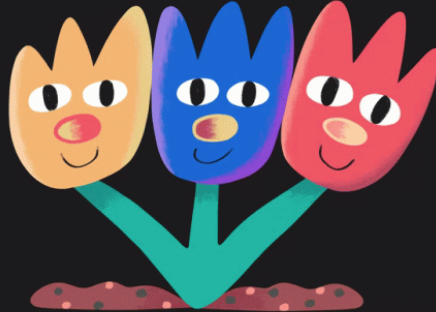


SPRING IS HERE



The Briefing for Sunday, March 22, 2026

The Last Briefing was Friday, March 13, 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](#)

[March Madness 2026 - The Best Tournament in Sports! .](#)

[The Status of the Brackets](#)

No Date for the legislature to return!

Return projected to be the week following Easter or the following week!

Major Concern

Property Tax Proposal

'Different rules for different counties' are a non-starter for the incoming Speaker.

A rural versus urban divide will complicate the upcoming Special Session to set up a November ballot initiative to let voters decide to eliminate homestead property taxes! House Speaker-designate **Sam Garrison** is on record as being against what could be part of a proposal by Gov. **Ron DeSantis** to pay the way for the state's poorest counties in the event voters decide to eliminate property taxes in November.

Recent comment from Speaker Designate Sam Garrison

“I don't want to get in the business, especially on a constitutional referendum, of having different rules for different counties,” Garrison stated.

DeSantis has called the amount of money needed to make up for uncollected property tax revenue “**budget dust**.” Typically lower in population and property value, counties considered Fiscally Constrained are :Baker, Bradford, Calhoun, Columbia, DeSoto, Dixie, Franklin, Gadsden, Gilchrist, Glades, Gulf,

Hamilton, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Lafayette, Levy, Liberty, Madison, Okeechobee, Putnam, Suwannee, Taylor, Union, Wakulla and Washington counties.

During the Legislative Session that concluded this month, the House did pass [HJR 203](#), a proposed constitutional amendment by Rep. **Monique Miller** to eliminate all non-school, non-emergency homestead taxes. However, it was not taken up by the Senate.

DeSantis has yet to unveil his property tax proposal saying it's a matter of getting it right and being coy about specifics, maintaining that a **Special Session** is necessary and that he's been working with partners in the Senate to get it done.

One highly-placed Republican in the House sees it differently, though, arguing the stall is because the Governor believes the proposal would get stale if voters had too much time to consider it.

Recent polling from the University of North Florida's Public Opinion Research Lab (**PORL**) found that among likely Midterm voters in the Sunshine State, 56% are for gradually eliminating taxes on homesteaded property over 10 years, not counting taxes for schools and emergency services. That falls below the 60% threshold necessary to approve an amendment.

[**Report on Millage Rates and Taxes Levied**](#)
[**Data Sets on County Tax Roll Components**](#)

Florida Association of Counties Property Tax Report

Unfinished Business

General Appropriations

Status of funding important to Small Counties

 [26-27 - Budget Proposals Small County Programs .docx](#)

Word Searchable Appropriation Proposals

Senate Budget Proposal - [SB 2500](#)

House Budget Proposal - [HB 5001](#)

Rural Renaissance

Unfinished Issues

Modification of Fiscally Constrained Formula
Increased funding for Regional Education Consortia
Establishment of Rural District Supplement Program

Education Funding

Status of K-12 Funding

[Senate FEFP Proposal](#)

[House FEFP Proposal](#)

Education Provisions in the GAA.

[Comparison of House and Senate Current Budget Provisions](#)

Unfinished Issues

*Addressing declining Enrollment
 Accountability and Transparency in Scholarship Programs
 Special Facility Construction Funding
 Regional Consortium
 Safe Schools Funding/Formula
 Funding for Declining Enrollment – current year and 26-27*

Legislative Reports

Report Prepared for the Small County Coalition and the SSDCC

[!\[\]\(4729e517bc6a7cd81c8025b9646574fb_img.jpg\) Initial Legislative Report - 2026 Legislative Session - March 15 - 2026.docx](#)

- Status of Budget and Funding Proposals
- Listing of Bills that Passed Related to Education
- Listing of Bills that Passed Related to General Government
- Listing of Bills that Passed Related to Climate and Environment
- Listing of Bills that Passed Related to Business and Economy
- Calendar of key dates - 2026 and 2027

2026 Bill Summaries

The 2026 Bill Summaries are reports created by Senate committee staff that give brief explanations of legislation that passed this session in both the House and Senate. These summaries are created by committee staff and do not represent the opinion of any Senator, Senate Officer, or Senate Office. Each category has a individual listing of bills relating to the category.

