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The advertisement for Landform of Central Florida Inc. features a blue header with the company name. Below the header is a collage of four images: a hand drawing a landscape plan, a modern outdoor lamp, a swimming pool with lounge chairs, and a person in a blue uniform working on a golf course. Below the collage is the company logo, which consists of three white circles arranged in a triangle on a blue square background, with the text 'LANDFORM OF CENTRAL FLORIDA INC.' underneath. To the right of the logo is the company's tagline and a list of services: Landscape (Design, Installation, Renovation, Maintenance) and Irrigation (Modification, Installation, Repair). At the bottom, contact information for Erin Sims is provided, including her email address and phone numbers.

March 6, 2024

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## THE INSIDER - SPECIAL EDITION

### 2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION UPDATE - WEEK 8

With the final week upon us, the Florida Legislature is poised to adjourn the 2024 Session this Friday, March 8th. This week, the House and the Senate will vote and pass the agreed upon budget before they sine die.

As Florida lawmakers sprint to finish the marathon, many hot topic bills have reached their final destination, while others still await their fate.

One of those priorities, is **HB 1** by House Speaker Paul Renner. This legislation would have prevented kids under the age of 16 years old from having accounts on certain social media platforms, and also eliminated any current accounts of those who did not meet the age threshold. The bill passed both Chambers, however, Governor DeSantis vetoed it last Friday. Concerns include the U.S. Supreme Court hearing constitutionality arguments regarding various states'

laws limiting social media. The replacement to HB 1 was expected to be heard in the Senate this week, as an amendment to [HB 3](#).

Additionally, with the conference committees concluding their final meetings this past weekend, the Senate and House negotiators rapidly addressed various issues including tourism marketing and school safety. In the end, the House and Senate leaders reached an agreement on a **\$117.46 billion budget for the 2024-2025 fiscal year** that will take effect on July 1. With a required 72-hour “cooling off” period before lawmakers can vote on the budget, the FY 2024 - 2025 budget includes:

- **\$15.68 billion** for PreK-12 education
- **\$6.37 billion** for higher education
- **\$16.05 billion** for healthcare
- **\$250 million** for transportation projects
- **\$450 million** for the toll road rebates for frequent commuters
- **\$80 million** for Visit Florida

Furthermore, the House passed its tax package ([HB 7073](#)) last Friday which **includes harmful language that would limit all new Tourist Development Taxes (TDT) to 6 years and would require existing TDT's to be approved by the voters beginning July 1, 2029**. CFHLA remains in staunch opposition to this proposal, and we will continue to push back against this harmful approach to TDT that could be extremely detrimental to our industry and local community. Your direct contact with our delegation members has been impactful and we thank everyone who has reached out to their Delegation members to voice your opinion. We urge you to continue to do so until the language is removed.

Meanwhile, the Senate's tax package ([SB 7074](#)) does not include this language. However, the Senate's package does include **\$309 million in savings over two years by reducing homeowners insurance premium taxes**, with the average homeowners saving potentially \$63 annually. This is in addition to the \$900 million in cuts for businesses and consumers. Furthermore, businesses operating childcare facilities or covering employee childcare costs could also receive tax credits against corporate income taxes. Lastly, the bill includes **various sales tax holidays, such as a two-week back-to-school holiday starting July 29**, potentially saving consumers and businesses alike.

The differences in these bills will be negotiated between the Chambers until a final version is agreed upon this week.

In conclusion, CFHLA looks forward to finding a resolution this week, to many other bills that are critically important to our industry including: the **statewide regulation of vacation homes and advertising platforms, increased funding and incentives to encourage additional workforce housing opportunities, storm water issues, revisions to the Florida Timeshare Act,** and many others.



[CLICK HERE](#) to download the complete 2024 CFHLA Legislative Agenda.

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**LEGISLATIVE ALERT - FUTURE OF TOURIST DEVELOPMENT  
TAX (TDT) THREATENED**

The Florida House tax package includes **a provision that would sunset the Tourist Development Taxes (TDT) unless approved by a voter referendum before July 2029.**

**This proposal is not supported by the Senate and will be one of the final issues to be resolved this week.** This House proposal would require all Tourist Development Taxes (TDT) in effect as of June 30, 2024, to be renewed by voter referendum on or before July 1, 2029. If a TDT is not approved through referendum before that time, it will expire. Subsequently, all TDT levies approved by referendum will expire after six years but may be renewed for subsequent six-year periods if each six-year period is approved by referendum.

