

Legislative Advocacy

MINI-GUIDE



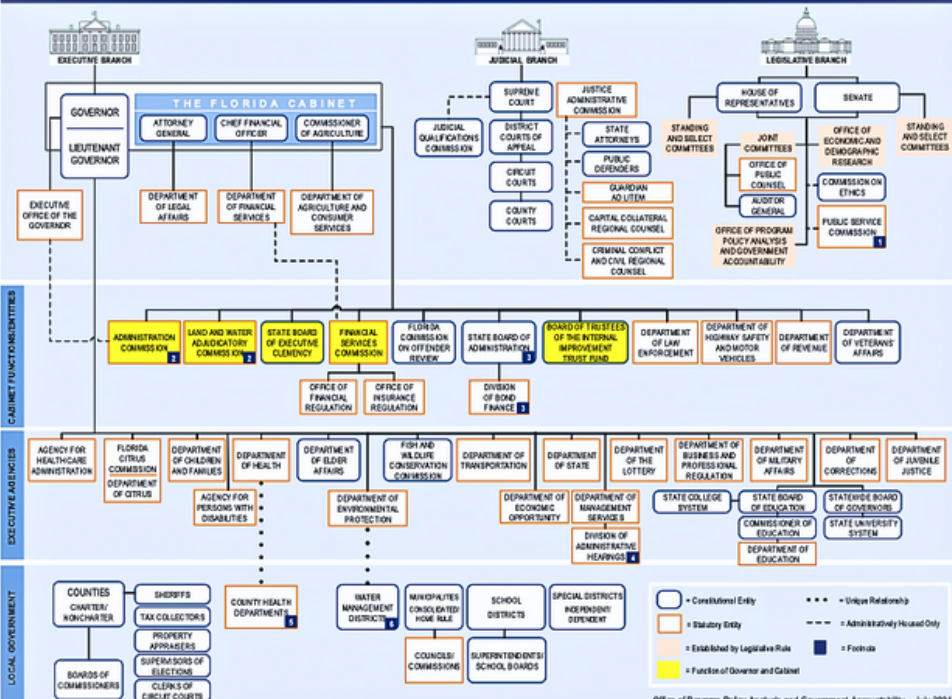
In This Guide You Will Find:



- 2** The Florida Electorate
- 3** Florida Local Government
- 4** State of the Legislature
- 6** Florida Legislative Session
- 8** How a Bill Becomes a Law
- 12** Contacting Your Legislator
- 14** Attending Committee Meetings
- 17** Delivering Testimony in Committee
- 21** Legislative Committees
- 22** House of Representatives Standing Committees
- 27** Senate Standing Committees
- 37** Joint Legislative Committees
- 39** Planning a Lobby Day at The Capitol
- 40** Glossary of Terms & Acronyms

STATE VOICES FLORIDA

THE FLORIDA ELECTORATE



Florida Local Government



1. Counties

Florida is divided into 67 counties. Each county has a Board of County Commissioners. The Board of County Commissioners is responsible for services such as public safety, land use planning, transportation, and public infrastructure within the county.



2. Municipalities

Florida has numerous municipalities, also known as cities or towns, which are incorporated areas within the counties. Municipalities have their own local governments, typically consisting of a mayor and a city council or commission. The mayor and council members are elected by the residents of the municipality and are responsible for making decisions and implementing policies related to local matters, such as public safety, utilities, zoning, and local services.



3. Special Districts

Special districts exist to provide specific services to residents within a defined geographic area. Examples of special districts in Florida include school districts, water management districts, community development districts, and fire districts. Each special district has its own governing body, which oversees the management and delivery of services within its jurisdiction.



4. School Districts

Florida has several school districts, each responsible for managing public education within its boundaries. School districts are governed by an elected school board, which establishes policies, approves budgets, and hires superintendents to manage the district's schools.

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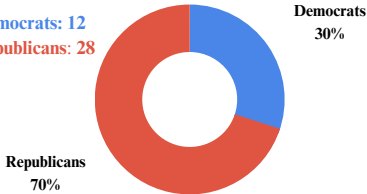


State of the Legislature

Senate

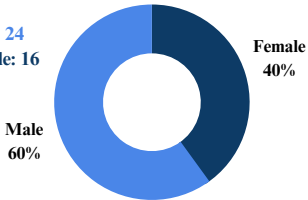
Party Affiliation

- Democrats: 12
- Republicans: 28



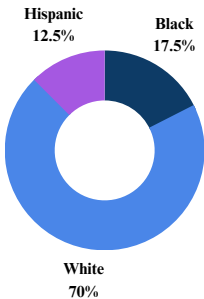
Gender

- Male: 24
- Female: 16



Race

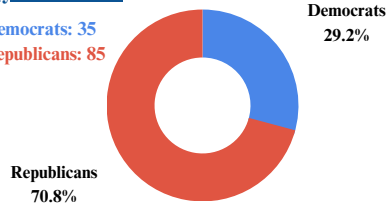
- Black: 7
- White: 28
- Hispanic: 5



House of Representatives

Party Affiliation

- Democrats: 35
- Republicans: 85



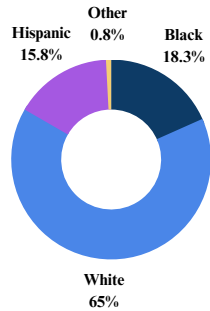
Gender

- Male: 70
- Female: 50



Race

- Black: 22
- White: 78
- Hispanic: 19
- Other: 1



Governor: Republican

The next FL Gubernatorial election will take place **November 2026** and Governor Ron DeSantis is ineligible to run for a third term.

