

MEMORANDUM

TO: NAIOP
FROM: GrayRobinson
DATE: April 4, 2021
SUBJECT: 2021 Legislative Session – Week 5 (March 29 – April 2)

Tomorrow (Monday, April 5) all individuals ages 18 and older are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine (16 and up for Pfizer) thanks to recent efforts by Gov. Ron DeSantis to expand eligibility and access to the shot as quickly as possible. This is a major milestone in the fight against the virus. However, it doesn't come without its challenges.

Following reports that the Biden Administration is working on a system for people to prove they have been vaccinated against the virus, the Governor issued an executive order to ban the use of "vaccine passports" by businesses or local governments in the state of Florida. This order, on one hand, is consistent with the Governor's approach to virus and its impacts on Florida from the outset, but the decision is already drawing criticism from some businesses and schools looking to assure all of their customers and students it is safe to return. Where will this issue land? – Likely in the courts.

On Friday, the U.S. Department of Labor released its March numbers showing the addition of 916,000 jobs across the nation. This is nearly double February's reported numbers and the highest increase since August. While the economy is not out of the woods yet, this is a positive sign that as the momentum for vaccinations increase so does the pathway to a sustained recovery from the pandemic recession.

This week, Gov. DeSantis signed the first bill into law from the current legislative session. The COVID-19 liability protections measure, a top priority of legislative leaders and the Governor, takes effect immediately. These retroactive protections and proactive guidelines will protect

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Florida's business, health care, government and non-profit communities from frivolous claims (that do not provide clear and convincing evidence) arising from or related to COVID-19.

Another of the Governor's priorities may also be on the way to his desk soon. Following the House's passage of HB 1 (along party lines), Senate President Wilton Simpson referred the controversial HB 1 (Combating Public Disorder) to only the Senate Appropriations Committee. The Senate version of the same bill, which would increase penalties for certain crimes committed during protests, has been held up in its first committee stop, the Criminal Justice Committee, by Chair Sen. Jason Pizzo who opposes the bill. The President's procedural maneuver makes this leadership-backed measure more likely to reach the Senate floor.

This is a big week for the state budget. Both chambers are readying to pass their respective spending plans and preparing them for conference. The Senate's Appropriations bill (SB 2500) and the House's General Appropriations Act (HB 5001) are both on their respective chamber's Special Order Calendar for Wednesday. The House proposal, which calls for \$97.1 billion including \$5 billion in reserves, according to the House press office "prepares Florida today for a better tomorrow" by focusing on long-term needs over short-term personal priorities. The Senate proposal, which calls for \$95 billion including \$5 billion in reserves, according to the Senate press office "responsibly plans for Florida's future with significant reserves" by safeguarding key government functions and addressing the decline in revenues.

Meanwhile, Gov. DeSantis plugged some of his budget priorities last week. On Tuesday, the Governor highlighted progress on one of his top priorities since taking office at a press conference, where he mentioned robust funding for Everglades restoration and water infrastructure in his budget. This was followed by the Governor on Thursday announcing a proposal to provide \$1,000 bonuses for Florida's principals and teachers.

All of [these](#), a preview of [Week 6](#), our [Federal Spotlight](#) and current [Session Statistics](#) are detailed below.

Activities and Bills related to NAIOP – Summary List

Key Issues for 2021 As Determined at the NAIOP Summit

- Enacting provisions of the Georgia FAST Act in Florida;
- Phasing out the Business Rent Tax;
- Enforcing the Internet Sales Tax;
- Improving the State Fire Code, with particular regard to radio antenna requirements; and
- Monitoring Florida Building Commission membership and adding NAIOP member

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Business Rent Tax – The Senate and House have both filed bills to enforce the online sales tax (bills summarized below). A deal was struck on the online sales tax with unemployment tax being the offset. As discussed previously, there was an expectation that there was still a chance to reduce the BRT in the online sales tax bill. This week, House and Senate leadership announced that the tax will be reduced from 5.5 to 2.0% with revenue gained from the online sales tax.

FAST Act – HB 1059 which increases time by which cities/counties must react to permits passed the House on April 1. In the Senate, SB 1788 passed Governmental Oversight on March 31 and is set for a Rules hearing on April 6.

Fire Code – CFO Jimmy Patronis has included our language regarding in his official package (summarized below). As well, we are in a standalone package dealing directly with the radio communication antennae. This standalone package is waiting on its final hearing in the Senate (Appropriations) and House (Commerce).

Detailed Activities and Bills related to NAIOPFL

The following are bills filed that impact (positively and/or negatively) the commercial real estate industry. Information that is highlighted is new as of this week.

Promoting Business Friendly CRE Regulations

Fire Prevention and Control – SB 360 (Hooper) and HB 415 (Botana)

Key Take Away

Requiring the authority having jurisdiction to determine certain minimum radio signal strength requirements for all new and existing buildings; authorizing the use of radio communication enhancement systems to comply with minimum radio signal strength requirements; extending the deadline to comply with minimum radio strength for fire department communications from 2019 to 2024 for permitting and from 2022 to 2027 for installation; providing an exception to the prohibition against installing or transporting certain radio equipment using law enforcement or fire rescue frequencies, etc.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed January 25.

Insurance & Banking Subcommittee – Committee Substitute passed by vote of 17-0 on March 17.

Commerce Committee – On Committee Agenda for April 6.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed December 21.

Community Affairs - Committee Substitute approved by vote of 9-0 on March 3.

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Banking & Insurance – Passed by vote of 9-0 on March 30.
Appropriations – Awaiting Hearing.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Construction Defects – HB 21 (Andrade) and SB 270 (Perry)

Key Take Away

Defining the term “material violation”; requiring that a person submit a construction defect claim to the warranty provider before bringing a cause of action; requiring that a claimant submit a construction defect claim to the warranty provider before serving a notice of claim; authorizing a person served with a copy of a notice of claim to perform a reasonable inspection of the property subject to the claim; requiring, instead of authorizing, a person served with a notice to serve a copy of the notice to specified persons under certain circumstances, etc.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed November 30, 2020.