<p><u>Agriculture (AG)</u></p> <p><u>Appropriations (AP)</u></p> <p><u>Banking and Insurance (BI)</u></p> <p><u>Children, Families, and Elder Affairs (CF)</u></p> <p><u>Commerce and Tourism (CM)</u></p> <p><u>Community Affairs (CA)</u></p> <p><u>Criminal Justice (CJ)</u></p> <p><u>Education Postsecondary (HE)</u></p> <p><u>Education Pre-K - 12 (ED)</u></p> <p><u>Environment and Natural Resources (EN)</u></p> <p><u>Ethics and Elections (EE)</u></p>	<p><u>Finance and Tax (FT)</u></p> <p><u>Governmental Oversight and Accountability (GO)</u></p> <p><u>Health Policy (HP)</u></p> <p><u>Judiciary (JU)</u></p> <p><u>Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security (MS)</u></p> <p><u>Regulated Industries (RI)</u></p> <p><u>Rules (RC)</u></p> <p><u>Special Master on Claim Bills (SM)</u></p> <p><u>Transportation (TR)</u></p>
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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 Association of Counties Property Tax Report](#)

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

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

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

Word Searchable Appropriation Proposals

Senate Budget Proposal - [SB 2500](#)

House Budget Proposal - [HB 5001](#)

Status of K-12 Funding

[Senate FEFP Proposal](#)

[House FEFP Proposal](#)

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

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

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

[The Florida Channel To Watch Proceedings](#)

[House Directory](#)

[Senate Directory](#)

Headlines Around The State

[*FlaPol: Ron DeSantis says politics should be more than 'sugar high' entertainment*](#)

[*Daily News: Lee Sheriff Marceno's father was a well-documented menace. Did he get special treatment?*](#)

[*DBNJ: Flagler County inmates dealt drugs at church services, sheriff says*](#)

[*News Herald: Bay County Commission confirms Griff Griffiths as TDC president, CEO*](#)

[*Times: Dry to the bone: Drought squeezes Everglades airboat operators*](#)

[*Times: Hillsborough County building wave of new fire stations to cut response times*](#)

[*TCPalm: Paul Renner wants to rein in costs, tame growth if elected governor*](#)

[*FlaPol: Early voting data continues to show Dems struggling in SD 14 Special Election*](#)

[*FlaPol: Systemic failures: Report links patient deaths in Florida to missed monitoring in state hospitals*](#)

[*FlaPol: Second ethics complaint against Fabián Basabe dismissed for lack of probable cause*](#)

[*FlaPol: Firefighters back Michael Kirwan over incumbent Aaron Bean in CD 4*](#)

[*Herald: DeSantis signs bill to bolster nature-based coastline protection*](#)

[*Herald: Cuban Americans rally at Tropical Park, urging U.S. action on Cuba*](#)

[*Today: Cocoa Beach approves impact fees, developers worry about projects*](#)

[*NBC 6: Florida Gov. DeSantis says there's no 'simple fix' for rising gas prices*](#)

[*FlaPol: Speaker-designate Sam Garrison 'stunned' by racist campaigning in HD 87*](#)

[*Bloomberg: Why Florida Sheriffs Are Pivoting on Immigration*](#)

[*Semafor: Conservative group, teacher's union team up on chatbots*](#)

Florida Phoenix: Jerry Demings applauds Florida GOP sheriffs for speaking out on federal immigration priorities

FlaPol: Tampa rolls out first draft of Land Development Code rewrite, seeks public input

FlaPol: Fort Lauderdale expands school zone enforcement to protect students

Herald: Activists leave Miami with aid for Cuba, criticize U.S. policy

TCPalm: Florida city might finalize deal to hire Navy vet as next city manager

Times: Bill Gates, book bans and politics: Hillsborough school board field weighs in

Times-Union: Orange Park youth organization receives DEA award for drug prevention

Herald: Florida has a new way to file complaints about prayer suppression in schools

TCPalm: 4 candidates enter packed Indian River County Commission race

ON THE DOCKET THIS WEEK

MONDAY, MARCH 23

- COLLEGE SPORTS - Monday, 10 a.m. - The state university system Board of Governors is holding a meeting on Zoom to go over its goals for the Task Force on Intercollegiate Athletics. Location: <https://www.flbog.edu/board/upcoming-meeting/>.
- TSC TRUSTEES - Monday, 2:30 p.m. - The Tallahassee State College Board of Trustees is holding a business meeting and workshop. Location: Center for Innovation, 350 South Duval, Tallahassee.
- SOUTH FLORIDA WATER - Monday, 5 p.m. - The South Florida Water Management District is holding a public forum on recreational issues. Location: SFWMD Headquarters, B-1 Building, Auditorium, 3301 Gun Club Road, West Palm Beach.