The statewide lodging industry agreed to levy the Tourist Development Taxes specifically to fund local tourism promotion through marketing and advertising, and this bill is a massive breach of that agreement.

Here's what this proposal could mean:

- Local governments **will shoulder the cost of a referendum every six years.**
- Resources will need to be **expended every six years to promote re-adoption of the TDT, rather than concentrating resources and efforts on the work of tourism promotion and community impact.**
- TDT revenues pledged for bonding prior to June 30, 2024, will not be disturbed, **but future revenues will only be eligible for bonding for projects in which the bonds can be retired in six years or less. This will eliminate any significant projects that require a longer bonding period such as the Orange County Convention Center, Camping World Stadium, etc.**
- If TDT levies are not approved for referendum, **this will be a significant loss of necessary funding for our local DMO's who promote and market Central Florida's most important industry.** This would have a direct impact on the number of visitors who travel to our destination in the future.
- **All entities and staff positions that rely on TDT collections will be in jeopardy and could result in economic uncertainty for our region.**

We urge all of our CFHLA members and partners to **[contact your Delegation members](#)** in opposition.

## CFHLA STONGLY OPPOSES

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### TOURIST DEVELOPMENT TAX (TDT)

The language of **SB 1748 / HB 1599 Tourist Development Tax by Senator Brodeur and Representative Truenow** is now included in the Senate tax package.

This language would prohibit a county from spending more than 25 percent of the TDT on an individual project unless the governing board of the county approves such use by supermajority vote.

**HB 1599** by Representative Truenow – **No action** was taken in the House last week.

**SB 1748** by Senator Brodeur – **No action** was taken in the Senate last week.

**HB 1081** by Representative Porras – **No action** was taken in the House last week.

**HB 1453** by Representative Valdes - **No action** was taken in the House last week.

**SB 872** by Senator Stewart - **No action** was taken in the Senate last week.

**SB 1072** by Senator Avila - **No action** was taken in the Senate last week.

**SB 1594** by Senator Stewart - **No action** was taken in the Senate last week.

### CFHLA MONITORING

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## VISIT FLORIDA FUNDING

CFHLA supports the Governor's proposed budget, which includes **\$105 million in funding for VISIT FLORIDA (increase from \$80M in FY 2023-2024)**.

Funding of VISIT FLORIDA ensures Florida continues to be top of mind as a leading vacation destination.

Great News for the Hospitality and Tourism Industry! **This weekend, the House and Senate have agreed to fund VISIT FLORIDA at \$80 million, with all \$80 million recurring for the next fiscal year.**

While this is the same overall funding as the current fiscal year, this is an **significant increase from the current \$30 million recurring**. This means that VISIT FLORIDA will have a minimum budget of \$80 million in annual funding from the state moving forward, which is the largest amount appropriated ever!

**We thank both the Florida House and Senate for recognizing the importance of Visit Florida to the state's tourism industry.**

CFHLA also opposes any efforts to replace VISIT FLORIDA funding from the state budget with County-level TDT revenues.

## CFHLA SUPPORTS



## VACATION HOME RENTALS & ADVERTISING PLATFORMS

We continue to remain optimistic about the passage of the Vacation Home Rental bill **SB 280 / HB 1537** by **Senator Nick DiCeglie and Representative Griff Griffiths**. The House and the Senate have debated this legislation over the past decade and this bill is a fair approach to all parties involved. **SB**

**280** will lead to the regulation of vacation home rentals and is intended to be a compromise where local governments will have greater authority over vacation rentals than before, while vacation rental owners would have more uniformed structure and standards.