Governor DeSantis has launched a U.S. Presidential campaign for 2024. Should the governor be elected as President of the United States, Lt. Gov. Jeanette Nuñez would move up to the vacant seat.

In the Senate and House, Republicans currently have a supermajority, which is when they control more than $\frac{2}{3}$ of the seats in a chamber.

If a party all votes together when they have a supermajority, it means they have enough votes to overturn gubernatorial vetoes or to act on some budget and tax provisions without requiring any input from the other party.

Florida is currently a **government trifecta**, which is when the same political party controls the executive branch and both chambers of the legislative branch.



Florida Legislative Session

The Florida Legislature meets in session every year for sixty consecutive days. A regular session of the legislature shall convene on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March of each odd-numbered year, and on the second Tuesday after the first Monday in January of each even-numbered year.

The tables below illustrate the number of bills introduced and passed during Florida's Regular Session and Special Session for the years 2013 - 2023 (there was no Special Session held in 2013). The tables include the average pass percentage for each session as well as the 10 year totals & averages for bills introduced and passed.

Year	Introduced	Completed	AVG Pass %
2023	1829	353	19.3
2022	3685	247	6.7
2021	3096	288	9.3
2020	3518	231	6.6
2019	3494	211	6
2018	3193	249	7.8
2017	3052	255	8.4
2016	1815	301	16
2015	1755	267	15.2
2014	1879	254	13.5
2013	1901	272	14.3
Total	29217	2928	10.0
Average	2656	266	10.0

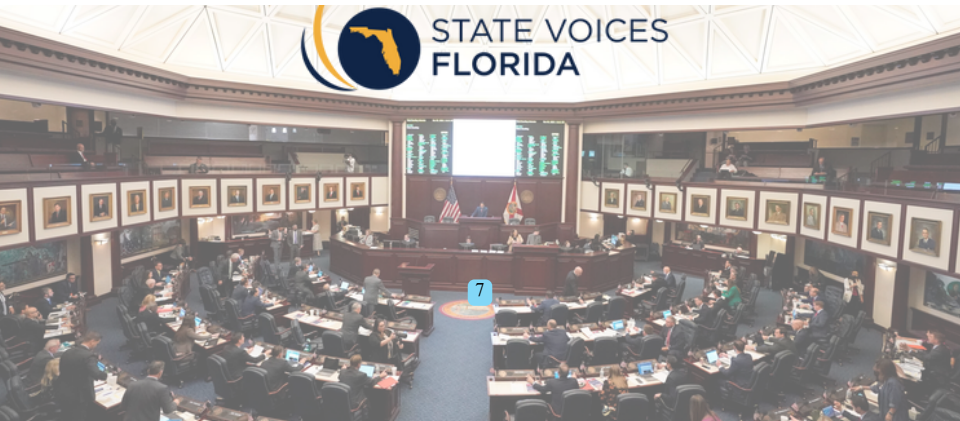
Florida Legislature Regular Session Yrs 2013 - 23





Year	Session	Introduced	Completed	AVG Pass %
2023	2nd Special Session	14	8	57
2022	1st Special Session	9	3	33.33
2022	4th Special Session	13	3	23.08
2022	3rd Special Session	6	3	50
2021	2nd Special Session	8	4	50
2021	1st Special Session	15	4	26.7
2017	Special Session	13	4	30.8
2015	3rd Special Session	6	1	16.67
2015	2nd Special Session	7	3	42.86
2015	1st Special Session	41	15	36.59
2014	1st Special Session	5	2	40
Total		13.7	50	36.5
Average		12.5	4.5	36

Florida Legislature Special Session Yrs 2014 - 23



How a Bill Becomes a Law



Idea

A citizen, group, or legislator has an idea for a new law. A Representative then decides that the idea should be a bill.



House Bill Drafted

The Representative (also called a member) contacts House Bill Drafting Services and requests a bill to be drafted. The member may provide very detailed instructions or just the general idea. A staff member, called a “bill drafter,” will work with the member and his or her staff until the member is satisfied and a final draft is approved. Once approved, the idea receives a bill number (odd numbers only in the House) and is called a bill for the first time.



1st Reading is by Publication in the House Journal

In accordance with Article III of the Florida Constitution, all bills must be read three times before being voted on. The 1st Reading is by publication of the bill number, its sponsor, and a short one paragraph description of the bill, called a title, in the House Journal. The Speaker will also refer the bill to one or more committees or subcommittees in the House. Committees and subcommittees are groups of members appointed to review specific areas of government such as education, criminal justice, and agriculture, to name a few.





How a Bill Becomes a Law



House Committee or Subcommittee Meeting

Once a bill is referred to a committee or subcommittee, it is reviewed for inclusion on an agenda. The Chair of the committee or subcommittee will decide which bills should be heard. In 2010, of the 843 general bills filed, 488 “died” in a council or committee, never being heard. Once a bill has been heard and voted favorably by all of its committees or subcommittees, it is placed on a House Calendar signifying that it is available for 2nd Reading.