Civil Justice & Property Rights Subcommittee – Approved by vote of 10-8 on February 17.

Regulatory Reform Subcommittee – Committee Substitute passed by vote of 18-5 on March 8.

Judiciary Committee – Awaiting Hearing.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed December 21.

Judiciary – Approved by vote of 9-1 on February 15.

Community Affairs – Awaiting Hearing.

Rules – N/A

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Building Design – HB 55 (Overdorf) and SB 284 (Perry)

Key Take Away

If passed, would provide that regulations relating to building design elements may not be applied to residential dwellings unless they are historic properties; provides affected party may submit certain local government regulations to Florida Building Commission for review; provides for enforcement of such regulation.

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House Approval Milestones – Bill filed on December 10.

Regulatory Reform Subcommittee – Committee Substitute passed by vote of 10-5 on February 10.

Local Administration & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee – Approved by vote of 12-6 on March 3.

Commerce – Committee Substitute passed by vote of 18-5 on March 9.

House Floor – **On Second Reading.**

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed on January 11.

Community Affairs – Committee Substitute passed by vote of 6-3 on March 16.

Regulated Industries – Passed by vote of 8-1 on March 23.

Rules – Awaiting Hearing.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

County and Municipal Code Enforcement – SB 60 (Bradley) and HB 883 (Overdorf)

Key Take Away

If passed, would prohibit code inspectors designated by boards of county commissioners from initiating investigations of potential violations of codes and ordinances by way of anonymous complaints; require persons who report potential violations of codes and ordinances to provide specified information to the board before an investigation occurs; prohibit code inspectors designated by governing bodies of municipalities from initiating investigations of potential violations of codes and ordinances by way of anonymous complaints, etc.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 10.

Local Administration & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee – Committee Substitute passed by vote of 13-4 on March 9.

Public Integrity & Elections Committee – **Committee Substitute approved by vote of 16-1 on March 29.**

State Affairs Committee – **Awaiting Hearing.**

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed January 5.

Community Affairs – Committee Substitute Approved by vote of 6-3 on February 2.

Governmental Oversight and Accountability – Approved by vote of 4-1 on March 3.

Rules – Approved by vote of 11-4 on March 11.

Senate Floor – Passed by vote of 27-11 on March 25.

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Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Home-based Business – SB 266 (Perry) and HB 403 (Giallombardo)

Key Take Away

If passed, would provide legislative findings and intent; specify conditions under which a business is considered a home-based business; authorize a home-based business to operate in a residential zone under certain circumstances; preempt to the state the ability to regulate or license home-based businesses; prohibit a local government from certain actions relating to the licensure and regulation of home-based businesses, etc.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed January 25.

Regulatory Reform Subcommittee – Approved by vote of 10-6 on February 18.

Commerce Committee – Committee Substitute Approved by vote of 14-8 on March 9.

House Floor – **On Second Reading.**

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed on December 14.

Community Affairs – Committee Substitute passed by vote of 6-3 on March 10.

Commerce and Tourism – Passed by vote of 9-2 on March 22.

Rules – Awaiting Hearing.

Weekly Roundup: N/A

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Engineers – SB 572 (Baxley) and HB 931 (Toledo)

Key Take Away

Prohibiting a person who is not licensed as an engineer from using a specified name or title; prohibiting, after a specified date, a person who is not a licensed professional structural engineer from using specified names and titles or practicing professional structural engineering; authorizing the Board of Professional Engineers to refuse to certify an applicant for a professional structural engineer license for certain reasons; exempting certain applicants who apply for licensure before a specified date from having to pass a certain national examination, under certain conditions; specifying acts that constitute grounds for disciplinary action, including civil penalties, against a professional structural engineer, etc.

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House Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 11.
Regulatory Reform Subcommittee – Awaiting Hearing.
State Administration & Technology Appropriations Subcommittee – N/A.
Commerce Committee – N/A.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed on January 12
Regulated Industries – Approved by vote of 9-0.
Commerce & Tourism – Approved by vote of 11-0 on March 15.
Rules – Awaiting Hearing.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Florida Building Code – HB 401 (Fetterhoff) and SB 1146 (Brodeur)

Key Take Away

Provides that assisting living facilities are exempt from certain compliance standards; authorizes substantially affected person to file petition with Florida Building Commission to review local government regulations; provides requirements for such petition; provides requirements for commission when considering petition; requires commission to issue nonbinding advisory opinion within specified timeframe; authorizes commission to issue errata to code; prohibits local government from requiring certain contracts for issuance of building permit; requires evaluation entities that meet certain criteria to comply with certain standards.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed January 25.
Regulatory Reform Subcommittee – Committee Substitute approved by vote of 18-0.
Local Administration & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee – Passed by vote of 14-0 on April 1.
Commerce Committee – Awaiting Hearing.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 8.
Community Affairs – Committee Substitute approved by vote of 9-0 on March 30.
Appropriations – Awaiting Hearing.
Rules – N/A.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

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Alcoholic Beverage Licenses – HB 329 (Tomkow) and SB 134 (Brandes)

Key Take Away

Authorizes food service establishments to sell or deliver alcoholic beverages for off-premises consumption if requirements are met; revises provisions that authorize restaurant to allow patrons to remove partially consumed bottles of wine from restaurant for off-premises consumption; revises requirements for sale of alcoholic beverages by certain vendors.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed January 19.

Regulatory Reform Subcommittee – Passed by vote of 14-0 on February 18.

Commerce Committee – Committee Substitute passed by vote of 24-0 on March 16.

House Floor – **Placed on Calendar for Second Reading.**

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed December 4, 2020.

Regulated Industries – Awaiting Hearing.

Commerce and Tourism – N/A

Rules – N/A

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Tolling and Extension of Permits and Other Authorizations During States of Emergency– SB 912 (Albritton) and HB 859 (Grant)

Key Take Away

Adding consumptive use permits issued under part II of ch. 373, F.S., and specified development permits and development agreements to the list of permits and other authorizations that are tolled and extended during a state of emergency declared by the Governor for a natural emergency; providing for retroactive application.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 9.