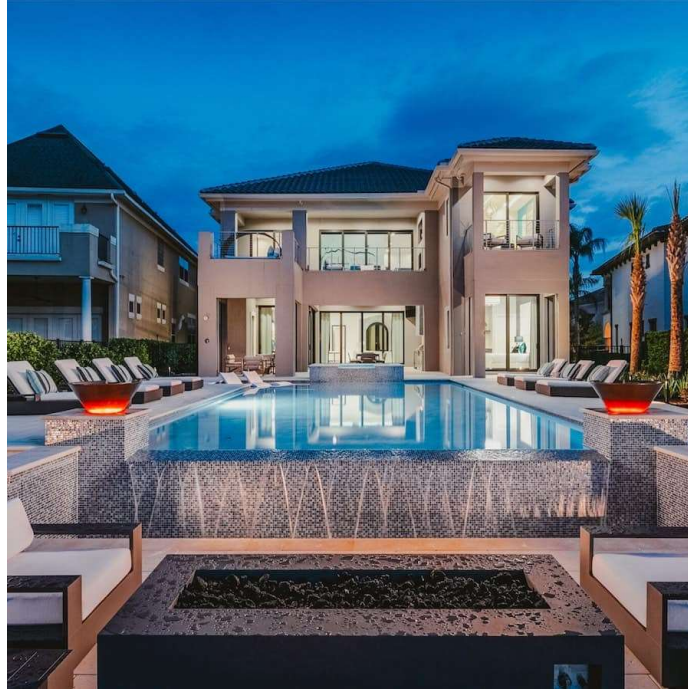
Moreover, CFHLA **supports the currently proposed version** but we are continuing to advocate for an amendment to **SB 280** that would add in safety components to **include health and safety standards such as human trafficking awareness, training and prevention, regular health and safety standards and inspections, pool safety and drowning prevention, hygiene and cleaning procedures to protect visitors and their experience.**

We are grateful to the bill sponsors Senator Nick DiCeglie and Representative Griff Griffiths for remaining diligent in continuing to pass this bill this year.

**HB 1537** by Representative Griffiths – **The bill passed the House Commerce Committee on February 22, 2024 by a vote of 13-5. The bill is now ready for consideration on the House Floor.**

**SB 280** by Senator DiCeglie – **The bill passed the Senate Floor on February 1, 2024 by a vote of 27-13 and is now in House Messages.**

## **CFHLA SUPPORTS**



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## WORKFORCE HOUSING

**CFHLA supports full funding for the Sadowski Fund**, as the Central Florida community has a dire need for more reliable and affordable rental housing.

In addition to existing State Apartment Incentive Loan dollars (usually known as SAIL), CFHLA would like to see the legislature increase the percentage of State Housing Incentive Partnership dollars (usually known as SHIP) that can be used for rental housing.

CFHLA also encourages the Legislature to consider creating incentives to encourage innovative approaches to affordable housing development. For example: incentives for development of high-quality rental properties in key areas or incentives and tax credits for businesses to create housing for their own staff.

Specifically, **Senate Bill 328 by Sen. Alexis Calatayud** and **House Bill 1239 by Rep. Vicki Lopez** seek amendments to the Live Local Act, the new affordable housing law passed last year that CFHLA supported. **CFHLA**



**supports** these bills and appreciates the Governor's Leadership in proposing \$208.6 million for the State Housing Partnership Program (SHIP), \$89.5 million for the State Apartment Incentive Loan Program (SAIL) and \$100 million for the Hometown Heroes program for down payment and closing cost assistance for first time homebuyers.

**SB 328** by Senator Calatayud - **Passed both the House and the Senate and is now headed to the Governor for his signature.**

**HB 1239** by Representative Lopez – **The companion bill SB 328 has passed by both the House and the Senate and is now headed to the Governor for his signature.**

## CFHLA SUPPORTS

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### IMMIGRATION REFORM

**CFHLA encourages solutions to our current immigration reform policies that help our hospitality businesses and economy thrive instead of hindering them.**

There have been two bills filed this session regarding this issue. Each bill urges the Federal Government to secure the southern border of the United States, enforce Federal Immigrations Laws, and fix the legal immigration system.

**HM 669** by Representative Sirois – **The bill is has now ready to be considered on the House Floor.**

**SM 598** by Senator Ingoglia – **The bill passed the Senate Floor on February 14, 2024 and is now in House Messages.**

## CFHLA SUPPORTS

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## FLORIDA TIMESHARE ACT

**CFHLA supports HB 429 by Rep. Robinson and SB 756 by Sen. Perry** which seeks the clarification and modernization of several provisions in the Florida Timeshare Act. This is ARDA's legislative proposal.

These bills would:

- Grant timeshare associations with the authority and flexibility to remove an amenity;
- Expanding the "Inn Keeper's Rights" to include timeshare properties (currently only licensed lodging establishments are included in this Statute);
- And clarify an existing provision that timeshare associations shall issue estoppel certificates.