2nd Reading on the Floor is by consideration of the Special Order Calendar

Once a bill is on the House Calendar, that does not mean that the bill will be heard on the floor. The House has a special committee called the Rules & Calendar Committee that will determine when and if a bill will be sent to the floor for 2nd Reading. These bills are placed on a recommended Special Order Calendar. Each Special Order Calendar is voted on prior to the House considering those bills on a specific legislative day. Once a bill has been introduced and read on the Special Order Calendar, it is explained, questions are answered about the bill, and amendments are considered. This constitutes a bill’s 2nd Reading.





How a Bill Becomes a Law



3rd Reading on the House Floor by consideration of the Third Reading Calendar

After a bill has been read a second time on the Special Order Calendar, it is taken up on 3rd Reading, generally, on a subsequent legislative day. This is the final reading of the bill prior to being voted on. Once a bill's title has been read a third time, it is explained again, questions are again permitted, and amendments may be offered; at this point, amendments may only be considered by a 2/3 vote. The final action is for debate on the bill prior to the sponsor making a closing statement. The bill is then voted on by the members of the House. Any bill not receiving a favorable vote "dies" on the floor.



Senate Consideration

Once the bill is passed by the House, it is sent to the Senate with a "message." The Senate's process varies slightly from the House's process. The Senate may vote to pass the bill without amendments and return the bill to the House, refer the bill to a committee for consideration, or defeat the bill on the Senate floor. The Senate may decide to further amend the bill and pass it. If this happens, the bill is returned to the House.





How a Bill Becomes a Law



Return to the House

If the House has received a House bill having been passed by the Senate without amendments, it puts the bill in its final form called an “enrolled” version. The enrolled version of the bill is then sent to the Governor for consideration. If the Senate has further amended the House bill, it is returned to the House for consideration of the Senate amendments. This “back and forth” consideration of the bill is an attempt to perfect the bill’s language by working out the differences, but generally ends after several exchanges by each side. At any time, either the Senate or the House may decide to abandon the effort of reaching a compromise and the bill dies. If the issue is important enough, however, the House and Senate may agree to appoint a conference committee comprised of Representatives and Senators to work out the details of the bill.



Consideration by the Governor

Generally, if the Legislature is in session and has sent the Governor a bill, he/she has seven days to consider the bill while the Legislature remains in session. If the bill is received after the Legislature has adjourned “sine die” (the 60-day session has ended), the Governor has 15 days to consider the bill. The Governor may take one of three actions: sign the bill into law, allow the bill to become law without his/her signature, or veto the bill. If the Governor vetoes the bill, the Legislature may override his/her veto by a 2/3 vote of the Legislature during the next Session.





Contacting Your Legislator

Legislators are elected by people in their community to represent their interests in the lawmaking process. Legislators vote on a variety of laws, from criminal justice, to disaster relief, and education. It is important for your legislator to hear directly from you about the issues that you care about!

Your goal is to either persuade them to support or oppose a particular issue. Alternatively, it is important to thank your legislator when they take a vote that you support as a reminder that they are representing the voices of their community members.

Plan

1. What are you contacting your legislator about?
2. Is there a specific bill that you want them to vote yes or no on?
3. What is the story you want to tell them in your phone call or email?
4. Write down a script for yourself so you don't forget your main point!





Contacting Your Legislator

You can contact your legislator by calling, emailing, or visiting their office to share your perspective. You do not need to be an expert to contact your legislator, you just need to share why it is important to you and your community or organization.



Call: Call your legislator using the phone number listed on the Florida legislative website. You may not be able to speak to them directly, but you can leave a message.



Email: Your legislator has a state email that you can contact, this can also be found on the Florida legislative website. Your email should have the same information you would include in a phone call. Identify yourself as a constituent and share why you are contacting them.



In-Person: Legislators are typically in the State House in Tallahassee on days that votes are happening. Though they do not all have individual offices, they can often be found between committee meetings or before going to the floor for a vote. When the legislative session is not happening, many legislators attend events in their districts and this can be a time to speak with your legislators about local matters.



Attending Committee Meetings

➤ In committee meetings bills will either be: voluntarily deferred, involuntarily deferred, voted favorably, or voted unfavorably.

➤ Seating in the audience is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

➤ **Do not clap, snap, or cheer** in chamber or committee rooms.

➤ **Before testifying you should plan.**

➤ **You may not approach the desk** to speak to committee members.

➤ The committee hearing is an opportunity to inform legislators of your position regarding pending legislation or just to observe the legislative process. However, the length of the meeting agenda and the number of people who wish to testify may require the imposition of time limitations.

➤ If you are with a group, it is advisable to appoint a spokesperson.

➤ Place all cell phones and other electronic devices on vibrate or silent mode.

➤ You may take phone calls in the hallway only, not in committee rooms.

➤ Food and drinks are prohibited in committee rooms.



Attending Committee Meetings

The Florida Senate
APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting.

