



**Currently monitoring active shooting at FSU.
A very strong multi-agency response!**

The Briefing for Thursday - April 17, 2025

The Last Briefing was April 12, 2025

What's the weather outlook?

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

Tid Bit's

- ***Legislature taking Easter Break! Nothing Friday and Nothing Monday!***
- ***Next Tuesday – There will be 11 days left.***
- ***The process is proceeding to package bills referred to as “Trains”. Trains reflect a “bundling “of bills that address the main areas like Agriculture, Health Care***
- ***The FY 25-26 Budget Proposal will have to be finished by Tuesday, April 29 to comply with 72hr rule in order for the legislative session to end on time –(May 2)***

The Calendar!

[The Current Calendar for the House of Representatives](#)

[The Calendar for the Florida Senate](#)

Action on Major Legislation

Rift Deepens Between Governor and House Speaker Continues to Take Center Stage

Senate President – Staying Positive and out of the fray!

Strong words going back and forth between the Governor and House Speaker. Speaker Perez, a Miami Republican, spoke to reporters Wednesday afternoon, kicking off the event by slamming Gov. DeSantis for his "temper tantrums." DeSantis posted a slew of blistering social media videos and hosted eight statewide press conferences insulting the "rotten" House Republicans for working against his priorities. Senate President Albritton has taken a positive approach complimenting both Perez and DeSantis for being good partners. Who knows how this continuing dust-up will impact the final few days and potential Vetoes. Not good!

“It seems that we’re getting into this regularity where he has a temper tantrum. He gets in front of a camera and he starts to do one of two things,” Perez said. “Willingly choosing to lie about what he is telling the people in front of a camera, or he is choosing not to read the bills or look at our budget.”

Speaker Daniel Perez comments at press conference Wednesday.

Rural Renaissance –House Bill TP’ld to take closer look!

[Staff Analysis of HB 1427 - Rural Renaissance](#)

[Letter from Small County Coalition Chair Russel Melendy- Support for Rural Renaissance c](#)

On Tuesday the House Health & Human Services Committee temporarily postponed consideration of HB 1427, the House Version of the Rural Renaissance Program. The 150 page bill covers a number of program areas – Education, Transportation, Fiscally Constrained funding, Health Care, and Economic Development. Because of its scope and significant cost - \$200 million, the bill is being divided into several proposal dealing with each of the program areas. The legislation is an announced priority of Senate President Ben Albritton. Small County Coalition Chair Russell Melendy sent a letter to House and Senate leadership expressing support for the legislation requesting that it move forward.

“The members of the Small County Coalition stand firmly in support of Senate Bill 110 and House Bill 1427 – Rural Renaissance. We believe that this legislation is truly the most transformative piece of legislation to address challenges in Florida’s rural communities in recent memory. We understand the need to carefully consider each eleme”nt of the legislation but respectfully request that the legislation move forward “in toto”.

Senate and the House sponsors are keeping a close eye on the deliberations.

PCS for CS/HB 1267 – Becomes “Education Train”

Significantly expanded to include various education bills that the House is moving through the process. Analysis will be provided later. The Education Components of Rural Renaissance Program, including the funding increases for Regional Education Consortia programs were amended into the bill.

Budget Process



[House and Senate Budget Comparison - As of April 15.docx](#)

House budget subcommittees met this week to workshop comparisons of House and Senate budget spreadsheet figures, member projects, and proviso & back-of-the-bill language heading into conference. Here are the comparison documents by subcommittee.

It is anticipated that Budget Conferees will be appointed at any time – possibly today with the Budget Conference process beginning next week.

School Start Time Bill – Waiting for final passage!

SB 296 has passed the Senate and HB 291 is on special order waiting for consideration. The bills are identical. The House Sponsor, Rep. Gerwig indicated that the only thing standing in the way is the schedule. Nothing problematic with the bill!

Term Limits

House Passes Term Limit Proposal – Senate Proposal Stuck in Committee

[Staff Analysis of Term Limit Proposal HJR 679](#)

The Florida House approved asking voters in 2026 to impose term limits on county commissioners throughout the state. House members voted 82-33 to back a proposed constitutional amendment (HJR 679) about eight-year term limits on county commissioners and school board members. The Legislature in

2023 approved eight-year term limits for school board members, but those limits are not in the Constitution. Opponents of the bill, including the Small County Coalition, the Small School District Council Consortium and the Florida Association of Counties, have requested that local voters be able to decide whether to impose term limits on county commissioners, rather than having them imposed statewide. A Senate version of the proposal (SJR 802) has cleared one committee. If the proposal is ultimately approved by the Legislature, it would go on the November 2026 ballot.

Sovereign Immunity

House Approves Changes – Senate Bill is stuck in Committee

Staff Analysis of House Sovereign Immunity Legislation

The Florida House on Wednesday overwhelmingly passed changes to the state Sovereign Immunity statutes. The bill will lead to cities, counties and other government agencies paying more in lawsuits over people getting injured. The bill (HB 301) would change Florida's sovereign-immunity laws and increase limits on government payments in lawsuits. Under the bill, the caps would increase to \$500,000 and \$1 million, respectively. Also, the bill would allow government agencies to settle lawsuits for higher amounts without needing to go through the lengthy and uncertain claim-bill process. A Senate version of the bill (SB 1570) has not moved through committees.

