

Today Is Day 40 of the 60 Day Legislative Session!

The Briefing for Saturday, February 21, 2026

The Last Briefing – Monday, February 16, 2026

Note – All previous Briefings can be accessed at www.smallcountycoalition.org or www.ssdcc.org

Click the Briefing button at the website!

What's the weather outlook?

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

[Link to Report on Bills That Saw Action This Past Week!](#)

Two Of The Biggest Issues Moved This Week

Property Taxes and Budget

House Adopts Property Tax Proposal Sends it to the Senate!

After months of consideration of multiple property tax reduction proposal, the House on Thursday settled on one that is a total exemption of the assessed value of Homestead properties. CS/CSHJR 203 is in Senate messages. The Senate has yet to offer a proposal. Neither has the Governor. There are three weeks left in the 60 day session -so things will either develop quickly or be punted to a special session to be held after the regular session adjourns.

HJR 203 - House Proposed Constitutional Amendment - Elimination of Homestead -

Effect of the Bill: The joint resolution proposes to create an exemption for the *entire assessed value of homestead properties*. The exemption would apply to all ad valorem taxes other than school taxes. The effect of this would be to create a full exemption for homestead properties for taxes levied by counties, cities, or special districts, but would not affect property taxes levied by school districts. The joint resolution also proposes a new Section 7 of Article VIII of the Florida Constitution to prohibit local governments from reducing funding for law enforcement services below a specified base year. **Subject to approval by 60 percent of voters during the 2026 general election, the amendment proposed in the joint resolution will take effect on January 1, 2027.** The joint resolution is not subject to the Governor's veto powers.

Fiscal or Economic Impact: The Revenue Estimating Conference (REC) estimated the bill to have a zero or negative indeterminate impact on local government revenues because the constitutional amendment requires voter approval. If the proposed amendment is approved by the voters, and assuming current millage rates, the REC estimated that beginning in Fiscal Year 2027-28, the amendment will have a negative cash impact of \$14.1 billion, and a negative recurring impact of \$18.3 billion on local non-school property tax revenues

Florida Association of Counties Property Tax Report

This report provides statewide context for all counties and the individual county property tax snapshots, using locally sourced, audited, and state reported data. Information in this report and the county snapshots is intended to inform state officials and the public on factors impacting Florida's property tax system and

county budgets. Each county in Florida has a unique property tax base depending on the county’s composition of real property. Each county snapshot, found following the link for that county, contains easily accessible and helpful links to individual county budgets and audit reports.

House and Senate Move Forward with Budget Proposals

Both the House and Senate Chambers adopted budget proposals and related implementing and conforming legislation. Conference Committees have been appointed and are expected to begin negotiating agreements on the spending plan for FY 26-27. All related documents are provided. If you are wondering about a project or program – wordsearch the GAA proposals. Hopefully you find it on one side or the other. [Here are links to budget documents](#)

	Senate	House
General Appropriations Act Proposals	SB 2500	HB 5001
Proposed Implementing Bills	SB 2502	HB 5003
FEFP Proposals	Senate FEFP Proposal	House FEFP Proposal
Conference Committees	Senate Budget Conference Committee Membership	House Budget Conference Committee Members

House Bill HB 5003 Proposes Changes to the Safe Schools Program and Funding

The House Safe Schools proposal changes the current funding distribution of safe schools funding. One of the significant changes in the House proposal is the elimination of the \$250,000 base. This base funding has been instrumental in providing support for small districts to address safe school requirements. **The House has increased funding by \$158 million from \$290 million to \$448 million.** In response to the impact of eliminating the base funding in the distribution formula, the House has increased the Small District Factor which gives small districts a bump in the calculation of BASE FUNDING. There remain concerns as to whether the proposed House funding provides for sufficient funding for districts to address all of the additional requirements relating to School Safety.

New Metrics in the House Safe Schools Proposal

The House proposal modifies the Safe School distribution formula with new metrics that are based on SRO positions at each school and other factors. Here are the proposed formula components:

- For each school facility required to have a safe-school officer as prescribed by the Office of Safe Schools, the number of safe-school officers shall be determined based on the recommended ratio of unweighted full-time equivalent students per safe-school officer as specified in the General Appropriations Act.
- Any school facility with a prior year percentage of law enforcement-reported incidents which is higher than the percentage reported in the School Environmental Safety Incident Reporting System pursuant to s. 1006.07(9), per unweighted full time equivalent student as specified in the General Appropriations Act, shall receive one additional safe-school officer.
- The sum of safe-school officers determined under subparagraphs 1. and 2. shall be multiplied by the school district’s safe schools factor as specified in the General Appropriations Act. The product shall be the school district’s amount of the safe schools allocation

