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THE INSIDER - SPECIAL EDITION 2022 LEGISLATIVE SESSION UPDATE - WEEK 7

With only two more weeks left in the 2022 Florida Legislative Session, the final official day for committee meetings is **Tuesday, March 1st**. After March 1st, the chamber's would need to waive the rules in order to meet again. As such, there are several bills that are unlikely to pass this year, along with many others that are heading to their final committee stops and/or ready to be heard on the chamber floors.

Additionally, last Thursday, Governor Ron DeSantis and State Surgeon General Joseph Ladapo announced significant changes to Florida's COVID-19 guidance including the removal of masks, reducing the isolation time for all Floridians including those in schools and daycares, and recommending that physicians exercise their individual clinical judgement and expertise based on their patients' needs and preferences. You can watch and read the [official announcement here](#). Furthermore, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention announced guideline changes on Friday that allows most Americans to unmask indoors, especially those who are in areas where [COVID-19 infections are at a "low" or "medium" risk](#).

Continuing on the topic of COVID-19, Governor DeSantis has signed into law a measure that will extend protections from COVID-19 liability lawsuits for nursing homes, hospitals, and doctors ([SB 7014](#)). Passed in 2021, current law states that in order to sue a health care provider over COVID-19, the plaintiff must prove gross negligence or intentional misconduct. Businesses were provided immunity liability protections up until March 2022. Now health care workers will continue to be protected from these lawsuits until June 1, 2023.

[City of Orlando](#)

[City of Kissimmee](#)

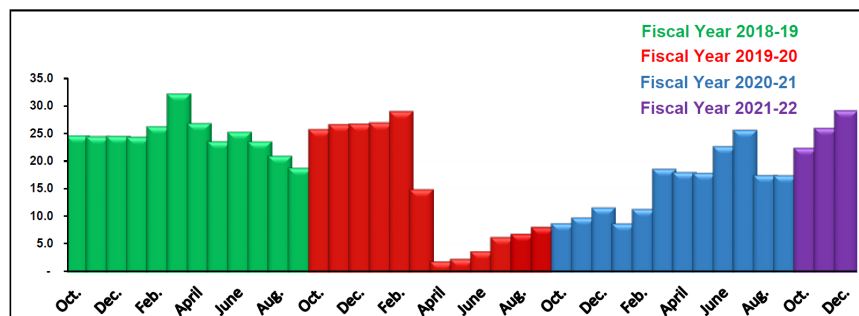
[City of Sanford](#)

Lastly, there is currently a \$3.3 billion divide between the Senate and House preferred budgets. In hopes to submit a final budget before March 8th (leaving enough time for the 72-hour constitutionally required waiting period for a vote), the Senate and House have called for budget conference meetings and negotiations to begin tonight. The House version stands at \$105.3 billion with \$2.9 billion for the Department of Corrections, \$100 million for nurse training programs, \$1.2 billion for Everglades restoration and water programs, and a \$200 million cut from schools that imposed mask mandates. The Senate unanimously voted for their budget proposal of \$108.6 billion, which sets aside \$24 billion for K-12 schools, \$300 million for affordable housing, and increases state workers minimum wage to \$15. The major policy differences in proposals include education, health care, state worker raises, environmental spending, and water policy.

REGIONAL TOURIST DEVELOPMENT TAX UPDATE

Orange County

Orange County announced that the December Tourist Development Tax collection was at **\$28,244,100**. That is a **164.3% increase** over December 2020. Month-over-month, December collections were higher than November collections by **\$3.2 million** and were higher than December 2019 collections by **\$2.4 million**. December's collections were the highest collections ever for Orange County and were the **third highest monthly collections in the history of the TDT**.

