

WEEKLY TALLAHASSEE UPDATE



May 5th, 2023 - the planned adjournment of this year's Florida Legislative Session, seems like a distant date to most of us, but to the legislators, staffers, lobbyists, and advocates - now is crunch time!

If you didn't see it in the news, our state legislators have been busy passing what has been dubbed as historic lawsuit abuse reform. On Friday March 24, Governor Ron DeSantis signed **HB 837** into law, which he described as the most "significant legal reform in modern history." This legislation has been supported by the Florida Chamber of Commerce and has been seen as pro-business legislation. If you are interested in reading more about this bill, please [click here](#).

Passing off the House Floor with a 103 to 6 vote, **HB 627 Live Local** is headed to Governor Ron DeSantis's desk for his approval after previously passing through the Florida Senate. Known as one of Senate President Kathleen Passidomo's main priorities, this legislation aims to support all Floridians to be able to live in the same community in which they are employed. **HB 627/SB 102** aims to tackle Florida's affordability crisis with a multifaceted approach - incentivizing the free market, removing regulatory roadblocks, and providing additional governmental financing. Main tenets of the bill are prohibiting municipalities to artificially cap rent prices, which is seen as an anti-free market solution, in addition to allowing redevelopment of existing buildings in areas that are close to commercial areas or public transit to increase the number of housing units. To learn more about this legislation, please [click here](#).

There have been many proposed changes so far relating to Florida's economic development and tourism marketing programs. A bill recently proposed in the Florida House, **RRS2**, aims to eliminate Visit Florida's state funding, and would require local municipalities that collect a TDT (tourist development tax), to contribute 5% of their collections to Visit Florida, through 2026. The legislation will require the county commissions throughout the state to approve local funding for Visit Florida, with a requirement that every 6 years, municipalities with a TDT include the issue on a ballot for voters to decide whether or not to renew their county's participation. To learn more about **HB 7053 Tourist Development**, [click here](#).

SB 256 Paycheck Protection sponsored by Senator Blaise Ingoglia has passed off the Senate Floor with a vote of 23 to 17. As mentioned in previous legislative updates, this bill aims to increase transparency and accountability around union dues collection. You can read this bill [here](#).

Workforce Education Packages, **HB 7051** and **SB 240** have each moved through their first committee stop in the past week. Passing unanimously through the Senate Education Prek-12 Committee, this legislation aims to do the following:

- Providing all high school students the option to enroll in at least one work-based learning opportunity.
- Incentivizing businesses to participate in offering paid work-based learning opportunities to students.
- Establishing regional educational consortia with representatives from local businesses and education institutions, which will have the goal of linking local educational programs to specific industry and employment needs in the community.

SB 240 has additional criteria proposing \$100 million for the Workforce Development Capitalization Incentive Grant Program for schools to fund the creation or expansion of career and technical education programs. You can read more about this bill [here](#).

In the past week, the Appropriations Committees of each legislative chamber passed their 2023-2024 fiscal year budgets. Starting \$700 million apart, the House comes in at \$113 billion and the Senate at \$113.7. The budget must be agreed upon by both chambers before the legislative session can be adjourned, the remaining time will be used to iron out any details so a final agreement can be made.

Thank you for reading this week's legislative update, it's hard to believe that the legislative session will be halfway over by the time you are reading this legislative update.

Justin Taylor
Public Policy Co-Chair

Sources: [The Florida Chamber of Commerce](#), [the Florida House of Representatives](#), and [the Florida Senate](#).