Pandemics & Public Emergencies Committee – Approved by vote of 16-0 on March 9.

Commerce Committee – On Committee Agenda for March 29.

State Affairs Committee – N/A.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed January 28.

Community Affairs – Approved by vote of 9-0 on March 3.

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Environment and Natural Resources – Committee Substitute approved by vote 6-0 on March 22.

Rules – Committee Substitute approved by vote of 15-0 on March 31.

Senate Floor – Placed on Special Order Calendar for April 7.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Public Safety Emergency Communications Systems– HB 587 (Snyder) and SB 1902 (Rodrigues)

Key Take Away

Revises requirements for minimum radio signal strength for fire department communications; requires State Fire Marshal to adopt minimum radio coverage design criteria for public safety emergency communications systems & minimum standards for interior radio coverage & signal strength in buildings; requires local jurisdiction's public safety emergency communications system be certified as meeting or exceeding certain criteria before new & existing buildings are required to install, or to be assessed for, two-way radio communications enhancement systems; requires local jurisdictions to produce radio coverage heatmaps; prohibits local jurisdictions from withholding certificates of occupancy under certain circumstances.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed January 29.

Insurance & Banking Subcommittee – Awaiting Hearing.

State Administration & Technology Appropriations Subcommittee – N/A.

Commerce Committee – N/A.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 26.

Banking and Insurance – Awaiting Hearing.

Appropriations – N/A.

Rules – N/A.

Weekly Roundup: N/A

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Building Inspections – HB 667 (Mooney) and SB 1382 (Perry)

Key Take Away

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Requires certain counties & enforcement agencies allow requests for inspections to be submitted electronically; provides acceptable methods of electronic submission; authorizes enforcement agencies to perform virtual inspections; requires refund of fees in certain circumstances; requires surcharges be recalculated under certain conditions.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 1.

Regulatory Reform Subcommittee – Committee Substitute passed by vote of 17-0 on March 2.

Local Administration & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee – Committee Substitute approved by vote of 17-0 on April 1.

Commerce Committee – Awaiting Hearing.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 17.

Community Affairs – Committee Substitute Approved by vote of 9-0 on March 10.

Governmental Oversight and Accountability – Committee Substitute approved by vote of 5-0 on March 31.

Appropriations – Awaiting Hearing.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Application for and Issuance of Building Permits – HB 1059 (Robinson) and SB 1788 (Boyd)

Key Take Away

Application for and Issuance of Building Permits: Requires county that issues building permits & local enforcement agency to post certain information on their websites; authorizes all components to completed application be submitted electronically or in person; requires local enforcement agency, local government, or local building department to reduce permit fee by specified amount for failing to meet certain deadlines; prohibits authority that issues building permit from requiring applicant to provide specified contracts as part of application for certain construction.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 17.

Regulatory Reform Subcommittee – Committee Substitute passed by vote of 17-0 on March 2.

Commerce Committee – Committee Substitute approved by vote 21-0 on March 24.

House Floor – Read Third time, passed by vote of 113-0 on April 1.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 26.

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Community Affairs – Committee Substitute passed by vote of 9-0 on March 10.
Governmental Oversight and Accountability – Committee Substitute approved by vote of 5-0 on March 31.
Rules – On Committee Agenda for April 6.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Department of Financial Services – SB 1408 (Burgess) and HB 1209 (Fetterhoff)

Key Take Away

Requires State Risk Management Trust Fund to provide insurance for certain firefighter cancer-related benefits; prohibits persons from acting or advertising themselves as funeral directors, embalmers, authorizes contractor repairing certain existing fire alarm systems to begin work after filing application for required permit; revises continuing education requirements for certain persons licensed to solicit, sell, or adjust insurance; provides exemption from diligent-effort requirement for surplus lines agents exporting contracts or endorsements providing flood coverage; extends deadline for certain buildings to comply with minimum radio signal strength requirement under Florida Fire Prevention Code; provides that certain persons serving as volunteer firefighters may serve as regular or permanent firefighters for limited period.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 22.

Insurance & Banking Subcommittee – Committee Substitute approved by vote of 17-0 on March 17.

State Administration & Technology Appropriations Subcommittee – Awaiting Hearing.
Commerce Committee – N/A.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 18.

Banking and Insurance – Committee Substitute approved by vote of 11-0 on March 10.

Appropriations – Awaiting Hearing.

Rules – N/A.

Weekly Roundup: N/A

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Licensure Requirements for Land Surveyors – HB 821 (Mariano) and SB 1342 (Perry)

Key Take Away

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Authorizing an exiled professional to substitute specified lawful practice of profession for education requirement for examination; revises education requirements for licensure; provides that specified work experience or completion of specified apprenticeship program may be substituted for education requirements for licensure as land surveyor or mapper; provides applicant who holds license from other state, jurisdiction, or territory, & has certain experience in practice of surveying & mapping may take licensure examination to practice as land surveyor or mapper in this state.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed March 1.

Regulatory Reform – Committee Substitute Approved by vote of 13-5.

Agriculture & Natural Resources Appropriations Subcommittee – Passed by vote of 11-4 on April 1.

Commerce Committee – Awaiting Hearing.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 26.

Regulated Industries – Awaiting Hearing.

Commerce and Tourism – N/A.

Rules – N/A.

Weekly Roundup: N/A

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Department of Business and Professional Regulation – HB 1517 (Duggan) and SB 1966 (Diaz)

Key Take Away

Revises & provides requirements relating to electronic reporting, application fee schedules, weight of boxing gloves, fingerprint processing procedures, proof of occupancy of premises, food service establishment audit schedules, delinquency of payment conditions, rules related to submission of certain complaints, & location of Office of the Condominium Ombudsman.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed March 1.

Regulatory Reform – Committee Substitute approved by vote 14-0 on March 24.

State Administration & Technology Appropriations Subcommittee – Awaiting Hearing.