Meeting Date _____ Bill Number or Topic _____
Committee _____ Amendment Barcode (if applicable) _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ Email _____
Street

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Speaking: For Against Information **OR** Waive Speaking: In Support Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship. I am a registered lobbyist, representing. I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1, 2000-2022 sos.leg.state.fl.us/legstate/gov

This form is part of the public record for this meeting. S-001 (08/10/2021)

The image pictured above is called an Appearance Record.



Attending Committee Meetings

Appearance Records are available to be completed either online (up to 1 hour before the meeting starts) or during the committee meeting. Carefully read and fill out the Appearance Record.

If you submit an appearance record, you have the option to speak but do not have to speak.

If you wish to speak, please check the appropriate box on the record. If you wish to waive speaking, please check whether you are waiving in support or against the bill.

Return completed cards to the designated staff member.

Your oral and written comments and positions submitted on appearance cards become public record of the meeting.



You must fill out a separate card for each bill you are supporting or opposing.





Delivering Testimony In Committee

There are limited opportunities during the legislative process when the public is able to go on the record and share information with legislators, but when a bill is being heard in committee, the public can provide written statements ahead of time or can provide in-person testimony. Both of these options will go into the record and are a great opportunity to share your perspective with legislators before they vote on a bill.

Legislators want to hear from constituents! They are there to represent your voice in government and sharing your authentic story and additional information is a great way to encourage legislators to support good legislation or stop bad bills from moving forward.

To address the committee, you must complete a witness card stating your name, agency, organization or other interest represented, address, and the bill number for which you would like to provide comments. The witness card will also indicate whether you are there in support of the bill, in opposition of the bill, or there for informational purposes only.



Delivering Testimony In Committee

All testimony is delivered from the lectern or witness table in front of the committee after you are recognized by the chairman. You will deliver your testimony into the microphone at the lectern. We recommend that you prepare your testimony ahead of time, have it written down, practice saying it out loud, and have multiple copies available for committee members.

Legislators may ask you questions after your testimony to help clarify your statements or based on information that you bring up.

Oral Testimony



Oral testimony should be quick, simple, and focused.

Your presentation should be around 2 - 3 minutes long.

A structured oral testimony consists of 5 parts: Introduction, Position on Issue, Support for Position, Ask for Action, and a Closing.

Introduction - greet committee chair by title and name, state your name, where you live, and your organization/expertise, if applicable.

Position on Issue - “I support” or “I oppose” followed by bill number and title. **Support for Position** - clearly and honestly, share your personal story and professional expertise or opinions you have that are relevant to the bill and your position.

Ask for Action - “I urge all of you to vote in favor of...” or “against” [bill number again]. **Closing** - thank the committee for the opportunity to speak and offer to answer questions.



Delivering Testimony In Committee



Written Testimony

If you do not feel comfortable providing testimony in person or are unable to go to Tallahassee (or your local town hall), you may submit a written statement. The written statement should be sent to members of the committee and committee staff 24 hours ahead of the hearing. Similar to oral testimonies, your written testimony should also include your name, contact information, a clear explanation of your position on the legislation, and evidence to support. Your written testimony should be focused and only address one piece of legislation. If you have a position on multiple bills before the committee, you should draft a testimony for each.

Unlike an oral testimony, written testimony can be more lengthy and fleshed out. However, it is still pertinent to be concise and to the point.

If you are providing the written statements to the committee, you should have the number of copies to distribute to each committee member, at least two staff members, and the committee administrative assistant.





Best Practice Tips:

- ★ If you use any statistics or other data, share where you got the information.
- ★ Keep your statements on the shorter side - what is the main takeaway for legislators?
- ★ Avoid the use of acronyms and jargon.
- ★ Anticipate what questions legislators might have for you so that you can answer them.
- ★ Before responding to questions or comments, address the committee Chair.
- ★ Do not argue with members of the committee, instead lay out your comments in an easy to understand way so that you can convince them.
- ★ Always be honest and never misrepresent yourself or an organization while testifying.



Legislative Committees



A committee functions to study and plan solutions to issues facing Floridians. The Senate and House rules provide for standing committees, subcommittees, and special or select committees. The Senate President names the chairs and members of all Senate committees, while the Speaker of the House names the chairs and members of all House committees. The presiding officers appoint members to joint committees that are composed of members from each house. Select committees are appointed to make recommendations on special or unique problems by the respective presiding officer in each house.



House of Representatives Standing Committees

Appropriations Committee

The House Appropriations Committee produces the House's proposed budget and provides legislative oversight regarding the expenditure of appropriated funds, reviews the Governor's budget recommendations and agency legislative budget requests, and analyzes trust funds for creation, termination or modification as well as hearing bills with fiscal impacts.

(850) 717-4810
221 The Capitol
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1300

Subcommittees: Agriculture & Natural Resources Appropriations, Health Care Appropriations, Higher Education Appropriation, Infrastructure & Tourism Appropriations, Justice Appropriations, PreK-12 Appropriations, and State Administration & Technology Appropriations Subcommittee

Commerce Committee

The House Commerce Committee considers matters related to Florida's economy; business and professional regulation; energy, utilities, telecommunications, and cybersecurity policy; the regulation of insurance companies and financial entities; and gaming regulation.

(850) 717-4870
303 House Office Building
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1300



House of Representatives Standing Committees

Education & Employment Committee

The House Education & Employment Committee considers matters related to Florida's education system, from early education through postsecondary education, adult education, and job training.