TUESDAY, MARCH 24

- HILLSBOROUGH SPECIAL SENATE CONTEST - Polk City Republican Rep. Josie Tomkow is going up against Navy veteran Brian Nathan of Tampa for the Senate District 14 seat in Hillsborough County. The election is to fill a seat vacated in August when Jay Collins of Tampa was named lieutenant governor.
- SPECIAL HOUSE ELECTION IN POLK - Republican Hilary Holley and Democrat Edwin Perez will square off in a special election to succeed outgoing Rep. Tomkow in Polk County's House District 51.
- PALM BEACH COUNTY SPECIAL ELECTIONS - Republican Jon Maples and Democrat Emily Gregory will square off in a special general election after easily winning primaries in Palm Beach County's House District 87. The House District 87 seat opened last year when Mike Caruso, a Delray Beach Republican, was appointed Palm Beach County clerk of the circuit court and comptroller.
- ST. PETERSBURG TRUSTEES - Tuesday, 9 a.m. - The St. Petersburg College Board of Trustees is meeting. Location: Seminole Campus, Conference Center, 9200 113 Street, Seminole.
- IRSC BOARD - Tuesday, 10 a.m. - The Indian River State College Board of Trustees is meeting. Location: Massey Campus, Board Room, A301, 3209 Virginia Avenue., Fort Pierce.

- FLORIDA GAMING - Tuesday, 11 a.m. - The Florida Gaming Control Commission is holding an “information gathering session” on potential future rulemaking related to cardroom operations. Location: Betty Easley Conference Center, Room 234, 4075 Esplanade Way, Tallahassee.
- PROJECT MAEVE - Tuesday, 10:30 a.m. CT - The Board of Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc., will review a \$76 million request from Pensacola to assist with construction costs for two boat building facilities at the Port of Pensacola under the name “Project Maeve.” Location: Walton County Commission Chambers, Freeport Business Park, 842 Highway 20 East, Unit 118, Freeport.
- NORTHWEST FLORIDA BOARD - Tuesday, 3 p.m. CT - Northwest Florida State College Board of Trustees is expected to consider the 2026-2027 academic year catalog and a shared-use agreement involving the baseball facilities. Location: South Walton Campus Building B Classroom 213, 109 Greenway Trail, Santa Rosa Beach.
- TURNPIKE WIDENING - Tuesday, 6 p.m. - The Florida Department of Transportation, Florida’s Turnpike Enterprise is holding an online design public hearing on plans to widen Florida’s Turnpike from U.S. 27 to the County Road 470 interchange. Location: Visit: www.floridasturnpike.com/widenturnpikeus27tochr470

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25

- CSWR-FLORIDA RATES - Wednesday, 9 a.m. - The Public Service Commission is holding a virtual hearing on the rate increase proposed by CSWR-Florida Utility Operating Company LLC., which provides water and wastewater service to 12,319 water and 7,859 wastewater customers across 11 systems in Brevard, Citrus, Duval, Highlands, Marion, and Volusia counties. Location: Sica Hall Community Center, 1065 Daytona Avenue, Daytona Beach.
- HISTORY MUSEUM SUPPORT - Wednesday, 10 a.m. - The Division of Historical Resources Friends of Florida History, Inc., Citizen Support Organization is meeting. Location: Gray Building, Room 307, 500 S. Bronough Street, Tallahassee.
- FLORIDA PALM PROJECT - Wednesday, 1:30 p.m. - The Florida PALM Executive Steering Committee will meet to discuss the status of the Florida PALM Project, a multi-year endeavor to replace the accounting and cash management systems with a cloud-hosted, modern financial management solution. Location: Department of Revenue, 2450 Shumard Oak Boulevard, Building 2, Room 1250, Tallahassee.
- SPORTS FOUNDATION - Wednesday, 2 p.m. - The Florida Sports Foundation is holding an online meeting on special board of directors grants. Location: <https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/25372149509744?p=s3Ub25D8DcQr6arsSB> ID: 253 721 495 097 44 Passcode: 2av3ig9Y
- BOARD OF GOVERNORS - Wednesday, 1:30 p.m. CT - The committees on Campus Safety & Student Success, Academic Excellence & Economic Prosperity, Audit and Compliance, and Artificial Intelligence & Cybersecurity are meeting ahead of the March 26 state university system Board of Governors meeting. Location: University of West Florida, Conference Center, 11000 University Parkway, Building 22, Pensacola.
- COLLEGE OF CENTRAL FLORIDA TRUSTEES - Wednesday, 3 p.m. - The College of Central Florida Board of Trustees will consider curriculum changes and set 2026-2027 and 2027-2028 academic calendars. Location: Ocala Campus, 3001 S.W. College Road, Ocala.
- TURNPIKE WIDENING - Wednesday, 5:30 p.m. - The Florida Department of Transportation, Florida’s Turnpike Enterprise is holding a design public hearing on plans to widen Florida’s