Senate Committee Moves forward on bill Repealing Regional Planning Councils

The Small County Coalition has expressed Opposition to repealing RPC's.

Staff Analysis of SB 1264

The [Senate Appropriations Committee on Transportation, Tourism, and Economic Development](#) voted Tuesday to move forward on the bill. Committee members debated whether removing references to Regional Planning Councils would eliminate duplicative bureaucracy. Senator Sharief citing personal experience of how RPCs supported small businesses and Senator Collins highlighting concerns from these councils, whether counties are mandated to participate, and if the same services could be handled by local government.

Farm Bill Moving forward!

Staff Analysis of SB 700 - House bill similar!

The state Senate passed a wide-ranging agriculture bill Wednesday that would ban public water systems from adding fluoride to drinking water. The Senate voted 27-9 along party lines to send to the House legislation that also would ban flying drones over agricultural lands and prohibit makers of plant-based foods from calling their products meat. The Senate bill could be taken up by the House. A House committee on Tuesday voted to advance the companion bill to the floor.

On The Docket

THURSDAY, APRIL 17, 2025

— Legislature:

- SCHEDULED MEETINGS
 - House Education & Employment Committee (8 a.m., Reed Hall, House Office Building, the Capitol.)
 - House Judiciary Committee (8 a.m., 404 House Office Building, the Capitol.)
 - House State Affairs Committee (8 a.m., Morris Hall, House Office Building, the Capitol.)

- Senate Appropriations Committee (9 a.m., 110 Senate Office Building, the Capitol.)
- Senate Fiscal Policy Committee (9 a.m., 412 Knott Building, the Capitol.)
- House Rules & Ethics Committee (2 p.m., 404 House Office Building, the Capitol.)

— Also:

- UCF TRUSTEES MEET - Thursday, 9 a.m. - The University of Central Florida Board of Trustees will meet. - University of Central Florida, Fairwinds Alumni Center, Orlando.
- SOUTHWEST FLORIDA ISSUES DISCUSSED - Thursday, 10 a.m. - The Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council will meet. - South Florida Water Management District, 2301 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers. <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/91588729954?pwd=OVERTVNQVVpRZjQrY1Jab1dpMDBGUT09>. Call-in number: 1-929-205-6099. Meeting ID: 91588729954. Code: 082520
- GULF COAST COLLEGE TRUSTEES MEET - Thursday, 10 a.m. - The Gulf Coast State College Board of Trustees will meet. - Gulf Coast State College, Robert L. McSpadden Student Union West, Panama City.
- SUPREME COURT RELEASES OPINIONS - Thursday, 11 a.m. - The Florida Supreme Court is scheduled to release opinions.

FRIDAY, APRIL 18, 2025

- ‘IMPACT’ CONFERENCE HELD - Friday, 9 a.m. - The Revenue Estimating Conference will hold an “impact” conference, which involves estimating potential costs of legislation. Location; 117 Knott Building, the Capitol.
- DOMESTIC SECURITY - Friday, 10 a.m. - The state Domestic Security Oversight Council will meet. - Information at <https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/Domestic-Security/Upcoming-Meetings>

Headlines Around The State

[*Democrat: Florida House Speaker Perez hits back against Gov. DeSantis over budget, state priorities*](#)

[*Floridian: Perez Accuses DeSantis of 'Lying' About Spurning Wives of Killed, Wounded Officers*](#)

[*WUSF: Hope Florida executive director stepping down to pursue new role amid program scrutiny*](#)

[*My News 13: Hope Florida to hold meeting amid probe into donations*](#)

[*WUSF: Gainesville residents protest Alachua County Public Schools allowing ICE to enter school zones*](#)

[*AP: Major Florida grower plans to build new community after ending citrus operations*](#)

[*News-Press: When does hurricane season 2025 start? What to know in Florida*](#)

[*Herald: Bill banning Florida governor from influencing university president hirings passes House*](#)

[*The Capitolist: DeSantis blasts House on its potential cuts to law enforcement budgets*](#)

[*WUSF: Florida House passes bill protecting parks from pickleball, golf and big hotel developments*](#)

[*FlaPol: Auditor General would evolve into COGE under House-backed plan*](#)

[*FlaPol: Senate passes Wilton Simpson's priority Florida Farm Bill despite fluoride flap*](#)

[*CBS Miami: Florida Senate passes bill to ban fluoride in public water supplies*](#)

[*FlaPol: Senate passes bill promoting affordable housing development*](#)

[*FlaPol: House advances path to tighten term limits for School Boards, County Commissions*](#)

[The Capitolist: Florida House Passes Bill to Raise Government Liability Caps in Injury Lawsuits](#)

[Democrat: House approves river drilling ban; Senate eyes softer version](#)

[FlaPol: Bill mandating access to minors social media messages' advances to Senate floor](#)

[FlaPol: Senate bill to ease public-to-charter school conversions clears last committee hurdle](#)

[FlaPol: Senate unanimously approves guardrails for teachers under criminal cloud](#)

[Sentinel: Florida House to students: Keep off your cellphones during entire school day](#)

[FlaPol: House passes bill to allow big counties to set overnight anchoring limitations](#)

About the Briefing

The Briefing is prepared by Chris Doolin

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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

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