(850) 717-4830
308 House Office Building
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1300

Subcommittees: Choice & Innovation, Education Quality, and Postsecondary Education & Workforce

Health & Human Services Committee

The House Health & Human Services Committee hears bills that include topics such as public and private hospitals, health offices, and their administration, services for people with disabilities, mental health institutions, nursing homes, research training and rehabilitation for public welfare, the regulation of health relation occupations, and health and welfare generally.

(850) 717-4840
214 House Office Building
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1300

Subcommittees: Children, Families & Seniors and Healthcare Regulation



House of Representatives Standing Committees

Infrastructure Strategies Committee

The House Infrastructure Strategies Committee considers matters related to planning for Florida's growth, including transportation, flood resilience, land acquisition, infrastructure planning, conservation of natural resources, fish and wildlife issues, water quality and supply, and transportation services.

(850) 717-4860
400 House Office Building
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1300

Subcommittees: Agriculture, Conservation & Resiliency, Transportation & Modals, and Water Quality, Supply & Treatment

Judiciary Committee

The House Judiciary Committee hears bills regarding civil and criminal law issues, including public safety and the administration of the court system.

(850) 717-4850
417 House Office Building
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1300

Subcommittees: Civil Justice Subcommittee and Criminal Justice Subcommittee



House of Representatives Standing Committees

Rules Committee

The House Rules Committee submits Special Order Calendars for adoption by the House. The committee also recommends procedures for the management of the floor process.

(850) 717-4880
422 The Capitol
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1300

State Affairs Committee

The House State Affairs Committee considers matters related to state agency governance, local government oversight and accountability, emergency management, administrative procedure, affordable housing, state and local government retirement programs and benefits, elections, and ethics and standards of conduct for public officers and employees.

(850) 717-4890
209 House Office Building
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1300

Subcommittees: Constitutional Rights, Rule of Law & Government Operations Ethics, Elections & Open Government, and Local Administration, Federal Affairs & Special Districts



House of Representatives Standing Committees

Ways & Means Committee

The House Ways & Means Committee hears bills related to all state and local taxes and select non-tax revenue sources, and addresses statutory and constitutional policy regarding tax rates, tax base design, and collection and enforcement parameters.

(850) 717-4812
221 The Capitol
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1300

Select Committee on Hurricane Resiliency & Recovery

The House Select Committee on Hurricane Resiliency and Recovery will consider matters related to recovery from recent storms and best practices for future storms.

(850) 717-4860
400 House Office Building
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1300



Senate Standing Committees

Agriculture

The Senate Agriculture Committee hears legislation relating to agricultural marketing economic development and assistance, agricultural emergency preparedness, agriculture industry, agricultural law enforcement, Agricultural water policy, Aquaculture, Biofuels, Commodity trade issues, forestry, migrant worker safety, public fairs, school lunch programs, special risk firefighting, surveyors and mappers, taxes affecting agricultural industry and lands, Wildlife habitats and agricultural environmental services.

(850) 487-5133
335 Knott Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100



Senate Standing Committees

Appropriations

The Senate Appropriations Committee annually prepares the state's budget through the General Appropriations Act (GAA) and has jurisdiction over legislation having a fiscal impact, affecting revenues, or containing an appropriation.

(850) 487-5140

201 The Capitol

404 South Monroe Street

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

Subcommittees: Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment, and General Government, Appropriations Committee on Criminal and Civil Justice, Appropriations Committee on Education, Appropriations Committee on Health & Human Services, and Appropriations Committee on Transportation, Tourism, & Economic Development



Senate Standing Committees

Banking and Insurance

The Senate Banking and Insurance Committee examines legislation in the following subject areas: regulation of state chartered financial institutions (banks, credits unions, etc.), regulation of credit, debt, and lending activities, securities regulation, money services businesses (check cashers and money transmitters), regulation of insurance companies and agents and regulation of insurance products.

(850) 487-5361
320 Knott Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

Children, Families, and Elder Affairs

The Senate Children, Families and Elder Affairs Committee examines legislation in the following subject areas: background screening, domestic violence (executive processes, DCF programs, programmatic issues or shelter issues), eligibility for government benefits, family legal issues, guardianship, homelessness, developmental disabilities, long-term care (community and facility-based), behavioral health, Older Americans Act programs, refugee assistance, sexual violence and sex trafficking and social services.

(850) 487-5340
520 Knott Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100



Senate Standing Committees

Commerce and Tourism

The Senate Commerce and Tourism Committee hears bills that include topics such as advertisers, business organizations (legal structures), civil rights, commercial activity, consumer protection, economic development, event tickets and admissions, Film and entertainment industries, Lending and credit issues, non-agricultural consumer services, notaries, restaurants and lodging establishments, retail and retailers, sales and use of tax, including exemptions and internet sales, space, sports, technology, tourism, trade issues and workforce issues.

(850) 487-5815
310 Knott Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

Community Affairs

The Senate Community Affairs Committee hears bills with issues relating to local governments, Americans with Disabilities Act and handicapped parking, affordable housing, building code and inspection, local claim bills, coastal management, community redevelopment, disaster preparedness, eminent domain, enterprise zones, growth management, homeowners associations, Hurricane Loss Mitigation Fund, impact fees, mandates, mobile homes and retirement issues for local employees.