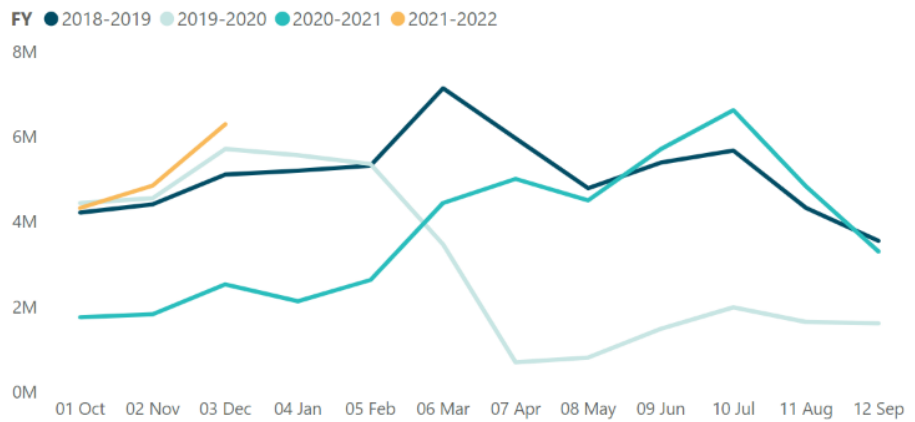


Source: Phil Diamond, CPA – Orange County Comptroller

Osceola County

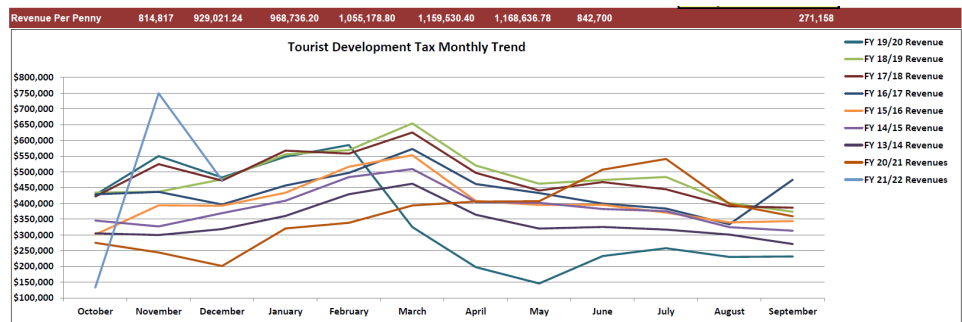
Osceola County announced that the December Tourist Development Tax collection was at **\$6,294,036**. That is a **149% increase** over December 2020 and a **10% increase** over December 2019.

TDT Osceola County



Seminole County

Seminole County announced that the December Tourist Development Tax collection was at **\$473,861**. That is a **135% increase** over December 2020.



TOURIST DEVELOPMENT TAX (TDT)

A bill in each chamber proposing changes to the Tourist Development Tax (TDT) statute that would remove a provision that would require a specific percentage of all tourist development tax revenues to be used to promote and advertise tourism.

HB 6075 - Representative Eskamani - **No action** taken in the House last week.

SB 1898 - Senator Farmer Jr. - **No action** taken in the Senate last week.

HB 673 - Representative Shoaf - **No action** taken in the House last week. The bill was passed by a vote of **16-2** by the House Tourism, Infrastructure & Energy Subcommittee on **February 8, 2022** and then voted **unanimously** in the House Ways & Means Committee on **February 17, 2022**. The bill is now awaiting a final hearing in the House Commerce Committee.

SB 1542 - Senator Gainer - **No action** taken in the Senate last week.

CFHLA OPPOSES

VISIT FLORIDA

A bill filed in each chamber that revises the scheduled repeal date of Florida's Tourism Industry Marketing Corporation (VISIT FLORIDA) **until at least October 1, 2028**.

Great News! The bill is now scheduled for a final vote on the House floor on Tuesday, March 1, 2022. Please contact your State Representative TODAY and tell them that you support the reauthorization of VISIT FLORIDA, until at least October 1, 2028! [CLICK HERE](#) to find your State Representative.

[HB 489](#) - Representative Cheney and Co-Sponsored by Representative Morales - The bill is scheduled for a final vote on the House floor on Tuesday, March 1, 2022.

[SB 434](#) - Senator Hooper - No action taken in the Senate last week. The bill passed the full Senate, by a vote of [36-2](#), on February 3, 2022. The bill is scheduled for a final vote on the House floor on Tuesday, March 1, 2022.

Additionally, we are optimistic about the future of tourism in Florida, and **CFHLA will continue to advocate for VISIT FLORIDA to be fully funded and recurring in the FY 2022-23 budget and beyond.**

CFHLA SUPPORTS

VACATION RENTALS

A bill in each chamber to require advertising platforms, such as **Airbnb** and **Vrbo**, to remit specified taxes imposed on some transactions. It also requires all licenses issued by the Division of Hotels & Restaurants of DBPR to be displayed conspicuously. Additionally, these bills would preempt regulation of vacation rentals to the State of Florida, which would prohibit local law, ordinance, or regulation from allowing or requiring inspections or licensing of public lodging establishments.

