



## WEEKLY TALLAHASSEE UPDATE

### Venice Area Chamber of Commerce Membership,

As the Florida Legislature reached the halfway point of the 2026 Legislative Session this week, activity in Tallahassee intensified particularly around the state budget and several key business-related reforms. With committee deadlines approaching, many bills are either gaining momentum or quietly stalling. Below are the highlights from Week 5.

#### Week 5 Legislative Highlights

##### **Budget Developments & Constitutional Context**

This week brought significant movement and some fluid timing around the state budget. The House released its proposed \$113.6 billion spending plan for Fiscal Year 2026-2027, followed shortly thereafter by the Senate's announcement that it would release its proposal as well. Once both chambers pass their respective budgets, formal negotiations will begin to reconcile differences.

It is important to remember that passing a balanced budget is the only item constitutionally required of the Florida Legislature each session. While hundreds of bills are filed each year, the General Appropriations Act funding state government operations is the sole constitutional mandate. In recent years, budget negotiations have even required session extensions to finalize, last year's by 45 extra days.

##### **Legal Climate & Lawsuit Abuse Reform**

Two major lawsuit reform measures advanced in the Senate Judiciary Committee this week:

- **SB 692 – Cybersecurity Standards & Liability**

This bill incentivizes companies to adopt strong cybersecurity programs by providing a presumption against liability in certain cyberattack-related litigation when proper security measures are in place.

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2026/692>

**House Companion:** HB 635

<https://www.flhouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail.aspx?BillId=83249&SessionId=113>

- **SB 1506 – Civil Litigation / Jury Anchoring Reform**

This legislation addresses “jury anchoring,” requiring courts to ensure a rational connection between damages awarded and the evidence presented. The goal is to reduce excessive noneconomic damage awards and litigation costs.

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2026/1506>

Florida continues to rank first in the nation in nuclear verdicts per capita, making legal climate reform a major business priority.



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### Housing & Workforce Affordability

Several workforce housing measures moved forward this week:

- **HB 311 – Employer Tax Credits for Homebuyer Assistance**

Creates an optional tax credit program incentivizing employers to assist employees with down payment and closing costs.

<https://www.flhouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail.aspx?BillId=82864&SessionId=113>

**Senate Companion:** SB 1672

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2026/1672>

- **HB 1143 – Local Government Land Development Regulations**

Provides flexibility in minimum lot sizes to increase housing supply and creates time-certain approval processes to streamline development.

<https://www.flhouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail.aspx?BillId=83844&SessionId=113>

**Senate Companion:** SB 948

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2026/948>

- **HB 1139 – Impact Fees Reform**

Defines “extraordinary circumstances” to prevent abuse in local impact fee increases and improve predictability for development.

<https://www.flhouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail.aspx?BillId=83837&SessionId=113>

**Senate Companion:** SB 548

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2026/548>

These measures aim to address the supply side of Florida’s housing affordability challenge.

### Workforce & Education Pipeline

- **HB 1325 – Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) Fund Expansion**

Expands eligibility and flexibility for higher education institutions partnering to address healthcare workforce shortages.

<https://www.flhouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail.aspx?BillId=84064&SessionId=113>

**Senate Companion:** SB 1246

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2026/1246>

- **SB 920 (Language in SB 7036) – Mathematics Education Reform**

Allows applied math courses aligned with industry training to satisfy Algebra I credit requirements.

SB 7036: <https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2026/7036>



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### Permitting & Infrastructure

- SB 1234 – **Building Permits & Inspections**

Creates a statewide uniform permit application, exempts minor projects from permits, and prevents duplicate inspections.

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2026/1234>

**House Companion:** HB 803

<https://www.flhouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail.aspx?BillId=83444&SessionId=113>

- HB 1093 – **Advanced Air Mobility**

Supports Florida’s “Autonomous Florida” initiative by enabling public-private partnerships for vertiports and related infrastructure. <https://www.flhouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail.aspx?BillId=83782&SessionId=113>

**Senate Companion:** SB 1362

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2026/1362>

### Insurance & Regulatory Environment

- HB 105 – **Local Government Enforcement Actions**

Provides businesses recourse against arbitrary or unreasonable local enforcement actions.

<https://www.flhouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail.aspx?BillId=82628&SessionId=113>

Senate Companion: SB 588

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2026/588>

- SB 1096 – **Florida Civil Rights Act Remedies**

Clarifies statute of limitations for filing discrimination complaints, bringing greater certainty for employers and employees. <https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2026/1096>

**House Companion:** HB 1407

<https://www.flhouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail.aspx?BillId=84141&SessionId=113>

### Looking Ahead

With the Legislature now past the halfway mark, committee deadlines will begin narrowing the field of viable legislation. Budget negotiations, legal climate reform, housing supply solutions, and insurance market stability remain central themes of session.

As always, I will continue monitoring developments that impact Venice-area businesses and our regional economy and will provide updates as the session progresses.

Best regards,  
Justin Taylor

**Sources:** <https://www.flchamber.com/> ; <https://www.flsenate.gov/> ; <https://www.flhouse.gov/>