(850) 487-5167
315 Knott Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100



Senate Standing Committees

Criminal Justice

The Senate Criminal Justice Committee examines legislation in the following subject areas: bills creating felonies, corrections and inmates, creation of crimes, criminal records, death penalty, DNA evidence, criminal matters related to domestic violence, protection injunctions, court processes, or any legal or public safety issues, criminal penalties, drug penalties, DUI (criminal), juvenile justice, law enforcement, parole and executive clemency, pretrial release, probation, prosecutors and public defenders, prostitution, regulation and sales of firearms, restitution, sentencing, sexual offenders, victims' rights, and wrongful incarceration.

(850) 487-5192
510 Knott Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

Education Postsecondary

The Senate Education Postsecondary Committee considers matters related to Florida's postsecondary education system.

(850) 487-5220
415 Knott Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100



Senate Standing Committees

Education Pre-K - 12

The Senate Education Pre-K - 12 Committee considers legislation related to Florida's Pre-K - 12 education system.

(850) 487-5213
415 Knott Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

Environment and Natural Resources

The Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee hears bills including aquaculture, basin management and restoration, beaches, boating and vessel safety, brownfields, clean air and water, clean and alternative energy initiatives, coastal management, consumptive use permitting, dry cleaning contamination, environmental land acquisition and protection, environmental resource permitting, everglades, hazardous and solid waste, hunting and fishing, invasive species management, mining, oceans, oil and gas exploration, onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems, petroleum tanks, power plant siting, recycling, sovereignty submerged lands, state parks and preserves, statewide numeric nutrient criteria, total maximum daily loads, and water supply.

(850) 487-5372
325 Knott Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

Ethics and Elections

The Senate Ethics and Elections Committee examines legislation in the following subject areas: election law, ethics law, executive Business and bills creating elected positions.

(850) 487-5828
420 Knott Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100



Senate Standing Committees

Finance and Tax

The Senate Finance and Tax Committee hears government revenue mechanisms and taxes.

(850) 487-5920
215 Knott Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

Fiscal Policy

The Senate Fiscal Policy Committee hears legislation regarding the use of government spending and taxation.

(850) 487-5577
2000 The Capitol
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

Governmental Oversight and Accountability

The Senate Governmental Oversight and Accountability Committee examines legislation in the following subject areas: administrative procedures, collective bargaining, direct support and citizen support organizations, general open government, historical and cultural programs, inspectors general, interstate compacts, libraries, naming public buildings, privatization and outsourcing, procurement and contracting, public employee benefits, sovereign immunity, state facilities and real estate, state human resource management, state information technology, state investments, state organization and structure and state Risk Management Program.

(850) 487-5177
330 Knott Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100



Senate Standing Committees

Health Policy

The Senate Health Policy Committee examines legislation in the following subject areas: Agency for Health Care Administration, controlled substances regulation, local health planning councils, medicaid, health insurance mandates, healthcare financing including health insurance and the uninsured, health insurance for children, CHIP, Department of Health, public health services, health professional recruitment, rural health care development, biomedical research, tobacco, medical records, drugs and medical devices, and healthcare policy issues.

(850) 487-5824
530 Knott Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

Judiciary

The Senate Judiciary Committee examines legislation in the following subject areas: Alternative dispute resolution (arbitration), civil law matters, general and local claim bills, compensation for wrongful incarceration, evidence, family law matters, immigration, interstate compacts, legislation proposing revisions to the State Constitution or implicating state or federal constitutional issues, liens and judgments, probate and trust law, some criminal law matters, and the state courts system.

(850) 487-5198
515 Knott Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100



Senate Standing Committees

Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security

The Senate Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security Committee examines legislation in the following subject areas: military affairs (The Florida National Guard, Military service member and family benefits (active duty and reserve), military presence/economic impact, military realignments (BRAC)), veterans' affairs, space (as it relates to economic impact), emergency management, homeland security issues, and seaport security.

(850) 487-5785
531 Knott Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

Reapportionment

The Senate Reapportionment Committee hears bills on all issues relating to the redistricting of congressional and legislative districts.

Regulated Industries

The Senate Regulated Industries Committee examines legislation in the following subject areas: alcohol and tobacco issues, boxing regulation, building code, child labor, construction lien law, condominiums and cooperatives, elevators, employee leasing companies, farm labor, funeral directors and cemeteries, homeowners and community associations, indoor smoking ban, landlord-tenant, mobile home parks, pool regulations, restaurants and lodging establishments, state lottery, surveyors and mappers, timeshares, and travel clubs.

(850) 487-5957
525 Knott Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100



Senate Standing Committees

Rules

The Senate Rules Committee examines legislation in the following subject areas: claim bills, internal operation of the legislature, lobbyist conduct, local bills, proposed constitutional amendments, public records bills, regulation of members' conduct, reviser's bills, senate resolutions, and veto messages.

