

WEEKLY TALLAHASSEE UPDATE



It is hard to believe that this is the second to last Tallahassee update of 2023, with this year's 60-day legislative slated to "Sine Die" on Friday, May 5, 2023. We will know much more in the following days from the 2023 session since many of the bills are not passed until the final few days of the annual legislative session. The annual budget must be agreed on by both legislative bodies, with the Governor reserving the right to line-item-veto items which he chooses to cut from the annual budget, even once it is approved by both the Florida House of Representatives and Florida Senate.

SB 256 - Employee Organizations Representing Public Employees, also known as the "Paycheck Protection" bill, has passed through the Florida Senate and Florida House of Representatives. The main components of the bill are; unions are prohibited from automatically deducting their dues from the paychecks of their union members, requiring employees to submit a form acknowledging Florida is a right to work state and union participation is optional, and enhancing the role of the Public Employee Relations Commission in certifying and decertifying employee organizations. This bill does not apply to law enforcement, correctional officers, and firefighters.

HB 1205 - Advertisements for Legal Services, has passed through both legislative chambers and is headed to Governor DeSantis for his approval. The purpose of this legislation is to increase the transparency around legal advertisements by trial attorneys regarding prescriptions and medical tactics. The requirements of this bill are that these legal advertisements must begin stating that it is a paid advertisement for legal services, and not a health service announcement. The bill also prohibits stating a medication is "recalled" if it has not been recalled under the applicable state or federal regulations, in addition to prohibiting the use of federal logos in legal advertisements by trial attorneys. The advertisements must also state, verbally and in writing, to "consult your physician before making any decision regarding prescribed medication or medical treatment."

SB 240 - Education, also known as "workforce education", was passed off the Senate Floor, which will expand work-based learning opportunities through grant programs, employer incentives, and partnerships with local workforce boards. The Florida House of Representatives is expected to take this bill up before the 2023 session adjourns.

HB 1021 - Child Care and Early Learning Providers, has passed through the Florida House of Representatives, though the Senate companion is still in the committee hearing process. The bill, sponsored by our local Representative, Fiona McFarland, addresses the "burdensome" regulations and staffing shortages that limit the availability of childcare and ultimately drive-up costs. "An affordable and quality childcare system is important to improve school readiness and encourage parents to re-enter the workforce."

With just one week left, be on the lookout this upcoming weekend at news headlines for the major activity happening in Tallahassee, and for next week's final legislative update of 2023 in this same email blast from the Venice Area Chamber of Commerce.

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