not discharge such foam except during emergency responses or when necessary for system testing or maintenance. This provision requires municipalities operating fire services to transition training practices and procurement away from PFAS-containing foam for non-emergency uses and to update operational policies to comply with the new statutory limitations. (Singer)

Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (Monitor)
CS/CS/HB 1019 (Conerly) and **CS/CS/SB 1230** (Harrell) create a new statutory framework regulating firefighting foam containing intentionally added perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and impose new PFAS sampling requirements related to domestic wastewater biosolids. The bills define "aqueous film-forming foam" (AFFF) and establish a phased approach that restricts its use, sale, purchase, distribution, possession, and disposal over several years. Beginning July 1, 2026, the bills prohibit non-emergency AFFF use for training or testing and require entities in possession of AFFF to submit an inventory to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Beginning July 1, 2027, the bills prohibit the sale, purchase, or distribution of AFFF and require entities with remaining inventories to submit disposal plans to DEP. Beginning July 1, 2028, possession and use of AFFF are prohibited, subject to limited statutory exemptions. The bills were amended to change the effective date for possession and use of AFFF from July 1, 2028, to July 1, 2029.

For municipalities operating fire services, the bills would require changes to training practices, procurement policies, and inventory management related to PFAS-containing firefighting foam, as well as new administrative reporting and planning obligations. Municipal fire departments currently storing AFFF would be required to document inventories, coordinate disposal, and transition to compliant alternatives within the statutory timelines. The bills authorize DEP to administer grant or cost-share programs that may assist with these transition and disposal costs.

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The bills also require all public entities that dispose of domestic wastewater biosolids with a designed average daily flow of 25,000 gallons or more to conduct quarterly PFAS sampling and submit results to DEP. The bills clarify that this sampling requirement is for informational purposes only until water quality standards for PFAS are established by the federal government and adopted by the Florida DEP. The language further provides that the sampling may not be the basis for any department enforcement action or other cause of action. Municipal wastewater utilities subject to this provision would assume ongoing sampling, monitoring, and reporting responsibilities, adding recurring operational and compliance obligations. (Singer)

Other Bills of Interest
SB 1654 (Simon) and **HB 1377** (Franklin) – Cooling Towers

WATER SUPPLY AND POLICY

Landscape Irrigation (Monitor)
HB 611 (Cobb) and **SB 508** (Truenow) establish the Landscape Irrigation Standards and Watering Restrictions Act and remove a provision of law that requires local governments to adopt and enforce an ordinance related to automatic landscape irrigation systems.

The bills provide that a person may not install, maintain, alter, repair, service, or inspect a landscape irrigation system unless the person is a licensed irrigation contractor or property owner. The bills allow local governments and water management districts to adopt more stringent requirements for a property owner who installs an irrigation system. The bills provide that to obtain a landscape

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irrigation permit, a licensed irrigation contractor must submit an application to the applicable local government or water management district with certain information prior to the construction of the irrigation system. The bills also require that before a local government or water management district can issue a landscape irrigation permit, the licensed irrigation contractor must provide a Letter of Certification of Design for a Landscape Irrigation System, a Letter of Completion Certifying Compliance with Design for a Landscape Irrigation System, and proof of certification by the Florida Water Star Certification program.

The bills also provide for landscape irrigation system sprinkler spacing and permits local governments to allow variances for areas where head-to-head spacing will oversaturate the soil or lead to inefficient water use.

Furthermore, the bills provide a landscape irrigation watering schedule. The bills allow local governments to grant a variance from the specific landscape irrigation watering schedule under certain circumstances, including instances in which strict adherence to the watering schedule would lead to unreasonable or unfair results. However, a local government may not grant a variance to allow a single zone to be irrigated more than two days per week during daylight saving time or more than one day per week during Eastern Standard Time or Central Standard Time.

The bills also address the enforcement of the act and provide that the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), in coordination with local governments, must authorize law enforcement personnel or other government staff as the enforcement officials. Any funds generated by penalties imposed due to violations of the act must be used by the local government for the administration and enforcement of the act and to further water conservation activities. The bills specify that enforcement officials may not provide violators with more than one written warning before

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assessing a fine and authorize local governments to take appropriate legal action, including injunctive action, to enforce the act. The bills also specify that it is unlawful for any governmental entity to enforce any law, rule, or regulation in conflict with the provisions of the act. (Singer)