



2026 Legislative Session Update - Week 3

Week three of the legislative session concluded with behind-the-scenes work on preliminary budget proposals, bills moving (or not moving) through the legislative process, and thousands of visitors filling the halls of the Capitol.

Appropriations subcommittees are expected to release their initial budget proposals week four, offering a glimpse at how the Senate and House will initially line-up their respective budget priorities. Committee meeting agendas stayed busy but not packed, perhaps foreshadowing a legislative session where fewer bills ultimately pass. Meanwhile, the Capitol was packed with advocates representing all aspects of Florida for Agricultural Day, Hospital Day, Space Day, 4-H Day, Dental Hygienist Day, PTA Day, Planners Day, and dozens more.

Implications of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act discussed this week

On Wednesday the **Senate Finance and Tax Committee** reported that the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) enacted by Congress in 2025 could cut state corporate tax collections by an estimated \$3.5 billion. The Committee heard a **presentation** from the staff director on the new general revenue forecast. In addition to the \$3.5 billion projected decrease, Senate Appropriation Committee Chairman Ed Hooper (R-Palm Harbor) said at the meeting that the budget must also address \$1 billion in extra Medicaid costs and possible cuts related to property tax reform. Plans for addressing the shortfalls are now being considered in the appropriations process. “We’re going to pass a balanced budget, and it will be less dollars than the current budget year and that is all I can assure you of” Hooper reported to the committee.

Legislation of Interest
(listed alphabetically)

Acupuncture – **SB 672** by Sen. Alexis Calatayud (R-Miami) and **HB 169** by Rep. Jose Alvarez (D-Kissimmee) revise licensure requirements for acupuncturists including allowing for the order and administration of herbs, homeopathic and other nutritional supplements.

HB 169 will be heard in the House Health Professions and Programs Subcommittee on Tuesday, 2/3.

Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Autonomous Practice – **SB 138** by Sen. Keith Truenow (R-Tavares) and **HB 301** by Rep. Jason Shoaf (R-Port St. Joe) authorize certain advanced practice registered nurses to engage in autonomous practice to provide mental health services as defined by the Board of Nursing.

HB 301 will be heard on the House Special Order Calendar on Wednesday, 2/4.

Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Initiative - **SB 578** by Sen. Corey Simon (R-Tallahassee) and **HB 513** by Rep. Dean Black (R-Jacksonville) require the Department of Elderly Affairs to contract for the development and implementation of the Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Initiative. **SB 578 was approved by the Senate Fiscal Policy Committee on Wednesday, 1/28 and now goes to the Senate floor.**

Autonomous Practice by a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist – **SB 462** by Sen. Ana Maria Rodriguez (R-Doral) and **HB 375** by Rep. Mike Giallombardo (R-Cape Coral) authorize autonomous certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs) to perform CRNA-specific acts without an established supervisory physician protocol.

HB 375 will be heard on the House Special Order Calendar on Wednesday, 2/4.

Background Screenings – **SB 1168** by Sen. Erin Grall (R-Fort Pierce) and **HB 1069** by Rep. Dana Trabulsy (R-Fort Pierce) specify additional disqualifying offenses under the background screening requirements for certain persons, require AHCA to review and determine eligibility for all criminal history checks submitted to the

Health Care Patient Protection – **SB 68** by Sen. Gayle Harrell (R-Stuart) and **HB 355** by Rep. Vanessa Oliver (R-Punta Gorda) require 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 bills require 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 bills require all hospital EDs to conduct the National Pediatric Readiness Assessment in accordance with timelines established by the National Pediatric Readiness Project.

Motor Vehicle Insurance – **SB 522** by Sen. Erin Grall (R-Fort Pierce) and **HB 769** by Rep. Meg Weinberger (R-West Palm Beach) repeal the existing no-fault statutes and references to personal injury protection coverage throughout the Florida Statutes. The bills establish mandatory bodily injury liability coverage requirements in place of personal injury protection and update insurance policy disclosure, coverage, and reporting requirements, replacing PIP-related language with bodily injury and property damage liability provisions.