**[HB 429](#)** by Representative Robinson – **Passed both the House and the Senate and is now headed to the Governor for his signature.**

**[SB 756](#)** by Senator Perry – **The companion bill HB 429 has passed by both the Senate and the House and is now headed to the Governor for his signature.**

## CFHLA SUPPORTS

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## REGULATION OF CASHLESS BUSINESSES

**CFHLA is opposing HB 35 by Rep. Rudman and SB 106 by Sen. Jones** which would require most brick-and-mortar businesses to accept cash, which combats the counter effort of accepting only electronic forms of payment. Several businesses have moved to cashless sales.

**[SB 106](#)** by Senator Jones – **Died in the Fiscal Policy Committee.**

**HB 35** by Representative Rudman – **No action** was taken in the House last week.

## CFHLA OPPOSES

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### REVISIONS TO FLORIDA'S CHILD LABOR LAWS

**CFHLA Supports HB 49 by Rep. Chaney and SB 1596 by Sen.**

**Burgess.** The Work Hour Law Moves allows 16- and 17-year-olds to work extended hours and is seen as beneficial for teens already working beyond legal limits off the books.

This bill would be beneficial to the hospitality and tourism industry as it works to address worker shortages post-pandemic, help with retention and help minors and their families to succeed in the current economic environment.

**HB 49** by Representative Chaney – **The bill passed the House Floor on February 1, 2024 by a vote of 80-35 and is now ready for consideration on the Senate Floor.**

**SB 1596** by Senator Burgess – **The bill is now ready for consideration on the Senate Floor.**

## CFHLA SUPPORTS

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### SCHEDULE FOR SESSION WEEK 9 (MARCH 4-MARCH 8)

To view the Senate's schedule, [CLICK HERE](#).

To view the House's schedule, [CLICK HERE](#).

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### UPCOMING CFHLA PAC/PC MEETING

The next CFHLA PAC/PC Boards of Director Meeting will be on **Wednesday, April 3rd from 8:15 a.m. - 9:15 a.m. at the CFHLA office.**

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## UPCOMING GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS MEETING

The next Governmental Affairs meeting will be held on **Wednesday, March 13th at the Signia by Hilton Bonnet Creek (thank you, Fred Sawyers) from 12:00 noon - 1:30 PM.**

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Week 9 (This Week)** - The House and Senate will each vote and pass the agreed upon FY 2024 - 2025 budget.

**Friday, March 8, 2024** - This will mark the end of the 2024 Florida Legislative Session (Sine Die).

**Lastly, between March 4 and June 30**, the Florida Legislature will send the budget, along with remaining bills that passed both chambers to the Governor for his consideration.

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## DONATE

CFHLA MEMBERS - Please **consider making a donation of \$50** via the link below to the CFHLA PAC/PC. All contributions help CFHLA expand its efforts to support and endorse Hospitality-Friendly candidates for local and state offices. **In the 2022 General election, all 16 CFHLA endorsed candidates were successfully elected into office.**

[DONATE](#)

**As a reminder, all CFHLA Board Members, PAC/PC Board Members, and ARC Board Members have committed to contributing \$200 to the**

**CFHLA PAC/PC in 2024.** If you are a part of one or more of these groups, please consider fulfilling your commitment today.

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## IN THE NEWS

[Gov. DeSantis appoints Glen Gilzean as Orange County Supervisor of elections](#) - Florida Politics

[Linda Stewart wants a local leading Disney World governing body](#) - Florida Politics

[Florida's proposed budget includes funds for UCF, perks for frequent toll-road users](#) - Orlando Business Journal

[House votes to ban IDs for undocumented immigrants](#) - Florida Politics

[Senate passes replacement for vetoed social media bill](#) - Florida Politics

[Florida TaxWatch report: Average Florida rental rates fell slightly in past year](#) - Florida Politics

[New specialty license plates, including one honoring Jimmy Buffett, soon headed to Florida roads](#) - Florida Politics

[Brightline confirms addition of new Stuart station along Florida's Treasure Coast](#) - NBC Miami News

[Florida voters could have say in race for Senate Republican Leadership](#) - Fox 35 Orlando

[Here's all the Ballot Questions for Central Florida Voters to Decide](#) - Spectrum News 13

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CONNECT WITH CFHLA



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About CFHLA

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**The mission of the Central Florida Hotel and Lodging Association is to represent the Central Florida Hospitality Industry, by setting the standard of excellence through advocacy, collaboration, education, recognition, and service.**