[The Education Funding Report](#)

This report compiles links to all of the relevant budget bills and FEFP proposals ,

Legislative Calendar for Week 7

[House Calendar for Week 7 beginning Monday - February 23, 2026](#)

[Senate Calendar for Week 7 beginning February 23, 2026](#)

[Bills Schedule To Move This Week!](#)

- [HB 0129](#) The Florida Virtual School by Smith**
- [HB 0203](#) Elimination of Non-school Property for Homesteads by Miller**
- [HB 0423](#) Student Elopement by Eskamani**
- [HB 0433](#) Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services by Alvarez, D.**
- [SB 0686](#) Agricultural Enclaves by McClain**
- [SB 0698](#) Onsite Sewage Treatment and Disposal System Permits by Martin**
- [HB 0753](#) School Counselors by Hunschofsky**
- [HB 0803](#) Building Permits and Inspections by Trabulsy**
- [HB 0833](#) Private School Facilities by Cassel**
- [HB 0925](#) Clerks of Court by Trabulsy**
- [HB 0979](#) Infill Redevelopment by Borrero**
- [SB 1062](#) Speech and Debate Education by Brodeur**
- [HB 1071](#) Education by Trabulsy**
- [HB 1103](#) Local Administration of Vessel Restrictions by Andrade**
- [HB 1245](#) Biosolids Management by Shoaf**
- [HB 1253](#) Athletics in Public K-12 Schools by LaMarca**
- [SB 1294](#) Biosolids Management by Bradley**
- [HB 1437](#) Conversion Charter Schools by Sapp**
- [SB 7036](#) Education by Education Pre-K - 12**

Here are some links that will assist you in monitoring the session.

<https://www.flhou.gov/>

<https://www.flsenate.gov/>

[The Florida Channel To Watch Proceedings](#)

[House Directory](#)

[Senate Directory](#)

DATA SETS ON STATEWIDE MILLAGE RATES AND LOCAL TAX ROLLS

[Report on Millage Rates and Taxes Levied](#)

[Data Sets on County Tax Roll Components](#)

[Florida DOGE Report Jan 2026 – Adobe cloud storage](#)

[Florida Association of Counties Property Tax Report](#)

[Florida TAXWATCH Report How Florida Counties Compare!](#)

[Fiscal Structure & Revenue Resilience of Florida Municipalities](#)

Headlines Around The State

[Herald: Florida House delivers on DeSantis property tax promise — what happens next?](#)

[FlaPol: Daniel Perez leads House on historic vote to eliminate most homestead property taxes](#)

[FlaPol: Ron DeSantis defends failure to produce property tax proposal he's promised for months](#)

[FlaPol: Paul Renner frustrated as time runs out on immediate property tax relief](#)

[FlaPol: Sprawling Farm Bill sails through Senate without dissent](#)

[FlaPol: Senate passes bill allowing Tax Collectors to regulate commercial driving schools](#)

[FlaPol: Blaise Ingolia: Fort Pierce overspending by \\$10M in local budget](#)

[FlaPol: Senate approves mandatory school pics of Abraham Lincoln, George Washington](#)

[FlaPol: Nick DiCeglie secures Senate approval for hurricane recovery fix, but it hasn't moved in the House](#)

[WLRN: Florida's largest teachers union says it doesn't condone or support student walkouts](#)

[FlaPol: 'Let me be clear': Florida teachers union doesn't support student walkouts](#)

[Axios: Florida homebuyers are scoring deals — but prices remain high](#)

[Times: DeSantis push for AI Bill of Rights reaches Florida's K-12 schools](#)

[The Capitolist: Lawmakers add transparency to conservation land sales](#)

[FlaPol: House Blue Ribbon projects land preservation bill takes next step toward passage](#)

[FlaPol: Live Local Act fix exempting farmland, protected areas from preemption moves to House floor](#)

[FlaPol: No argument here: Senate panel unanimously OKs Jason Brodeur's debate bill](#)

[Times: Lawmakers not assigning money for Florida home-hardening program](#)

[News4JAX: Confidence grows for coaches as bill for better pay picks up steam in Florida](#)

[Democrat: Florida lawmakers, Jimbo Fisher push bill to boost high school coach pay](#)

[CBS Miami: Florida Senate introduces a bill named after former NFL QB Teddy Bridgewater to allow coaches to give benefits to players](#)

[FlaPol: Kevin Steele cashes out of CFO race, will seek re-election to HD 55](#)