Commerce Committee – N/A.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 26.

Regulated Industries – Committee Substitute approved by vote of 7-0 on March 30.

Appropriations – Awaiting Hearing.

Rules – N/A.

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Weekly Roundup: N/A

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Promote Feasible Sustainability Initiatives
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Resiliency – SB 514 (Rodrigues) and HB 315 (LaMarca)

Key Take Away

Establishing the Statewide Office of Resiliency within the Executive Office of the Governor; creating the Statewide Sea-Level Rise Task Force adjunct to the office; authorizing the Department of Environmental Protection to contract for specified services, upon request of the task force; requiring the Environmental Regulation Commission to take certain action on the task force's recommendations, etc.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed January 19.

Environment, Agriculture & Flooding Subcommittee – Awaiting Hearing.

Appropriations Committee – N/A.

State Affairs Committee – N/A

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed January 8.

Environment and Natural Resources – Passed by vote of 6-0 on February 15.

Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Environment, & General Government – Awaiting Hearing.

Appropriations – N/A.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Renewable Energy – SB 208 (Brandes) and HB 775 (Omphroy)

Key Take Away

If passed, would authorize owners of commercial or industrial businesses, or third parties contracted by such owners, to install, maintain, and operate a renewable energy source device on or about the structure in which the business operates or on a property the business owns or leases; authorizes owners or contracted third parties to sell electricity generated

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from the device to certain businesses regardless of whether the device is located in a utility's service territory, etc.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 4.
Tourism, Infrastructure & Energy Subcommittee – Awaiting Hearing.
State Administration & Technology Appropriations Subcommittee – N/A.
Commerce Committee – N/A.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed December 7, 2020.
Regulated Industries – Passed by vote of 9-0 on March 23.
Commerce and Tourism – Awaiting Hearing.
Rules – N/A

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Renewable Energy – HB 539 (Byrd) and SB 896 (Brodeur)

Key Take Away

Provides definitions of terms "biogas" & "renewable natural gas"; revises definition of term "renewable energy" to include certain energy created to displace traditional fuel sources.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed January 28.
Tourism, Infrastructure & Energy Subcommittee – Approved by vote of 17-0 on March 9.
Environment, Agriculture & Flooding Subcommittee – Committee Substitute approved by vote 17-1 on March 23.
Commerce Committee – On Committee Agenda for April 6.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed January 28.
Regulated Industries – Committee Substitute approved by vote 7-1 on March 16.
Environment and Natural Resources – Passed by vote of 3-2 on March 29.
Rules – Awaiting Hearing.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Soil and Groundwater Contamination – SB 1054 (Broxen)

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Key Take Away

Requiring the Department of Environmental Protection to make information relating to areas of PFAS contamination available to certain governmental entities; requiring the department to provide constructive notice to local governmental entities and to certain property owners and residents when the department issues a site rehabilitation completion order that relies on intuitional controls not recorded in public records; requiring the department to adopt rules for statewide cleanup target levels for PFAS in soils and groundwater; providing that a person who executes a PFAS voluntary site rehabilitation agreement with the department is immune from and has no liability for certain claims under certain circumstances.

House Approval Milestones – No bill filed.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 2.

Environment and Natural Resources – Committee Substitute approved by vote 6-0 on March 22.

Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Environment, and General Government – Awaiting Hearing.

Appropriations – N/A.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

State Preemption of Energy Infrastructure Regulation – SB 856 (Hutson) and HB 839 (Fabricio)

Key Take Away

Prohibits local government from regulating energy infrastructure; preempts such regulation to state.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 9.

Tourism, Infrastructure & Energy Subcommittee – Committee Substitute Approved by vote of 12-6 on March 9.

Local Administration & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee – Committee Substitute approved by vote of 15-0 on April 1.

Commerce Committee – Awaiting Hearing.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed January 27.

Regulated Industries – Committee Substitute Approved by vote of 7-2 on March 9.

Community Affairs – Committee Substitute Approved by vote of 6-3 on March 16.

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Rules – Awaiting hearing.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Public Financing of Potentially At-risk Structures – SB 1550 (Rodriguez)

Key Take Away

Providing that coastal building zones are areas at risk due to sea level rise and coastal structures within those areas are potentially at-risk structures; requiring state-financed constructors to include certain flood mitigation strategies in sea level impact projection studies.

House Approval Milestones – No Bill filed.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 23.

Environment and Natural Resources – Passed by vote of 6-0 on March 22.

Community Affairs – Awaiting Hearing.

Appropriations – N/A.

Weekly Roundup: N/A

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Promote Fair Taxation

Internet Sales Tax Enforcement – SB 50 (Gruters) and HB 15 (Clemons)

Key Take Away

If passed, would revise definitions for “retail sale” and “mail order sale” to capture internet sales, and thus enforce the sales tax on internet sales. Amended to require certain amounts to be deposited into the Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund during specified periods.

UPDATE: House and Senate have agreed to amend the legislation further and provide for a reduction in the BRT, once the Unemployment Tax Fund has been replenished to \$4.071 Billion.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed on November 30, 2020.

Ways & Means Committee – Committee Substitute passed by vote of 16-2 on March 11.

Commerce – Committee Substitute approved by vote of 23-0 on March 29.

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House Floor – Placed on Special Order Calendar for April 7.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed on December 18, 2020.

Commerce and Tourism – Approved by vote 11-0 on January 25.

Finance and Tax – Committee Substitute passed by vote of 8-0 on February 18.

Appropriations – Committee Substitute approved by vote of 18-0 on March 4.

Senate Floor – Placed on House Special Order Calendar for April 7.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Back-to-School Sales Tax Holiday – SB 598 (Perry)

Key Take Away

Providing exemptions from the sales and use tax on the retail sale of certain clothing, wallets, bags, school supplies, personal computers, and personal computer-related accessories during a specified timeframe; defining terms; specifying locations where the exemptions do not apply; authorizing certain dealers to opt out of participating in the tax holiday, subject to certain requirements, etc.