(850) 487-5350
402 Senate Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

Transportation

The Senate Transportation Committee examines legislation in the following subject areas: airports, aviation, driver licenses, DUI, BUI, Highway Patrol, license plates, motor fuels, registration and titling, motor vehicle dealers and manufacturers, railroads, regulation of driving, regulation of use of various vehicles (ATVs, Automobiles and trucks, Bicycles, Commercial motor vehicles, Golf carts (and low speed vehicles), Motorcycles and mopeds, Scooters), road construction, road and bridge honorary designations, seaports, seat belt laws, spaceports, towing and recovery of vehicles and vessels, traffic safety, transportation funding, as well as transportation of goods and people and Vessels.

(850) 487-5223
410 Knott Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100



Joint Legislative Committees

A Joint Committee is a congressional committee consisting of both Senate and House members and having jurisdiction over matters of joint interest.

Joint Administrative Procedures Committee

Members – 5 Senate, 6 House

(850) 488-9110
680 Pepper Building
111 West Madison Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1400

Joint Legislative Budget Commission

Members – 7 Senate, 7 House

House Location
(850) 717-4810
221 The Capitol
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1300

Senate Location
(850) 487-5140
201 The Capitol
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

Joint Legislative Auditing Committee

Members – 5 Senate, 6 House

(850) 487-4110
876 Pepper Building
111 West Madison Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1400

Joint Committee on Public Counsel Oversight

Members – 5 Senate, 6 House

House Location
(850) 717-4870
303 House Office Building
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1300

Senate Location
(850) 487-5957
525 Knott Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100



Joint Legislative Committees

Joint Select Committee on Collective Bargaining

Members – 5 Senate, 6 House

House Location

(850) 717-4890

209 House Office Building

402 South Monroe Street

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1300

Senate Location

(850) 487-5177

330 Knott Building

404 South Monroe Street

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100



Planning a Lobby Day at the Capitol

STEP 1: Identify a legislative area of focus that impacts your organization, members, or community.

STEP 2: Choose an event that aligns with a mission of the State.

STEP 3: Find an Agency sponsor for event.

- ❖ The Department of Management Services (DMS) has provided a list of agency sponsor contacts for convenience.
- ❖ Per DMS rules, the head of the agency can either authorize event sponsorship or delegate the authority. All state legislatures have been delegated the authority to be an agency sponsor. Delegation is not permanent and may have changed at the time you are planning your event.

STEP 4: Agency sponsor submits a request to DMS on behalf of organization.

- ❖ Requests must be submitted no later than 10 days prior to requested event date and no more than one year prior.
- ❖ Requests should be submitted with enough time to resubmit should the original request be denied.

STEP 5: DMS reviews requests for approval.



Glossary of Terms & Acronyms

Absent: When a legislator is not present at a session to cast a vote.

Act: Legislation that has been made into law. This means a bill has passed both the House of Representatives, the Senate, and been signed by the governor or the legislature overrode a veto. It is a permanent measure and is the law unless it is repealed.

Adjournment: Termination of a session for that day, with the hour and day of the next meeting being set.

Adjournment Sine Die: Final termination of a regular or special legislative session, no more legislation can be heard until a new session starts.

Adoption: The favorable agreement by vote of an amendment, motion, resolution, or memorial.

Author: The legislator who presents a bill or resolution.

Amendment: Any alteration made (or proposed to be made) to a bill or clause by adding, deleting, substituting, or omitting language from the bill.

Analysis: Sometimes called a bill analysis or staff analysis, it is prepared by the staff of each committee of reference. It summarizes the bill and explains the current law affected by the bill, the likely impact of the bill, any constitutional issues raised by the bill, and committee amendments, if any, are summarized.

Bill: A draft of a proposed law that is presented to the legislature. Bills are identified by their bill numbers.

Bill in the First Reading: A bill is introduced to a chamber (either the House of Representatives or the Senate).



Bill in the Second Reading: A bill is referred to a committee based on the intent of the bill.

Bill in the Third Reading: A bill is debated on the floor after passing out of committee.

Caucus: An informal meeting of a group of legislators, based on a shared identity or interest such as political party affiliation, gender, race, geographic location or specific issue.

Chair: A term used to refer to the presiding officer in a floor session or in a legislative committee meeting.

Chamber: Official hall for the meeting of a legislative body, either the Senate or House of Representatives.

Clerk of the House or Senate: A non-legislator officer who is appointed or elected by the members of the House of Representatives or Senate to direct functions of the chamber.

Committee Report: When a committee votes to move a bill or resolution from the committee with (or without) a specific recommendation, such as “pass”, “passed with amendments” or “involuntarily deferred.”

Constituent: A citizen in a legislator’s district.

Constitutional Amendment: A joint resolution that proposes an amendment to, or revision of, the State Constitution. After final passage and filing with the Secretary of State, a proposed constitutional amendment is presented to the voters at the next regular general election pursuant to section 5 of Article XI of the State Constitution.

Debate: Discussion by legislators during a committee meeting or while a house is meeting supporting or opposing an issue.



District: The area from which a state senator, representative, or congressman is elected. The boundaries of state legislative and congressional districts are drawn in the decennial process known as apportionment and redistricting.

Fiscal: Dealing with state revenues and expenditures.

Fiscal Note: A fiscal note is the estimated amount of increase or decrease in revenue or expenditures that a piece of legislation would have and the present and future implications of a piece of pending legislation.

Gallery: The seating area on the floor above the Senate or House chamber where the public may observe a house in session.