[News4JAX: DeSantis: Florida ranked No. 1 in workforce education, goal reached 5 years ahead of schedule](#)

[FlaPol: Report: Jimmy Patronis warns property tax cuts could spike rents](#)

[Post: Will HIV spread in Florida if state-funded HIV patients lose access to drugs?](#)

[Herald: Florida sports school to pay \\$1.7M for taking students with Mexican cartel ties](#)

[WUSF: First lady Casey DeSantis food testing program snubbed in Florida budget plans](#)

[WUSF: Florida Legislature weighs amendment for religious expression in public schools](#)

[Times: Florida House passes bill to add more transparency around conservation land decisions](#)

[FlaPol: Parental rights health care bill is ready for full House vote after divisive Committee process](#)

[FlaPol: Language blocking state money for businesses connected to media watchdogs resurfaces](#)

[FlaPol: Nick DiCeglie bill to address unintended consequences of hurricane recovery law advances to Senate floor](#)

[FlaPol: Orange County Schools warns about unintended consequences of vacant land bill now ready for House floor](#)

On The Docket

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23

Legislative - Senate

- HATCH, HARRIS CONFIRMATIONS - Monday, 4 p.m. The Ethics & Elections Committee will consider a wide range of executive appointments, including Department of Children and Families Secretary Taylor Hatch and Health Care Administration Secretary Shevaun Harris. 37 Senate Building, the Capitol.

Legislative - House

- DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS - 10 a.m. House Minority Leader Fentrice Driskell, D-Tampa, Leader Pro Tempore Christine Hunschofsky, D-Parkland, and Rep. Kelly Skidmore, D-Boca Raton, are set to hold a Zoom call with reporters.
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81555299750#success>
- WORLD CUP SECURITY - Monday, 12:30 p.m. The Security & Threat Assessment Committee will get a “secured” briefing on 2026 FIFA World Cup security and incident response planning. 12 House Office Building, the Capitol.
- CAPITOL COMPLEX PATROLS - Monday, 3 p.m. The Justice Budget Committee is to consider a proposal for the Capitol police to provide daytime patrols on streets north of the Capitol in Tallahassee (HB 975). Mashburn Hall, 314 House Office Building, the Capitol.
- POST-SECONDARY ELIGIBILITY - Monday, 4 p.m. The Health Care Budget Committee is to review a proposal involving the Department of Children and Families that in part extends the maximum age of eligibility for Post-Secondary Education Services and Support from 22 to 25 (HB 763). Mashburn Hall, 314 House Office Building, the Capitol.

OTHER SCHEDULED EVENTS:

- STATE BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION - Monday, 9 a.m. The State Board of Administration is to hold a meeting to consider general business of the Audit Committee. Hermitage Room, First Floor, The Hermitage Centre, 1801 Hermitage Blvd., Tallahassee.
- EVERGLADES WATER GOALS - Monday, 9 a.m. The South Florida Water Management District is holding a public meeting on the long-term plan for achieving water quality goals for

the Everglades Protection Area Tributary Basins. SFWMD Headquarters, B-1 Building, 3301 Gun Club Road, West Palm Beach.

- GULF GAG GROUPER - Monday, 6 p.m. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission is holding meetings on recreational Gulf gag grouper management. Wakulla Environmental Institute, 170 Preservation Way, Crawfordville.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24

Legislative - Senate

- COLLEGE GUARDIANS - Tuesday, 9 a.m. The Senate Appropriations Committee is set to review a proposal to expand Florida's "school guardian" program to colleges and universities (SB 896), a wide-ranging "medical freedom" proposal (SB 1756), and a wide-ranging transportation package that includes a study to identify key maritime components in the state's supply chain, making it a felony to shoot into an occupied or unoccupied autonomous vehicle, and to allow electrically-powered personal delivery devices to operate on bike lanes, bike paths, and road shoulders (SB 1220). 110 Senate Office Building, the Capitol.
- CHARLIE KIRK DAY, AVENUE - Tuesday, 9 a.m. The Senate Fiscal Policy Committee will consider measures that designate a road in Miami-Dade County for slain conservative activist Charlie Kirk (SB 174), annually set Oct. 14 as Charlie Kirk Day of Remembrance (SB 194), directs the Department of Education and Florida Debate Initiative to establish regional traveling debate teams and to create a Florida Speech and Debate Hall of Fame (SB 1062), and to require the Medical Examiners Commission, rather than the Governor, to appoint district medical examiners for each medical examiner district (SB 524). 412 Knott Building, the Capitol.
- LAND USE, STATE FLAGSHIP CHANGES - Tuesday, 12 p.m. Among bills scheduled to go before the Senate Rules Committee are measures intended to make the permit and development-order application process less costly while making it harder for local governments to deny applications because of a lack of compatibility with existing neighboring land uses (SB 208); to allow owners of what are known as agricultural "enclaves" in counties with populations under 1.75 million to put forward plans for single-family housing that are consistent with land-use requirements of adjacent parcels (SB 686); and to transfer the state flagship designation from the Schooner Western Union in Key West to the S.S. American Victory in Tampa. 412 Knott Building, the Capitol.