House Approval Milestones – No bill filed yet.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed on January 13.

Commerce and Tourism – Committee Substitute passed by vote of 11-0 on February 15.

Finance and Tax – Approved by vote of 8-0 on March 11.

Appropriations – Awaiting Hearing.

Weekly Roundup: N/A

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Sales Tax Holiday for Disaster Preparedness Supplies – SB 734 (Gruters)

Key Take Away

Providing exemptions from the sales and use tax for specified disaster preparedness supplies during a specified timeframe; requiring purchasers of certain items to furnish a specified affidavit and information to the selling dealer; providing a criminal penalty for furnishing a false affidavit with certain intent; authorizing the Department of Revenue to adopt emergency rules.

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House Approval Milestones – No bill filed.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed January 22.

Commerce and Tourism – Committee Substitute passed by vote of 11-0 on February 15.

Finance and Tax – Committee Substitute passed by vote of 8-0 on March 11.

Appropriations – Awaiting Hearing.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Tax Exemption for Affordable Housing – HB 563 (Anthony Rodriguez) and SB 674 (Ana Maria Rodriguez)

Key Take Away

Authorizing counties and municipalities to adopt ordinances to grant ad valorem tax exemptions to property owners whose properties are used for the governmental or public purpose of providing affordable housing to certain persons or families; specifying procedures in the event property is transferred for other purposes; specifying procedures in the event an exemption is improperly granted as a result of certain acts by the property appraiser, etc.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed January 28.

Local Administration & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee – Awaiting Hearing.

Ways & Means Committee – N/A.

State Affairs Committee – N/A.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed January 15.

Community Affairs – Awaiting Hearing.

Finance and Tax – N/A.

Appropriations – N/A.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Impact Fees – HB 337 (DiCeglie) and SB 750 (Gruters)

Key Take Away

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Specifies instances when local government or special district may collect impact fee; requires local governments & special districts to credit against collection of impact fee any contribution related to public facilities; provides annual limitations on impact fee increases; requires school districts to report specified items regarding impact fees; requires specified entities to file affidavit attesting that impact fees were appropriately collected & expended.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed January 19.

Local Administration & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee – Committee Substitute passed by vote of 13-5.

Ways & Means Committee – Committee Substitute approved by vote of 15-2 on March 31.

State Affairs Committee – Awaiting Hearing.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed January 25.

Community Affairs – Committee Substitute approved by vote 5-3 on March 24.

Finance and Tax – Committee Substitute approved by vote of 6-2 on March 31.

Appropriations – Awaiting Hearing.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Small Business Saturday Sales Tax Holiday – HB 637 (DiCeglie) and SB 302 (Taddeo)

Key Take Away

Defining the term “small business”; providing that small businesses are not required to collect the sales and use tax on the retail sale of certain items of tangible personal property during a specified timeframe; authorizing the Department of Revenue to adopt emergency rules; providing an appropriation.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 1.

Ways & Means Committee – Awaiting Hearing.

Commerce Committee – N/A.

Appropriations – N/A.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed December 18.

Commerce and Tourism – Committee Substitute approved by vote of 11-0 on March 15.

Finance and Tax – Passed by vote of 7-0 on March 25.

Appropriations – Awaiting Hearing.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

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Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Tax Refund Program for Qualified Target Industry Businesses – SB 982 (Gruters) and HB 6071 (LaMarca)

Key Take Away

Deleting a provision prohibiting the certification of applicants after a specified date.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 10.

Tourism, Infrastructure & Energy Subcommittee – Awaiting Hearing.

Ways & Means Committee – N/A.

Commerce Committee – N/A.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 1.

Commerce and Tourism – Approved by vote of 10-0 on March 9.

Finance and Tax – Approved by vote of 8-0 on March 18.

Appropriations – Awaiting Hearing.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Government Property Tax Exemptions – HB 1555 (Harding) and SB 1702 (Hutson)

Key Take Away

Revising the types of lessees whose purposes and functions are deemed to be governmental, municipal, or public purposes or functions; providing exemptions from ad valorem taxes for certain real property.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed March 1.

Tourism, Infrastructure & Energy Subcommittee – Awaiting Hearing.

Ways & Means Committee – N/A.

Commerce Committee – N/A.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 25.

Community Affairs – Awaiting Hearing.

Finance and Tax – N/A.

Appropriations – N/A.

Weekly Roundup: N/A

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Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Limitation on Assessment of Real Property Used for Residential Purposes – HB 1377 (Chaney) and SB 1182 (Brandes)

Key Take Away

Proposes amendment to State Constitution to authorize Legislature to prohibit consideration of changes or improvements made to real property used for residential purposes to improve property's resistance to flood damage in determining assessed value of such property for ad valorem taxation purposes.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 22.

Environment, Agriculture & Flooding Subcommittee – Approved by vote of 17-0 on March 15.

Ways & Means Committee – Awaiting Hearing

State Affairs Committee – N/A.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 18.

Community Affairs – Approved by vote of 9-0 on March 10.

Finance and Tax – Awaiting Hearing.

Appropriations – N/A.

Weekly Roundup: N/A

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Tax Administration – HB 1241 (Stevenson)

Key Take Away

Requires tax collectors to accept late payments of prepaid property taxes; specifies severance tax rate for titanium; revises conditions for sales tax exception for tangible personal property exported out of state; specifies application requirements & procedures for forwarding agent; specifies procedures regarding forwarding agents and reporting tax; provides criminal penalties for certain violations; revises recordkeeping requirements for dealers collecting sales & use tax; provides that stolen sales tax revenue may be aggregated for purposes of determining grade of criminal offenses; authorizes DOR to publish list of forwarding agents' addresses on its website.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 24.

Ways & Means – Approved by vote of 16-0 on March 11.

Appropriations – Committee Substitute approved by vote 27-0 on March 22.

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House Floor – Read Third Times, Passed by vote of 115-0 on March 31.

Senate Approval Milestones – No Bill filed.

