



MEN'S BASKETBALL

Congratulations to the 2025 National Champions

The Briefing for Friday - April 11, 2025

Day 39 of 60 – 21 Days to Go!

The Last Briefing was April 6, 2025

What's the weather outlook?

[10-Day Weather Forecast for Tallahassee, FL – The Weather Channel | weather.com](#)

[Calendar for Week Seven for the Florida Senate](#)
[Calendar for the Florida House of Representatives](#)

Status of Major Legislation

The Budget Process Moves to Conferencing between the House and Senate

The House and Senate are about to enter budget negotiations divided on spending and taxes. The House and Senate on Wednesday passed proposed budgets that are billions of dollars apart. The legislative session is scheduled to end May 2, with the state's new fiscal year starting July 1.

The House and Senate budget proposals are below the \$117.46 billion budget lawmakers passed last year before it faced DeSantis vetoes, mid-year adjustments and veto overrides.

- The Senate budget proposal ([SB 2500](#)) totals \$117.36 billion.
- The House proposal ([HB 5001](#)) has a bottom line of \$112.95 billion and is linked to a \$5.4 billion tax package (HB 7031) that includes reducing the overall state sales-tax rate from 6 percent to 5.25 percent.
- Visit Florida – Both the House and Senate propose \$80 million on the tourist-marketing agency Visit Florida.
- Everglades restoration - the Senate proposes to spend \$750 million for Everglades restoration and the House proposing \$357 million.
- Helping the Citrus Industry - the Senate would spend \$200 million for research and to help packinghouses and growers, with \$125 million included for new trees. The House has proposed \$10 million to fight citrus canker disease.

Rural Renaissance Alive and Well – Will be Subject of Conference Process

RR has passed the Senate and is waiting action in the House.

SB 110 – Rural Renaissance, a priority of Senate President, has passed the Senate and is awaiting action in the House. The House bill is a comprehensive proposal addressing a wide range of proposals that will enhance rural communities. Here is a detailed - [Staff Analysis of SB 110](#) .

HB 1427 – the house companion has passed 1 committee and is awaiting further action. [HB 1427 - Staff Analysis -](#)

Tax Cut Proposals Very Different

- The House Tax Package – [Proposed Committee Bill - WMC1](#) - The House has proposed cutting the state’s overall sales-tax rate. In addition to the reduction in Sales Tax, the House tax package also would reduce the commercial-lease tax from 2 percent to 1.25 percent, cut the sales-tax rate on electricity from 4.35 percent to 3.6 percent, reduce the tax rate on sales of new mobile homes from 3 percent to 2.25 percent and trim the rate on coin-operated amusement machines, such as pinball machines, from 4 percent to 3.25 percent.
- The Senate Tax Package - [No bill available however here is a detailed description of what the bill will include.](#) The Senate package is a less aggressive proposal that would provide a permanent sales-tax exemption on clothes and shoes costing \$75 or less. The Senate proposal also would direct the Legislature’s Office of Economic and Demographic Research to study the effects of reducing or eliminating property taxes for homesteaded properties. Among other things, the proposed sales-tax elimination on clothes and shoes as being “where it can help the most number of Floridians.” The Senate proposal also provides for a “back-to-school” tax holiday in August; a tax holiday on disaster-preparedness supplies in June; a tax holiday on recreational items in July; a tax holiday on tools around Labor Day; and a “hunting season” tax holiday in September and October on guns, ammo and other hunting supplies. The estimated \$750 million package is expected to go to the Senate Finance and Tax Committee on Tuesday.

County Commissioner Term Limits

HB 679 – moves to House Floor. The joint resolution requires a three-fifths vote of the membership of both houses of the Legislature for final passage.

SB 802 – has not moved

HB 679 - The House Joint Resolution proposes an amendment to the Florida Constitution to provide term limits for county commissioners and school district board members after serving eight consecutive years. This limitation applies to terms of office for county commissioners beginning after November 3, 2026, and terms of office for school district board members beginning on or after November 8, 2022. If a county charter provides that a chairperson or county mayor is elected county-wide, the joint resolution allows a term-limited county commissioner elected from a single-member district to appear on the ballot for election as chairperson or county mayor. If approved by the Legislature, the amendment would appear on the ballot for the 2026 general election

House Committee Approves Increasing Sovereign Immunity lawsuit caps and allows settlement above the caps

**The Bill is headed to the House Floor
The Senate Bill has not been heard.**

Bill Summary - [CS/HB 301](#) - increases the existing caps on the recovery of awards against a governmental entity. For a claim that accrues between October 1, 2025, and September 30, 2030, the cap is increased to \$500,000 per person from \$200,000 and the cap for multiple claims or judgments arising out of the same incident is increased to \$1,000,000 from \$300,000; the bill provides for one automatic increase in the caps for claims accruing on or after October 1, 2030. The limitations of liability in effect on the date the claim accrues apply to the claim. The bill permits a subdivision of the state to settle a claim or judgment in excess of the caps without requiring the subdivision to seek further action by the Legislature. The bill prohibits an insurance policy, beginning October 1, 2025, from conditioning the payment of benefits or the coverage of liability on the enactment of a claim bill. The bill also revises certain statutes of limitation and presuit procedures for certain types of claims against government entities.

