



As fall approaches, Florida legislators returned to Tallahassee this week for interim committee meetings. After an extended 2025 Legislative Session that concluded in late June, lawmakers face a quick turnaround as they ready themselves for the January start of the 2026 Regular Legislative Session. Bill drafting deadlines are already nearing, and legislative priorities are beginning to take shape.

In addition to the early start, members of the House Select Committee on Property Taxes reconvened ahead of schedule in September to hear presentations on property tax reform. Meanwhile, Governor Ron DeSantis has reshaped the state's executive branch through two high-profile appointments—naming former Senator Jay Collins as Lieutenant Governor and former Senator Blaise Ingoglia as Chief Financial Officer—triggering multiple special elections to fill legislative vacancies.

The Governor's recent press events signal an ambitious agenda for his final session. Policies are expected to center on property tax restructuring, enhanced oversight of local government spending, additional education system changes, and revisions to existing vaccine mandates.

### Property Tax Reform Discussions

Governor DeSantis and newly appointed CFO Blaise Ingoglia continue to advocate for a constitutional amendment to eliminate property taxes on homestead properties. Across the state at joint press conferences, they promote the proposal in conjunction with the audits on local government spending led by CFO Ingoglia and the state's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). A provision in the budget implementation bill, [SB 2502](#), authorizes DOGE to review the spending of local governments from the past two years. A report with recommendations to improve fiscal responsibility and streamline government services is due to the Governor and Legislature by January 13, 2026.

The House Select Committee on Property Taxes met on **September 22 and 23** to

resume its review of potential property tax relief proposals for homeowners. The committee heard from a panel of experts on municipal property taxes as well as county property taxes. The Committee also heard an overview of the DOGE team's efforts.

While the Senate has not established a dedicated committee, Senate President Albritton has expressed support for pursuing a plan to review property tax policy in the upcoming session. Speaking at a legislative delegation meeting in August, President Albritton emphasized that the Senate will take a measured and balanced approach to the issue to account for the impacts to rural counties. Lawmakers will need to resolve key details of a property-tax proposal during session in order to place any proposal on the November 2026 ballot.

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## Fiscal and Revenue Outlook

The Senate Appropriations Committee met this week to discuss the state's Long-Range Financial Outlook Report [Long-Range Financial Outlook Report](#) from the Legislature's Office of Economic & Demographic Research (EDR). The report projects a \$3.8 billion surplus for FY 2026–27, a notable reversal from the \$2.8 billion deficit projected in last year's report. However, by FY 2028–29, the state faces a projected \$6.5 billion shortfall driven by increased Medicaid costs, expanded K–12 and voucher funding, state health insurance obligations, and recurring transfers to the Emergency Response Fund. These pressures—estimated at \$6.8 billion in additional spending over three years—will shape the 2026 budget debate as lawmakers weigh new revenue strategies against cost containment.

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## Health Care Committees look at implementation of key legislation

The House Health Care Facilities and Systems Subcommittee met Wednesday to receive a briefing from The Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) on the implementation of Florida Medicaid's Biomarker Testing Coverage. Legislators were updated on the 2024 and 2025 biomarker legislation, the development of a comprehensive biomarker code list, and Medicaid coverage policy. The [presentation](#) also covered an overview of the One Big Beautiful Bill. Legislators heard a breakdown of the new fiscal policies, eligibility and enrollment changes, and new state options such as the Rural Health Transformation Program included in the bill.

The Senate Health Policy Committee met Tuesday and heard [updates from AHCA](#) on several key items including implementation of the 2024 Rural Emergency Hospital legislation, elements of the Senate's 2024 "Live Healthy" initiative, and the 2023 KidCare eligibility legislation. During AHCA's presentation on the Training, Education, and Clinical in Health (TEACH) funding program, part of the Live Healthy legislation, Senators asked about the status of the "Slots for Docs" and Graduate Medical Education (GME) programs. AHCA reported that it is

unlikely the related waiver will move forward. As a result, no new "Slots for Docs" will be available under the current structure, but current slots will continue to support existing programs through June 30, 2027.



## Republicans designate next House Speaker

House Republicans on Thursday formally designated Representative Sam Garrison, R-Fleming Island, as the next House Speaker following the 2026 elections, succeeding Speaker Daniel Perez (R-Miami). During the ceremony, Speaker Designate Garrison, a former assistant state attorney and current Rules & Ethics Committee chair, emphasized unity, warned against political theatrics, and vowed to maintain Florida's economic momentum.

## 2026 Legislative Session: Key Dates

The schedule for the 2026 Legislative Session is now set. The Session is scheduled to begin on Tuesday, January 13, 2026, and conclude on March 13, 2026. Prior to the beginning of the Regular Session, the House and Senate will hold interim committee meetings in October, November and December.

## Legislation of Interest (listed alphabetically)

**Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Autonomous Practice – SB 138** by Sen. Keith Truenow (R-Tavares) authorizes certain advanced practice registered nurses to engage in autonomous practice to provide mental health services as defined by the Board of Nursing.

**Coverage for Mammograms and Supplemental Breast Cancer Screenings – HB 137** by Rep Dianne Hart (D-Tampa) requires AHCA to provide coverage for yearly mammograms and yearly supplemental breast cancer

**Medicaid Providers - SB 40** by Sen. Barbara Sharief (D-Davie) requires the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) to establish standards to ensure that Medicaid enrollees have access to network providers during state holidays and outside of regular business hours.

**Protection from Surgical Smoke – HB 93** by Rep. Marie Paule Woodson (D-Pembroke Pines) requires hospitals and ambulatory surgical centers to adopt and implement policies requiring the use of smoke evacuation systems during certain surgical procedures.

screenings to certain Medicaid women and revises coverages for mammograms and supplemental breast cancer screenings under certain individual accident and health insurance policies.

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**Health Care Patient Protection – SB 68** by Sen. Gayle Harrell (R-Stuart) requires AHCA, in consultation with the Florida Emergency Medical Services for Children State Partnership Program, to adopt rules that establish minimum standards for pediatric patient care in hospital emergency departments (ED). The bill requires all hospitals with EDs to develop and implement policies and procedures for pediatric patient care in the ED, and to designate a physician, physician assistant, nurse, or paramedic to serve as the pediatric emergency care coordinator in the ED. Finally, the bill requires all hospital EDs to conduct the National Pediatric Readiness Assessment in accordance with timelines established by the National Pediatric Readiness Project.

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**Recovery of Damages for Medical Negligence Resulting in Death – HB 6003** by Rep. Dana Tabulsky (R-Fort Peirce) and Rep. Dr. Anna Eskamani (D-Orlando) deletes a provision prohibiting the recovery of certain damages by specified parties related to the decedent in wrongful death proceedings.

**HB 6003 will be heard in the House Civil Justice and Claims Subcommittee on Wednesday, 10/15.**

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**Temporary Licensure of Anesthesiologist Assistants – SB 148** by Sen. Gayle Harrell (R-Stuart) requires the Department of Health to issue a temporary license to practice as an anesthesiologist assistant to applicants meeting specified criteria, and provides that temporary licensees may practice only under the direct supervision of an anesthesiologist and pursuant to a written protocol.

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**Use of Professional Nursing Titles - SB 36** by Sen. Barbara Sharief (D-Davie) authorizes certain nurses the title Doctor of Nursing Practice and the abbreviation D.N.P., and the title of Doctor of Philosophy and the abbreviation PhD. The bill also requires doctoral degree holders to specify their profession when using the term “doctor.”

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We hope this summary is helpful. We look forward to working with you during the 2026 Legislative Session. Please contact us if you have any questions.

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