Weekly Roundup: N/A

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Documentary Stamp Tax Distributions – SB 2512 (PCB bill by Appropriations) and HB 5401 (Tomkow)

Key Take Away

Revising and deleting distributions of the documentary stamp tax; providing that specified distributions may not be transferred to the General Revenue Fund; revising the purposes for which distributions may be made from the Water Protection and Sustainability Program Trust Fund.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed March 25.

Appropriations – Passed by vote of 19-10 on March 31.

House Floor – Placed on Special Order Calendar for April 7.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed March 26.

Appropriations – Passed by vote of 12-8 on March 31.

Senate Floor – Placed on Special Order Calendar for April 7.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Collaborative Growth Management
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State Housing Funds – SB 510 (Hooper) and HB 13 (Killebrew)

Key Take Away

If passed, would protect Housing Trust funds by exempting State Housing Trust Fund & Local Government Housing Trust Fund from provision authorizing Legislature, in GAA, to transfer unappropriated cash balances from specified trust funds to Budget Stabilization Fund & General Revenue Fund

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed November 30.

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Infrastructure & Tourism Appropriations Subcommittee – Awaiting hearing.
Appropriations Committee – N/A

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed January 8.
Community Affairs – Passed by vote of 9-0 on February 2.
Finance & Tax – Passed by vote of 7-1 on February 18.
Appropriations – Awaiting Hearing.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Growth Management – HB 59 (McClain) and SB 496 (Perry)

Key Take Away

Requires local governments to include property rights element in their comprehensive plans; provides statement of rights that local government may use; requires local government to adopt property rights element by specified date; prohibits local government's property rights element from conflicting with statutorily provided statement of rights; provides that certain property owners are not required to consent to development agreement changes; prohibits municipality from annexing specified areas; requires DOT to afford right of first refusal to certain individuals; provides requirements & procedures for right of first refusal; authorizes certain developments of regional impact agreements to be amended.

House Approval Milestones – Filed on December 10, 2020.

Local Administration & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee – Committee Substitute passed by vote of 12-6 on February 4.

Civil Justice & Property Rights Subcommittee – Committee Substitute passed by vote of 12-6 on February 17.

State Affairs – Committee Substitute passed by vote of 20-3 on March 10.

House Floor- Passed by vote of 82-32 on March 31.

Senate Approval Milestones – Filed on January 7.

Community Affairs – Committee Substitute approved by vote of 9-0 on March 3.

Judiciary – Committee Substitute approved by vote of 11-0 on March 15.

Rules – Committee Substitute approved by vote 17-0 on March 25.

Senate Floor – Placed on Special Order Calendar for April 7.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

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Current Call to Action: N/A.

Small Scale Development Amendments – HB 487 (Duggan)

Key Take Away

Revises acreage thresholds adopting an amendment using a small scale development amendment.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed January 27.

Local Administration & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee – Approved by vote of 17-1 on March 3.

Commerce Committee – Approved by vote of 22-1 on March 9.

State Affairs Committee – Approved by vote of 20-3 on March 17.

House Floor – Read Third time, Passed by vote of 103-9 on April 1.

Senate Approval Milestones – No bill filed.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Promote Economic Prosperity

Civil Liability for Damages Relating to COVID-19 – HB 7 (McClure) and SB 72 (Brandes) - Approved by Governor, Chapter No. 2021-001, on March 29

Key Take Away

Provides requirements for civil action based on COVID-19-related claim; provides that plaintiff has burden of proof in such action; provides statute of limitations; provides retroactive applicability.

House Approval Milestones – Filed on January 6.

Civil Justice & Property Rights Subcommittee – Approved by vote 11-6 on January 13.

Pandemics & Public Emergencies Committee – Passed by vote 11-6 on February 3.

Judiciary Committee - Committee Substitute approved by vote of 14-7 on February 16.

House Floor – Passed on March 5 by vote of 83-31 and sent to Senate.

Senate Approval Milestones – Filed on January 6.

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Judiciary – Approved by vote 7-4 on January 25.
Commerce and Tourism Committee – Approved by vote of 7-4 on March 3.
Rules – Committee Substitute passed by vote of 10-5 on March 11.
Senate Floor – Enrolled..

Weekly Roundup: On March 29, the governor signed SB 72 - which recently merged protections to businesses and health care providers - into law.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Evidentiary Standards for Actions Arising During an Emergency – HB 579 (Melo)

Key Take Away

Provides that specified actions taken by business during declared emergencies may not be used as evidence in certain civil causes of action.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed January 29.

Civil Justice & Property Rights Subcommittee – Approved by vote of 14-1 on March 12.

Pandemics & Public Emergencies Committee – Passed by vote of 17-1 on March 24.

Judiciary Committee – Passed by vote of 19-0 on March 29.

House Floor – Placed on Calendar for Second Reading.

Senate Approval Milestones – No bill filed.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Governmental Actions Affecting Private Property Rights – HB 421 (Tuck) and SB 1876 (Albritton)

Key Take Away

Revises notice of claim requirements for property owners; creates presumption that certain settlement offers protect public interest; specifies property owners retain option to have court determine awards of compensation; authorizes property owners to bring claims against governmental entities in certain circumstances; authorizes property owners to bring actions to declare prohibited exactions invalid; provides for resolution of disputes concerning comprehensive plan amendments under Florida Land Use & Environmental Dispute Resolution Act.

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Local Administration & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee – Committee Substitute approved by vote of 15-2 on April 1.
Judiciary Committee- Awaiting Hearing.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 26.
Judiciary - Committee Substitute approved by vote of 7-4 on March 22.
Community Affairs – Passed by vote of 6-3 on March 30.
Rules – Awaiting Hearing.