House and Senate Propose Modify the FEFP including Cutting FEFP Program Cost Factors in half.
[Staff Analysis of SB 2500](#)

[SB 2500](#) - conforms statutes to the funding decisions related to prekindergarten through grade 12 education in the Senate proposed General Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2025-2026. The bill:

- Modifies virtual instruction to allow school districts to receive full-time equivalent student completions through virtual programs, including those where students were first reported during the summer. The bill also modifies the definition of full-time equivalent student for virtual instruction programs to include summer enrollment.
- Modifies CAPE Digital Tool Certificates and CAPE industry certification funding, including changes to the additional full-time equivalent membership, and modifies the requirements of the CAPE Industry Certification Funding List.
- Modifies the School Recognition program, limiting the bonuses to only instructional personnel, rather than all faculty and staff.
- Reduces the amount of the add-on weights applied to certain types of students and school districts funded in the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP).
- Modifies the distribution of FEFP funds to the school districts to a monthly distribution rather than bimonthly

[Staff Analysis of HB 5101 Modifying the FEFP](#)

[HB 5101](#) - Amends laws to modify the forecasting of the number of students eligible for funding, the data provided by governmental agencies and scholarship organizations, the approval and review processes for forecasts in education, scholarship accountability, and several aspects related to student information and school district financial calculations.

- Revises the data government agencies must provide to the Education Estimating Conference, including more specific information on scholarships and full-time equivalent students.
- Requires the final forecast by the Education Estimating Conference to undergo reviews and approval from respective school districts and nonprofit scholarship-funding organizations before adoption.
- Defines "fraud" and prohibits school districts from reporting certain students for state funding inaccuracies.

- Amends Family Empowerment Scholarship Program to prioritize children from families with limited financial resources and revises authorized uses of program funds.
- Sets out new responsibilities for the Office of Economic and Demographic Research, scholarship-funding organizations, and the Department of Education regarding data collection, student eligibility verification, and report submissions to the Legislature.
- Establishes written approval requirements from the Legislature and the Executive Office of the Governor for releasing recalculated educational program funds.
- Adds provisions for recovering improperly received scholarship funds and reallocation strategies in cases of funding adjustments.

House and Senate Bills Require Local Governments and the FDOT to pay for relocating

Broadband SB 818 is waiting to be considered in the Rules Committee. The companion bill – HB 703 is awaiting floor action and includes similar provisions as the Senate Bill.

SB818 provides an exemption for broadband Internet providers, and cable service and video service providers, from the general requirement that utility owners bear the cost of relocating utilities. The effect of the bill requires that the public sector taxpayer pay the cost of relocating their equipment. The exemption provided to the Broadband, cable, and video entities is a problem on several levels.

- It requires all of the taxpayers to pay for the relocation costs – when all of the taxpayers don't have broadband service.
- The ISPs have been benefitting from 100's of millions of grant funds to support the deployment of Broadband throughout the state.
- This exemption will increase the cost of road projects – these costs have not been factored into the appropriations for the various road program/projects. The impact will diminish the work that can be accomplished through the Small County Road Assistance and Small County Outreach Programs and the FDOT road plan.
- Other utilities – (Water, Gas, and Electricity) currently pay for the cost of relocation when there is road work that requires relocating utility assets! This exemption provided in the bill requires the public sector to treat the ISP's differently.

The Small County Coalition is openly opposing this cost-shift.

On The Docket

FRIDAY, APRIL 11, 2025

- **TOBACCO TRUST FUND** - Friday, 9 a.m. description: The Revenue Estimating Conference will discuss a forecast for the Tobacco Settlement Trust Fund. - 117 Knott Building, the Capitol.
- **LAND CONSERVATION** - Friday, 9 a.m. - The state Acquisition and Restoration Council, which works on land conservation issues, will meet. - Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Marjory Stoneman Douglas Building, 3900 Commonwealth Blvd., Tallahassee. <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/431800649841551966>
- **OPTOMETRY ISSUES** - Friday, 9 a.m. - The Florida Board of Optometry will meet. - Four Points by Sheraton Tallahassee Downtown, Tallahassee.
- **GREENWAYS, TRAILS PANEL** - Friday, 9 a.m. - The Florida Greenways and Trails Council will meet. - 101 South Copeland Ave., Everglades City.