Turnpike from U.S. 27 to the County Road 470 interchange. Location: Venetian Center, 1 Dozier Court, Leesburg.

THURSDAY, MARCH 26

- BOARD OF GOVERNOR - Thursday, 8:30 a.m. CT - The state university system Board of Governors is meeting around 11:40 a.m. CT., following a series of committee meetings, with an agenda that includes the three-year contract extension of Florida State University President Richard McCullough and the sale of Tallahassee Memorial Healthcare to FSU. Location: University of West Florida, Conference Center, 11000 University Parkway, Building 22, Pensacola.
- INDEPENDENT EDUCATION - Thursday, 9 a.m. - The Commission for Independent Education under the state Department of Education is holding a meeting on reports involving degree granting institutions. Location: Orlando Marriott Lake Mary, 1501 International Parkway, Lake Mary.
- SELECT FLORIDA - Thursday, 9 a.m. - The Select Florida Board of Directors is meeting. Location: Northwest Florida State College, 100 College Boulevard, Building 400, Room 302, Niceville.
- RESILIENCY COORDINATION - Thursday, 9:30 a.m. - The South Florida Resiliency Coordination Forum continues to hold fact-finding forums on regional coordination and collaboration between the South Florida Water Management District and local, state, federal, and tribal partners on water management initiatives related to resiliency. Location: SFWMD Headquarters, B-1 Building, 3301 Gun Club Road, West Palm Beach.
- APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING - Thursday, 10 a.m. - The Apalachee Regional Planning Council is holding its bi-monthly board meeting. Location: 2507 Callaway Road, Suite 100, Tallahassee.
- NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA PLANNING - 5:30 p.m. The North Central Florida Regional Planning Council is meeting at 7 p.m., following meetings by the Program Committee, Clearinghouse Committee and Executive Committee. Location: Holiday Inn Hotel and Suites, Suwannee Room, 213 Southwest Commerce Boulevard, Lake City.

FRIDAY, March 27

- INDEPENDENT EDUCATION - Friday, 9 a.m. - The Commission for Independent Education under the state Department of Education is holding a meeting on reports involving non-degree granting institutions. Location: Orlando Marriott Lake Mary, 1501 International Parkway, Lake Mary.

Here are key dates for 26-27

June 9-12	FSBA Summer Meeting – Tampa
June 11 –	Small District Breakfast – SSDCC Annual Meeting
June 23-26 –	FAC Annual Conference – Orlando
June 24 -	Small County Coalition Summer Meeting
August 18 –	Primary Elections
Sept 16-17 –	FAC Policy Conference – Jacksonville
Nov 3 –	General Election
Nov. 17-19-	Rural Summit – Ocala – Sponsored by FREDA

Dec 2-4 – Florida Association of Counties Legislative Conference
Dec 2 - Small County Coalition Breakfast –
Dec 2-4 – FSBA Legislative Conference – Tampa
Dec 3 - Small District Breakfast – SSDCC Legislative Meeting
Dec - Feb. - Legislative Committee Meetings
March 2 - Legislature convenes
March 16 - Small County Coalition – Legislative Reception
March 17 - Small School District Council Consortium
March 17-18- Rural Days 2027 – Tentative
March 17-18 – FSBA Days in the Legislature
March 17 - Florida Association Counties – Legislative Day
April 30 - Legislative Session 60 Days – Sine Die!

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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