

# WEEKLY TALLAHASSEE UPDATE



The Florida Legislature kicked off the 2025 Florida Legislative Session on Monday, March 3, 2025, marking the 127th regular legislative session since Florida's statehood in 1845. The start of Florida's annual legislative session begins a 60-day period in which the state's legislature convenes in Tallahassee for committee hearings, budget conferences, and legislative discussions.

Florida has a bicameral legislature, meaning it consists of two chambers: the Florida Senate (upper house) and the Florida House of Representatives (lower house). As outlined in the Florida Constitution, the Governor and the Legislature must collaborate annually to pass and approve a balanced budget. Senators may serve up to two four-year terms (a maximum of eight years), while Representatives may serve up to four two-year terms (also a maximum of eight years).

## VACC Legislative Priorities for 2025

In late 2024, the Venice Area Chamber of Commerce (VACC) Public Policy Committee established its 2025 legislative priorities. These priorities were reviewed by the VACC general membership and approved by the VACC Board of Directors. Over the past five years, VACC's legislative priorities have evolved as we continue drafting and promoting them. A few months ago, VACC CEO Kathy Lehner presented these priorities to our local legislative delegation. The Venice Area Chamber of Commerce will actively promote and advocate for these priorities throughout the 2025 legislative session.

As a recap, our 2025 legislative priorities are as follows:

- 1. Support continued insurance initiatives** that create a competitive and stable insurance market which will lower costs for Florida's policy holders.
- 2. Monitor "Live Local" Act** affordable housing solutions for our workforce and residents' housing needs and Florida's housing trust funds (Sadowski Act) to be used solely for housing programs.
- 3. Support the flexibility to extend disaster loan payoff terms** and reduce interest rates for business recovery after disasters.
- 4. Support FDOT work program funding** which adds to regional vibrancy including S.R. 681 and I-75 interchange expansion project.
- 5. Support the Department of Commerce** to proactively market the state as a business destination including incentivizing corporations to relocate to Florida and Visit Florida, under Commerce to establish Florida as a premier destination for visitors nationally and internationally.
- 6. Support the continued reduction of Florida's corporate income tax.**

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## **Legislative Updates: Week Two of the 2025 Session**

### SB 7016: Initiative Petitions Proposing an Amendment to the State Constitution

This bill, sponsored by the Senate Ethics and Elections Committee, passed favorably (6-3) in the Senate Ethics and Elections Committee. It aims to increase voter accountability by requiring identifying information when signing petitions and streamlining the petition review process for election supervisors. The bill also closes a "volunteer" loophole, requiring non-family members who deliver petitions to register as "petition circulators." Additionally, SB 7016 seeks to provide clearer information to voters regarding the purpose and intent of proposed amendments. The bill has now been referred to the Fiscal Policy Committee, while its House companion bill, HB 1205, is set for a final hearing in the House State Affairs Committee.

### HB 247/SB 184: Affordable Housing

Sponsored by Representative Conerly, HB 247 passed favorably out of the Housing, Agriculture & Tourism Subcommittee and has been referred to the Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee. Its Senate counterpart, SB 184, sponsored by Senator Gaetz, also passed favorably in the Senate Appropriations Committee on Transportation, Tourism, and Economic Development.

These bills are part of broader efforts to address Florida's ongoing affordable housing crisis. They propose requiring local governments to adopt ordinances permitting accessory dwelling units in areas zoned for single-family residences while preventing excessive parking requirements that could discourage their development.

### HB 571: Career Planning Opportunities for Students

Sponsored by Representative Kendall, HB 571 passed unanimously in the House Careers and Workforce Subcommittee. The bill seeks to enhance Florida's K-12 education system and workforce development by promoting career planning, apprenticeships, and work-based learning. Additionally, it aims to expand access to paid career opportunities for students over the age of 16 through job fairs and other initiatives.

### SB 346: State Preemption of the Regulation of Hoisting Equipment

Sponsored by Senator Rouson, SB 346 seeks to remove the current preemption preventing local governments from regulating construction equipment such as hoists, derricks, and cranes. The Florida Chamber of Commerce opposes this bill, arguing that these equipment types are already regulated by OSHA and the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, ensuring consistent safety standards statewide. They contend that allowing local governments to impose differing regulations could create confusion and compliance challenges. Despite opposition by the Florida Chamber, the bill passed unanimously (8-0) in the Senate Regulated Industries Committee.

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### **Final Thoughts**

If you've made it this far, thanks for reading the Week Two Update for the 2025 Florida Legislative Session! If there are any bills or topics you'd like me to cover in future updates, please email them to the VACC, and I'll do my best to provide updates before the session concludes.

### **Justin Taylor**

Public Policy Chair

Sources:

[www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov)

[www.myfloridahouse.gov](http://www.myfloridahouse.gov)

[www.flchamber.com](http://www.flchamber.com)