Weekly Roundup: House Local Administration & Veterans Affairs Committee Substitute combines this bill with HB 1101.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Electronic Legal Documents – HB 483 (Altman) and SB 848 (Powell)

Key Take Away

Clarifies that supervising witnessing of electronic record by online notary public is notarial act; specifies applicability of online notarization procedures to supervision of witnessing of electronic record; modifies witnessing procedures; revises statutory forms for affidavit for acceptance of & reliance upon power of attorney, for notice of election relating to descent of homestead property, for self-proof of will or codicil, for disposition of certain assets at death, & for petition of summary relief for sale or transfer of property owned by absentee, to reflect means of notarization.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed January 27.
Civil Justice & Property Rights Subcommittee – Passed by vote of 16-0 on March 30.
Commerce Committee – On Committee Agenda for April 6.
Judiciary Committee- N/A.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed January 27.
Commerce and Tourism – Approved by vote of 11-0 on March 2.
Judiciary – Approved by vote of 10-0 on March 9.
Rules – Awaiting Hearing.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

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Tourism Marketing Entities – HB 675 (Plasencia) and SB 778 (Hooper)

Key Take Away

Authorizes Florida Tourism Industry Marketing Corporation to carry forward unexpended state appropriations into succeeding fiscal years; abrogates repeal of provisions establishing Florida Tourism Industry Marketing Corporation, direct-support organization of Enterprise Florida, Inc., & Division of Tourism Marketing within Enterprise Florida.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 2.

Infrastructure & Tourism Appropriations Subcommittee – Awaiting Hearing.

Tourism, Infrastructure & Energy Subcommittee – N/A.

Appropriations Committee – N/A.

Senate Approval Milestones – Bill filed January 25.

Commerce and Tourism – Passed by vote of 10-1 on February 15.

Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Tourism, and Economic Development – Subcommittee Recommendation approved by vote of 10-0 on March 10.

Appropriations – Awaiting Hearing.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Health Care Civil Liability – HB 7005 (Formerly HHS1 Bill by Health & Human Services Committee)

Key Take Away

Provides protections for COVID-19 related claims for Health Care providers.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 5.

Health & Human Services Committee – Passed by vote of 17-3 on February 17.

Pandemics & Public Emergencies - Committee Substitute passed by vote of 12-6 on March 2.

Judiciary– Committee Substitute passed by vote of 15-5 on March 10.

House Floor – Placed on Calendar for Second Reading.

Senate Approval Milestones – No bill filed yet.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

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Repeal of Developer Incentive Requirements – HB 6067 (Eskamani)

Key Take Away

Removes provisions requiring counties & municipalities to provide incentives to fully offset costs of certain affordable housing contributions or linkage fees.

House Approval Milestones – Bill filed February 9.

Local Administration & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee – Awaiting Hearing.

Commerce Committee – N/A.

State Affairs Committee – N/A.

Senate Approval Milestones – No bill filed yet.

Weekly Roundup: N/A.

Current Call to Action: No action needed at moment.

Summary of Session Week 5 (March 29 – April 2)

In case you missed it, here is an update on last week's legislation to watch:

Civic Education Curriculum Legislation ([HB 5 by Rep. Zika](#)/[SB 1450 by Sen. Rodriguez](#)) —

The bills would require high school government classes to include a comparative discussion of political ideologies, including communism. The bills would also require the Department of Education to create a media library “including first-person accounts of victims of other nations’ governing philosophies.” The House proposal, endorsed by House Speaker Sprowls, unanimously passed the full House on Thursday. An identical bill in the Senate awaits its last committee stop, the Appropriations Committee.

Motor Vehicle Rentals Legislation ([HB 365 by Rep. Caruso](#)/[SB 566 by Sen. Perry](#)) —

The bills would regulate the emerging peer-to-peer car rental industry by requiring rentals to levy a \$1-a-day surcharge and charge sales tax. While the current language of the bill reflects an agreement in principal between peer-to-peer platforms and traditional rental car companies, the bill still lacks a requirement that the platforms have a formal agreement with airports before operating on their property. Such a requirement has been included by nearly every state that has passed similar legislation and already exists in Florida statute for other disruptive technologies such as transportation network companies (TNCs) and autonomous vehicles. The Senate Transportation Committee unanimously voted in favor of the bill on Wednesday, but with several Senators

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expressing a desire that the airport piece be addressed. The Senate bill is now ready for its final stop in the Appropriations Committee. The legislation was also discussed during the Office of Economic and Demographics Research's Revenue Estimating Impact Conference on Friday.

State Preemption of Seaport Regulations Legislation ([HB 267 by Rep. Roach/SB 426 by Sen. Boyd](#)) — The bills would preempt local government ordinances that “restrict or regulate commerce” at Florida seaports. The provision targets a Key West ordinance aimed at keeping cruise ships away from the island. The House bill favorably passed the Local Administration and Veterans Affairs Subcommittee on Thursday by a vote of 11 - 6, and now heads to its final committee stop. The Senate bill awaits its last hearing in the Rules Committee.

Foreign Influence Legislation ([HB 7017 by Rep. Grall/SB 2010 by Sen. Diaz](#)) — The bills would require organizations seeking state funding to disclose any financial ties to adversarial countries, or “foreign country of concern.” The list includes China, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Russia, Syria, and Venezuela. The legislation is a priority of Gov. DeSantis and House Speaker Sprowls. The Senate bill was unanimously passed by the Education Committee on Tuesday and now heads to the Appropriations Subcommittee on Education. House Bill 7017 awaits its last committee hearing in the State Affairs Committee.

Constitutional Amendment Threshold Legislation ([HJR 61 by Rep. Roth/SJR 1238 by Sen. Rodriguez](#)) — The resolutions seek to raise the vote threshold to pass constitutional amendments from 60% to two-thirds. The House version favorably passed the Public Integrity and Elections Committee on Monday by a vote of 11 - 6. The bills are ready for their last committee stops in both the House and Senate.

Reemployment Assistance Legislation ([SB 1906 by Sen. Brodeur](#)) — The bill would increase the maximum weekly unemployment benefit from \$32 to \$100 and the minimum from \$275 to \$375. The current levels are among the lowest in the nation. The bill sponsor called his proposal a good starting point for talks. The bill favorably passed the Commerce and Tourism Committee on Monday by a vote of 9 - 1, and was subsequently advanced to its final stop, the Appropriations Committee.