House Meetings - Tentatively scheduled

- - Tuesday, 8:30 a.m.
 - Education & Employment, Reed Hall, 102 House Office Building, the Capitol.
 - Judiciary, Sumner Hall, 404 House Office Building, the Capitol.
 - State Affairs, Morris Hall, 17 House Office Building, the Capitol.
- - Tuesday, 12:30 p.m.
 - Health & Human Services, Morris Hall, 17 House Office Building, the Capitol.
- - Tuesday, 4 p.m.
 - Budget, Morris Hall, 17 House Office Building, the Capitol.

OTHER SCHEDULED EVENTS:

- CABINET - Tuesday, 9 a.m. Gov. Ron DeSantis, Attorney General James Uthmeier, Agriculture Commissioner Wilton Simpson and Chief Financial Officer Blaise Ingoglia will hold a state Cabinet meeting. Cabinet meeting room, the Capitol.

- FSU BOARD - Tuesday, 1:30 p.m. The committees for the Florida State University Board of Trustees are meeting. FSU Westcott Building, 222 South Copeland St., Tallahassee.
- FLORIDA KEYS COLLEGE - Tuesday, 2 p.m. The College of the Florida Keys Board of Trustees is meeting. Middle Keys Center, Marathon High School, 350 Sombrero Beach Rd, Marathon.
- INDIAN RIVER STATE COLLEGE - Tuesday, 1 p.m. The Indian River State College Board of Trustees is meeting. Massey Campus, Main Building A, 3209 Virginia Avenue, Fort Pierce.
- VISIT FLORIDA COMMITTEE - Tuesday, 11 a.m. The Visit Florida Industry Services Committee is holding a meeting on Zoom to discuss the DNEXT Future Study. The meeting is expected to be aired on The Florida Channel.
- TROTTER EXECUTION SLATED - Tuesday, 6 p.m. Melvin Trotter to be executed for the June 1986 murder of Virgie Langford, 70, in Palmetto. Florida State Prison, 23916 N.W. 83rd Ave., Raiford.
- GULF GAG GROUPER - Tuesday, 6 p.m. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission is holding meetings on recreational Gulf gag grouper management. Port Inn Hall & Chapel, 309 Sixth St., Port St. Joe.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25

Legislative – Senate - Tentatively scheduled

- SENATE FLOOR SESSION - Wednesday, 5 p.m. The Senate is scheduled to meet from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. The Senate Chamber, the Capitol.

- Wednesday, 8:30 a.m.

- Health & Human Services Appropriations Committee, 412 Knott Building, the Capitol.
- Pre-K – 12 Education Appropriations Committee, 37 Senate Building, the Capitol.
- Transportation, Tourism, & Economic Development Appropriations Committee, 110 Senate Building, the Capitol

- Wednesday, 1:30 p.m.

- Agriculture, Environment, & General Government Appropriations Committee, 412 Knott Building, the Capitol.
- Criminal & Civil Justice Appropriations Committee, 37 Senate Building, the Capitol.
- Higher Education Appropriations Committee, 110 Senate Building, the Capitol.
- Finance & Tax, 301 Senate Building, the Capitol.

- Wednesday, 5 p.m.

- Special Order Calendar Group 401 Senate Building, the Capitol.

House = Tentatively Scheduled

- HOUSE HOLDS FLOOR SESSION - Wednesday, 10 a.m. The House is meeting on the floor. House chamber, the Capitol.

OTHER SCHEDULED EVENTS:

- CLEMENCY BOARD MEETS - Wednesday, 9 a.m. Gov. Ron DeSantis and the state Cabinet are scheduled to meet as the Board of Executive Clemency. Cabinet Meeting Room, The Capitol.
- FSU PRESIDENT CONTRACT - Wednesday, 9 a.m. The Florida State University Board of Trustees will consider a three-year contract extension for President Richard

McCullough. Herbert Wertheim Center for Business Excellence, Brian and Renee Murphy Forum West, 402 W. Gaines Street, Tallahassee.