- **PODIATRY BOARD** - Friday, 9 a.m. - The Florida Board of Podiatric Medicine will meet. - Holiday Inn Tampa Airport Westshore, 700 North Westshore Blvd., Tampa.
- **CHILD ABUSE DEATHS** - Friday, 9 a.m. - The state Child Abuse Death Review Committee is scheduled to meet. - Embassy Suites Tampa/Brandon 10220 Palm River Road, Tampa.
- **'IMPACT' CONFERENCE HELD** - Friday, 9:30 a.m. - The Revenue Estimating Conference will hold an "impact" conference, which involves estimating potential costs of legislation. - 117 Knott Building, the Capitol.
- **REFUGEE ISSUES** - Friday, 10 a.m. - The Miami-Dade Refugee Task Force will meet. - Information at <https://www.myflfamilies.com/news-events/public-events-meetings/miami-dade-refugee-task-force-meeting> . Call-in number: 1-305-224-1968. Code: 91550331906

Headlines Around The State

FlaPol: Florida to prosecute would-be Donald Trump assassin

AP: DeSantis defends \$10 million donation from state agency settlement to charity linked to his wife

Floridian: DeSantis Blasts Florida House for Their 'Sabotage' Amid Hope Florida Allegations

Florida Phoenix: DeSantis says he agrees with Senate president on cutting sales tax for clothing under \$75

PNJ: Michelle Salzman clashes with DeSantis allies on X over higher ed bill

FlaPol: Despite qualms, Senate panel advances measure stopping university pollsters from tracking candidates, campaigns

Times: Florida's DOGE agency asks university faculty to hand over research

Florida Phoenix: University presidential search laws are a major topic inside the Florida Capitol

Floridian: Senate Advances Bill Exempting Tolls to Purple Heart Recipients

PNJ: Floridatown chosen for Santa Rosa County's first living shoreline project

FlaPol: Senate panel gushes over bill that would limit permits for oil drilling near Florida coast

FlaPol: Bill giving teeth to residents of homeowners associations advances

FlaPol: Bill establishing protections for domestic violence victims advances

FlaPol: 'Bought and paid for': Ben Albritton unveils roadmap to end property taxes — with voter OK

FlaPol: Gov. DeSantis says sales tax relief should help Floridians, not foreigners

FlaPol: State teachers union blasts proposed budgets as a cut by another name

FlaPol: Senate proposes sales tax holidays to help hunters, workers and families

FlaPol: Sneakerheads rejoice: Ben Albritton proposes eliminating sales tax on most clothes and shoes

FlaPol: 'Sabotage': Condo dispute offers Gov. DeSantis a new platform to hammer the Florida House

FlaPol: Pam Bondi, Kash Patel meet with FIFA Prez to talk World Cup security in Miami

NWF Daily News: Flags to fly at half-staff for Florida deputy killed in line of duty. What to know

FlaPol: LaVon Bracy Davis resigns from HD 40 to run for late Geraldine Thompson's Senate seat

Herald: Proposal for lifetime term limits could get watered down by Miami City Commission

Floridian: Alleged Backroom Move in Miami Could Let Elected Officials Stay Longer Without a Voter Say

WUSF: Florida Forest Service says it has seen twice as many wildfires compared to last year so far

Sentinel: Rampant pollution caused manatees to starve. Florida waters are getting worse.

Sentinel: Termites are hitching rides on boats and spreading their destruction across Florida

Post: Lincoln Day gala spotlights PBC Republican gains on voter registrations, Trump 'golden age'

FlaPol: Daniella Levine Cava among honorees at SAVE Champions of Equality Gala in Miami Beach

Floridian: Emilio T. González Promises Day-One City Audit, Pledges to Cut Property Taxes, and Cites 'Out of Control' Miami Budget in Campaign Kickoff

FlaPol: Florida new jobless claims increase for the first time in a month

FlaPol: Up on pups: Pet insurance overhaul clears final legislative hurdle

FlaPol: 2 years since Florida insurance reforms, the impact appears to have benefited consumers

About the Briefing

The Briefing is prepared by Chris Doolin

cdoolin@doolinandassoc.com

The Briefing is compiled to provide information to elected officials and staff in counties that are members of the Small County Coalition and the Small School District Council Consortium. It is also sent to Professional Colleagues and Associates. For Questions Email – cdoolin@DoolinandAssoc.com

If you want to see all of the latest briefings – you can go www.smallcountycoalition.org or www.ssdcc.org and click on the red Briefing button

Chris Doolin

President – Christian B. Doolin & Associates

Vice – President – Robert P. Jones & Associates

Mobile – 850-508-5492

Email – cdoolin@doolinandassoc.com