Initiative: An amendment to the State Constitution proposed by a number of electors. An initiative is accomplished by filing with the Secretary of State a petition containing a copy of the amendment proposed which has been signed by a specified number of electors.

Legislative Committee: A group of legislators appointed by legislative leadership to consider and make recommendations on whether to send a bill to a full legislative vote. The committees are in various topic areas and have chairs, vice chairs, and members. Committees are where the public can provide written or oral testimony to legislators.

Legislative Session: The period when the legislature meets in Florida is typically March-May in odd years and January-March in even years.

Line Item: Program number that is listed in an appropriations or budget bill.

Lobbyist: A representative of a special interest group whose function is to influence legislation affecting his special interest. Encourages, directly or indirectly, the passage, defeat, or modification of any legislation.



Majority Party: The political party having the greatest number of members in the legislature or in either chamber.

Minority Party: The political party having fewer numbers of members in the legislature in either chamber.

Motion: Formal proposal made by a legislator.

Nonpartisan: Not affiliated with a particular party or caucus.

Partisan: Affiliated with a particular party or caucus.

Precedent: Unwritten rules that are established by custom and used as a basis for interpretation.

Profile: When a legislator files a bill before the opening of session.

Recess: A break within a sitting during which a legislative body is not conducting business. After a recess, a legislative body resumes business at the point where business halted when the recess was taken.

Ranking Member: The highest-ranking (and usually longest-serving) minority member of a committee or subcommittee.

Referendum: A vote of the electors on a specific measure presented for approval or rejection on a ballot. A referendum is required as a condition for the effectiveness of a local bill if proof of publication has not been provided.

Repeal: Revoking or annulling a previous legislative action.

Representative: One of two elected officials each citizen has at the State House who serves as their district's spokesperson. A member of the House of Representatives.

Resolution: A document that expresses the sentiment or intent of a chamber, that governs the business of a chamber, or that expresses recognition by a chamber.



Roll Call: Names of the members being called in alphabetical order and recorded to take a vote on legislation or another topic.

Rules: Regulating principles or methods of legislative procedure.

Senator: One of two elected officials each citizen has at the State House who serves as their district's spokesperson.

Shell Bill: a bill, typically with no substantive provisions, that is introduced to meet filing deadlines with the purpose of being amended at a later date.

Simple Majority: More than half of the votes or legislators.

Special session: Special sessions may be called by Proclamation of the Governor, by Joint Proclamation of the Senate President and the House Speaker, or by members of the legislature for the purpose of considering specific legislation and shall not exceed 20 consecutive days unless extended by a three-fifths vote of each house.

Sponsor (co-sponsor): The legislator(s) who presents a bill or resolution for consideration.

Standing Committee: A permanent committee established under the rules of the Senate or House, specializing in the consideration of particular subject areas.

Statute: A formal enactment of the written law.

Temporarily postponed: "Temporarily postponed," "temporarily passed," "temporarily deferred," or "TP'd" refer to the postponing of consideration of a bill or other legislative matter appearing on an agenda or calendar.

Testimony: Written or spoken information provided by a legislator or public participant.

Veto Override: Vote by the legislature to pass a bill over a governor's veto.

Veto: When a bill passes both the House and Senate, it is sent to the Governor for their signature to be turned into a law. If the Governor does not approve the bill, they "Veto" the bill, sending it back to the legislature.

Whip: An assistant to the majority or minority leader who is also elected by his or her party conference. Responsible for mobilizing votes within the party on major issues and often serves as acting floor leader.

Yeas and Nays: Recorded vote of members on an issue.

Yield: A legislator may release part of the allotted time for which he or she has the floor to another member of his or her chamber, usually for questions or clarification of the yielding legislator's discussion.

Status of a Bill: The progress of a bill at any given time in the legislative process. It can be in committee, on the calendar, in one chamber, etc.

Sunset: Some legislation has a "sunset" which is when the contents of the law are no longer in effect.

Supermajority: More than 2/3 of the votes or legislator.



CR - Concurrent Resolution

HB - House Bill

CS or C1 - Committee Substitute

HCR - House Concurrent Resolution

CS/CS or C2 - Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute

HJ - House Journal

E - Engrossed Bill

HJR - House Joint Resolution

E1 or 1st ENG - First Engrossed

HR - House Resolution

E2 or 2nd ENG - Second Engrossed

JR - Joint Resolution

ER - Enrolled Bill

L.O.F. - Laws of Florida

F.S. - Florida Statutes

LB - Local Bill

GB - General Bill

LC - Claim/Local Bill

GC - Claim/General Bill

M - Memorial

GL - General Bill/Local Application

PCB - Proposed Committee Bill

GR - Reviser's/General Bill

PCS - Proposed Committee Substitute

GT - Trust Fund/General Bill

R - Resolution

H - House



S - Senate

SB - Senate Bill

SCR - Senate Concurrent Resolution

SJ - Senate Journal

SJR - Senate Joint Resolution

SR - Senate Resolution

TF - Trust Fund

TP - Temporarily Postponed

WD - Withdrawn





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FLORIDA

**Thank you for helping us build our state. Scan the QR code
below to follow us on our mission to liberate Florida!**

**- Juanica Fernandes
Executive Director
State Voices Florida**

