

WEEKLY TALLAHASSEE UPDATE



I would like to start the first VACC legislative update of 2023 by wishing everyone a happy and healthy 2023 FL Legislative Session! The 2023 FL Legislative Session kicked off last week on Tuesday, March 7, with Governor Ron DeSantis giving a "State of the State" address before a joint session of the Florida Senate and Florida House of Representatives. By the first day of the 2023 session, there were over 1700 bills that have been filed between both legislative bodies. Each week from now until May 5, 2023 when the 2023 session adjourns, I will be providing updates included in the Venice Area Chamber of Commerce Weekly Connector. Each week I will discuss bills that relate to our VACC 2023 legislative priorities, in addition to bills that are supported by the Florida Chamber. If you are interested in legislation that you would like to be mentioned in these weekly updates, please let the VACC know and they will relay the information to me. My goal is to provide fact based and non-biased updates on pro/anti business legislation.

If you are interested in learning more about the 2023 legislative priorities of the Venice Area Chamber of Commerce, you can read about them [here](#).

On opening day of the 2023 legislative session, Senate President Kathleen Passidomo outlined her session priorities including lawsuit abuse reform, affordable workforce housing known as "Live Local", school choice expansion, linking career and technical education to local jobs, securing our borders, reducing taxes, and expanding Florida's wildlife corridor. Florida House of Representatives Speaker Paul Renner also listed lawsuit reform as a priority, in addition to ending the "tort tax". He also mentioned prioritizing school choice expansion, ending fiscal cliffs, protecting consumers from Environmental Sustainability and Governance (ESG) standards, and infrastructure investments for future growth and resilience. Governor Ron DeSantis added his 2023 priorities of a \$2 billion tax cut to combat inflation, lawsuit reform, and making permanent a sales tax exemption on items such as diapers, wipes, and baby strollers. He added support for Senate President Passidomo's affordable workforce housing plan, in addition to increasing teacher pay, and passing paycheck protection.

The first week of the 2023 legislative session saw movement with the following bills moving through committee hearings:

SB 236 Civil Remedies by Senator Hutson passed 8-3 through the Senate Banking and Insurance Committee, and will now head to the Senate Judiciary Committee for a second hearing. HB 837 Civil Remedies by Representatives Gregory and Fabricio passed 16-8 in the House Judiciary Committee and will now head to the House floor. According to the Florida Chamber, these bills, if passed, "will put the interests of local businesses above billboard and TV personal injury lawyers and works to finally balance the scales of justice in our civil courts." You can read more about the House version of this bill [here](#).

SB 102 Housing by Senator Calatayud passed through the entire Florida Senate 40-0 on the second day of the 2023 legislative session. The House companion, HB 627 Housing passed its first committee hearing 18-3. The purpose of this legislation is to "build on existing programs and create new opportunities while tackling Florida's housing affordability crisis from multiple angles, including incentivizing the free market, providing additional financing, and removing regulatory roadblocks." The Senate version of this bill is available [here](#).

SB 256 Employee Organizations Representing Public Employees by Senator Blaise Ingoglia passed its first committee stop in the Governmental Oversight and Accountability committee with a 5-3 vote. Also known as paycheck protection, according to the Florida Chamber, "this bill aims to protect the rights of union members to determine how their earnings are spent and creates transparency and accountability in the collection of dues." The bill is available [here](#).

If you've made it this far, thank you for reading, and I look forward to providing you with another weekly update next week!

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