Alimony Legislation ([HB 1559 by Rep. Rodriguez/SB 1922 by Sen. Gruters](#)) — The bills aim to end permanent alimony. They also include provisions that would default child custody time to a 50-50 split between parents. Similar legislation has made it to the Governor's desk in recent years, though it has been vetoed. The Senate bill passed the Judiciary Committee on Monday on a party line vote of 6 - 4. The House bill is awaiting its final stop, the Judiciary Committee.

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Chief Science Officer Appointment – Gov. DeSantis announced the [appointment](#) of Dr. Mark Rains as Florida’s next Chief Science Officer, who will be responsible for leading the Office of Environmental Accountability and Transparency.

Preview of Week 6 (April 5 - 9)

Barber Services Legislation ([HB 855 by Rep. Nixon/SB 1176 by Sen. Stewart](#)) — The bills would change barber regulations to allow for house calls. Current law only allows house calls for customers with debilitating health issues. The full House unanimously passed the measure on the floor Thursday. The Senate bill will go before the Senate Rules Committee, its final committee stop, at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday.

Emergency Management Legislation ([HB 7047 by House Pandemics and Public Emergencies Committee and Rep. Leek/SB 2006 by Sen. Burgess](#)) – The legislation would update the State Emergency Management Act to better address and minimize threats that arise due to pandemics or other public health emergencies. It would address planning and preparations; require greater transparency for emergency orders, delegated emergency powers, and emergency spending; and pull back the authority of local government emergency orders that restrict individual liberties; among other things. This priority legislation is moving quickly in both the House and Senate. The Senate bill will go before the Senate Rules Committee, its last committee stop, at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday.

Online Sales Tax Packages ([HB 15 by Rep. Clemons/SB 50 by Sen. Gruters](#)) – The House Special Order Calendar for Wednesday contains both the House and Senate versions of the tax proposals. House Speaker Chris Sprowls and Senate President Simpson are presenting a united front on what they hope to accomplish with the online sales tax package. In a [joint press release](#), their plan “prevents an unexpected tax hike on Florida businesses, creates a fair playing field with out-of-state businesses, and ensures necessary compensation for Florida workers seeking re-employment.” On Wednesday, an amendment to HB 15 was jointly announced in a [press release](#), highlighting “a major update to the plan that will result in a substantial cut – by more than half – to Florida’s business rent tax.”

Student Financial Aid Legislation ([SB 86 by Sen. Baxley](#)) — The bill originally would have limited Bright Futures scholarship funding for degree programs that are not seen as leading directly to a job, but it has been substantially reworked following outcry from students and parents. The bill would now put a hold on course registrations for college freshmen until they confirm they are aware of their chosen degree’s job prospect potential. The bill is on Wednesday’s Special Order Calendar in the Senate.

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Resilient Florida Legislation ([HB 7019 by Rep. Busatta Cabrera](#)/[HB 5401 by Rep. Tomkow](#)/[HB 7021 by Rep. Busatta Cabrera](#)/[SB 1954 by Sen. Rodrigues](#)/[SB 2512 by Senate Appropriations](#)/[SB 2514 by Senate Appropriations](#)) — The legislation would create the Resilient Florida Grant Program within the Department of Environmental Protection to help local governments address the impact of sea-level rise and nuisance flooding. All three House bills and all three Senate bills are on the Special Order Calendars in their respective chambers for Wednesday.

Federal Spotlight

Yellen, Powell are optimistic about recovery - In virtual appearances before the [House Financial Services Committee](#) and the [Senate Banking Committee](#) this week, Secretary of the Treasury Janet Yellen and Federal Reserve Board Chairman Jerome Powell said this was a hopeful time, but a daunting one. “We should be clear-eyed about the hole we are digging out of,” Secretary Yellen said. Despite rapid recovery in many sectors, the economy is still down about 10 million jobs from pre-pandemic levels. Chairman Powell downplayed concerns about inflation; although some price pressures are already emerging, the Fed doesn’t expect them to be large or persistent. Republican and Democratic lawmakers on both sides of the Hill urged Secretary Yellen to address the backlog in IRS processing and enforcement, and suggested that the filing date postponement to May 17 should apply to first-quarter estimated payments as well.

Momentum builds for action on infrastructure - Between the expiration of the FAST Act in September and the Biden administration’s vow to “build back better,” it seems almost certain that some form of infrastructure legislation will pass this year. Secretary of Transportation [Pete Buttigieg](#) told the [House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure](#) yesterday that this is “the best chance in any of our lifetimes to make a generational investment in infrastructure.” Full economic recovery will require a national commitment to “fix and transform” our infrastructure, Buttigieg said, because the status quo poses rising threats to our competitiveness and national security. The Administration’s infrastructure priorities include clearing the backlog of repairs needed to existing infrastructure and improve public transit and mobility options, improving transportation reliability and safety, addressing major inequities, improving air quality, and tackling the climate crisis.

For more updates from our federal lobbying team, read last week’s [On the Record with the Golden Apple](#).

Current Bill Statistics

Total Bills Filed: 3,039 (2,001 House; 1,038 Senate)

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Appropriations Bills Filed: 1,060

Total Appropriation Project Dollars Requested: \$1.174 billion

Session Weekly Schedules

House Week 6:

<https://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Documents/loadoc.aspx?PublicationType=Session&CommitteeId=&Session=2021&DocumentType=Session%20Weekly%20Schedules&FileName=Session%20Weekly%20Schedule%20for%20Week%206%20April%205%20-%209,%202021.pdf>

House Week 7:

<https://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Documents/loadoc.aspx?PublicationType=Session&CommitteeId=&Session=2021&DocumentType=Session%20Weekly%20Schedules&FileName=Session%20Weekly%20Schedule%20for%20Week%207%20April%2012%20-%2016,%202021.pdf>

Senate Week 6:

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Calendar/2021/Weekly%20Schedules%202021-03-25%20170411.PDF>

Senate Week 7:

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Calendar/2021/Weekly%20Schedules%202021-04-02%20155311.PDF>