- UCF BOARD - Wednesday, 10:40 a.m. University of Central Florida Board of Trustees, meeting follows the Audit and Compliance Committee. Online: <https://ucf.zoom.us/j/98928151713?pwd=saBfb0fr1iG6aeVKkRVvoRa2QBzw8I.1>
- HILLSBOROUGH COLLEGE BOARD - Wednesday, 2 p.m. The Hillsborough College Board of Trustees is meeting. HC Plant City Campus, 1206 N. Park Road, Plant City.
- COLLEGE OF CENTRAL FLORIDA - Wednesday, 3 p.m. The District Board of Trustees of the College of Central Florida is holding a meeting. Jack Wilkinson Levy Campus, 15390 NW Highway 19, Chiefland.
- FLORIDA MANATEE-SARASOTA BOARD - Wednesday, 5:30 p.m. The State College of Florida Manatee-Sarasota Board of Directors is meeting. SCF Bradenton, Board Room #7/160, 5840 26th St W, Bradenton.
- HISTORICAL MARKERS - Wednesday, 10 a.m. The Florida Historical Marker Council is to discuss several marker applications, including ones for Mikasuki-Spanish War in Tallahassee; St. Mary's Episcopal Church and Parish Hall in Green Cove Springs; the E. Pan-American Hangar 5 in Miami; and four proposals involving Venetian Causeway in Miami. R.A. Gray Building, Room 307, 500 South Bronough Street, Tallahassee.
- GULF GAG GROUPER - Wednesday, 6 p.m. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission is holding meetings on recreational Gulf gag grouper management. Destin Community Center, 101 Stahlman Ave., Destin.
- NORTH CENTRAL REGIONAL PLANNING - Wednesday, 6 p.m. The North Central Florida Regional Planning Council is meeting. Holiday Inn Hotel and Suites, Santa Fe Room, 213 Southwest Commerce Boulevard, Lake City.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Legislative –

Senate - Tentatively scheduled

- SENATE HOLDS FLOOR SESSION - Thursday, 9 a.m. The Senate is on the floor. Senate chamber, the Capitol.

House - Tentatively scheduled

- Thursday, 9 a.m.

- Education & Employment, Reed Hall, 102 House Office Building, the Capitol.
- Judiciary, Sumner Hall, 404 House Office Building, the Capitol.
- State Affairs, Morris Hall, 17 House Office Building, the Capitol.

- Thursday, 12:15 p.m.

- Rules & Ethics, Sumner Hall, 404 House Office Building, the Capitol.

- Thursday, 1 p.m.

- Ways & Means, Sumner Hall, 404 House Office Building, the Capitol.

- Thursday, 3:30 p.m.

- Commerce, Sumner Hall, 404 House Office Building, the Capitol.
- Health & Human Services, Morris Hall, 17 House Office Building, the Capitol.

OTHER SCHEDULED EVENTS:

- FIU BOARD - Thursday, 1 p.m. The Florida International University Board of Trustees is meeting. Modesto A. Maidique Campus, Graham Center Ballrooms,
- GULF COAST STATE COLLEGE - Thursday, 10 a.m. CT The Gulf Coast State College Board of Trustees is meeting. Panama City Campus, 5230 W Highway 98, Student Union West, William C. Cramer Jr. Seminar Room 306, Panama City.
- DAYTONA STATE COLLEGE - Thursday, 12 p.m. The Daytona State College Board of Trustees is holding a workshop followed by a board meeting. Wetherell Center, Building 100, Board Room, Room 402L, 1200 W. International Speedway Blvd., Daytona Beach.
- SUPREME COURT RELEASES OPINIONS - Thursday, 11 a.m. The Florida Supreme Court is scheduled to release opinions.
- SEAPORT MANATEE ACCESS - Thursday, 5 p.m. The Department of Transportation is holding a meeting on plans for intersection improvements along U.S. 41 in Manatee County near the access to SeaPort Manatee. SeaPort Manatee International Center, 1905 Intermodal Circle, Palmetto.
- GULF GAG GROUPER - Thursday, 6 p.m. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission is holding meetings on recreational Gulf gag grouper management. Steinhatchee Community Center, 1013 Riverside Drive, Steinhatchee.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27

OTHER SCHEDULED EVENTS:

- REVENUE ESTIMATING CONFERENCE - Friday, 9 a.m. The Revenue Estimating Conference Impact Conference is meeting. 117 Knott Building, the Capitol.

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

www.smallcountycoalition.org or www.ssdcc.org and click on the red **Briefing** button

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