Please contact the members of the [House Ways & Means Committee](#) TODAY and tell them that you SUPPORT HB 325!

[HB 325](#) - Representative Fischer and Co-Sponsored by Representative Morales - No action taken in the House last week. The bill was passed by a vote of [10-6](#) in the Regulatory Reform Subcommittee on January 27th, and is now awaiting a hearing in the House Commerce and Ways & Means Committee.

[SB 512](#) - Senator Burgess - No action taken in the Senate last week. The bill was passed by a vote of [6-3](#) in the Senate Community Affairs Committee on February 2, 2022. The bill has now been referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee for its final committee stop.

CFHLA SUPPORTS

DATA PRIVACY

A priority of Governor DeSantis, this bill would allow consumers to control how their personal data is shared and sold.

Please contact your State Representative TODAY and tell them that you oppose HB 9! [CLICK HERE](#) to find your State Representative.

[HB 9](#) - Representative McFarland - The bill was passed by a [13-4 vote](#) in the House Judiciary Committee on **February 23, 2022. It was also [passed unanimously](#) by the House Commerce Committee on **February 10,****

2022. This bill still **includes a private right of action clause that we oppose. The bill is scheduled for a final vote on the House floor on Tuesday, March 1, 2022.**

SB 1864 - *Senator Bradley* - **No action** taken in the Senate last week. The bill was filed in the Florida Senate on January 7, 2022 and it has been referred to the Senate Commerce and Tourism Committee, the Senate Regulated Industries Committee and the Senate Rules Committee.

CFHLA OPPOSES

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

A bill in each chamber, named the Human Trafficking Reduction Act, that proposes a slew of provisions, including a prohibition of hourly rate offerings at hotels and motels, seeks to raise Florida's criminal penalties, and establishes a statewide human trafficking data repository at the University of South Florida. We are working with our legislators to ensure that the measures in this bill, if passed, are fair and tailored to meet their objectives.

HB 1439 - *Representative Toledo* - The bill was **passed unanimously** by the House Judiciary Committee on **February 8, 2022. The bill is scheduled for a final vote on the House floor on Tuesday, March 1, 2022.**

SB 1852 - *Senator Bradley* - The bill was **passed unanimously** by the Senate Regulated Industries Subcommittee on **February 8, 2022.** The bill has now been referred to the Senate Commerce and Tourism Committee.

CFHLA MONITORING

FLORIDA TIMESHARE ACT

A bill filed in each chamber that seeks to clarify and modernize several provisions in the **Florida Timeshare Act**. The bill includes beneficial revisions for owners' associations including the option for meetings to be held virtually, an exemption from current requirements to deliver notices to an owner's unit rather than address of record, clearer authority to act in an emergency, and streamlining the trustee foreclosure process to make it less time consuming. The proposal would also allow developers to deliver certain documents to purchasers electronically and clarify provisions regarding the delivery and filing of other required documents. These proposed changes would help bring the statute up to date relative to the current business model and available technology.

HB 575 - *Representative McClain* - The bill was **passed unanimously** by the House Civil Justice & Property Rights Subcommittee on **February 16, 2022** and is now awaiting its final hearing in the House Commerce Committee.

SB 1216 - *Senator Hutson* - **No action** by the Senate last week. The bill was passed unanimously by the Senate Regulated Industries Committee on January 25th, and is now awaiting a hearing in the Senate Community Affairs Committee.

CFHLA SUPPORTS

DONATE

CFHLA MEMBERS - Please consider making a donation of \$50 via the link below to the CFHLA PAC/PC. All contributions help CFHLA continue its efforts

in supporting and endorsing Hospitality-Friendly candidates for local and state offices.

DONATE NOW 

As a reminder, all CFHLA Board Members, PAC/PC Board Members, and ARC Board Members have committed to contributing \$100 to the CFHLA PAC/PC in 2022. If you are a part of one or more of these groups, please consider fulfilling your commitment today.

IN THE NEWS

[CDC: Many healthy Americans can take a break from masks](#) (AP News)

[House, Senate agree to top-line spending figures, setting stage for final budget negotiations](#) (Florida Politics)

[Florida TaxWatch scores impact of data privacy bill at \\$21B economy-wide](#) (Florida Politics)

[Consumer data privacy moves to House floor despite Senate inaction](#) (Florida Politics)

[Proposal tying local tax referendums to General Election ballots clears House, heads to Senate](#) (Florida Politics)

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