Parental Rights – **SB 166** by Sen. Erin Grall (R-Fort Pierce) and **HB 173** by Rep. Kim Kendall (R-St. Johns) revise requirements for the provision of maternal health and contraceptive information and services to minors. The bills require consent from a parent or guardian for a minor's treatment for certain diseases, repeal a provision relating to minors' access to outpatient crisis intervention services and treatment, and require school districts to provide parents with specified information before the district administers certain questionnaires or forms to students. *HB 173 will be heard in the House Health and Human Services Committee on Tuesday, 1/27.*

Practice of Chiropractic Medicine –

Care Provider Background Screening Clearinghouse by specified agencies, provide that, beginning on a specified date, an independent sanctioning authority is considered a qualified entity for the purpose of participating in the clearinghouse, and require qualified entities conducting background criminal history checks to designate a user administrator for a specified purpose.

SB 1168 was approved by the Senate Health Policy Committee on Monday, 1/26. HB 1069 will be heard in the Health and Human Services Committee on Tuesday, 2/3.

Department of Health – SB 902 by Sen. Ileana Garcia (R-Miami) and **HB 733** by Rep. Ann Gerwig (R-Wellington) broadens eligibility requirements for the dental student loan repayment program. The bills revise the definition of “low-THC cannabis,” require qualified physicians and medical directors of medical marijuana treatment centers to renew their training course certification biennially, prohibit medical marijuana treatment centers from being located within certain distance of specified areas, update DOH duties relating to the Early Steps Program and Early Steps Extended Option, revise eligibility requirements for developmental evaluation and early intervention services, revise transition to education requirements for children with disabilities, provide that committing criminal offense relating to murder is cause for immediate suspension of health care practitioner's license, and revise eligible individuals for University of Florida Center for Autism and Neurodevelopment's autism micro-credential.

HB 733 was approved by the House Health Professions and Programs Subcommittee on Thursday, 1/29.

Dry Needling – SB 914 by Sen. Alexis Calatayud (R-Miami) and **HB 867** by Rep. Adam Anderson (R-Tarpon Springs) define the terms “dry needling” and “myofascial trigger point,” requiring the Board of Occupational Therapy to establish minimum standards of practice for the performance of dry needling by occupational therapists, including specified

SB 1524 by Sen. Corey Simon (R-Tallahassee) and **HB 439** by Rep. Nan Cobb (R-Eustis) authorize board certified chiropractic physicians to possess, prescribe, and administer vitamins, nutrient preparations, homeopathic remedies, dietary supplements, and epinephrine and authorize licensed pharmacists to fill, compound, or dispense certain nutritional prescriptions prescribed by certified licensed chiropractic physicians.

HB 439 will be heard in the House Health Professions and Programs Subcommittee on Tuesday, 2/3.

Practice of the Profession of Pharmacy – SB 868 by Sen. Barbara Sharief (D-Davie) and **HB 1021** by Rep. RaShon Young (D-Orlando) authorize pharmacists who meet specified criteria to, at the direction of a licensed physician, administer medications at a Level I or Level II trauma center under certain circumstances and require trauma centers to retain certain documentation to employ pharmacists to perform such tasks.

HB 1021 will be heard in the House Health Professions and Programs Subcommittee on Tuesday, 2/3.

Public Assistance – SB 1758 by Sen. Don Gaetz (R-Pensacola) authorizes AHCA to conduct retrospective reviews and audits of certain claims under the state Medicaid program, requires the agency to seek federal approval to implement mandatory work and community engagement requirements for able-bodied adults as a condition of obtaining and maintaining Medicaid coverage, requires AHCA, in consultation with the Department of Children and Families, to develop a business plan to implement specified provisions, revises the purpose of the Medicaid Pharmaceutical and Therapeutics Committee to include creation of a Medicaid preferred physician-administered drug list, a Medicaid preferred product list, and a high-cost drug list, and requires the department to develop and implement a food assistance payment accuracy improvement plan.

SB 1758 will be heard in in the Senate Health Policy Committee on Monday, 2/2.

standards, and require the board, if it deems it necessary for patient safety, to adopt additional supervision and training requirements for occupational therapists to perform dry needling on specified areas.

SB 914 will be heard in the Senate Health Policy Committee on Monday, 2/2.

HB 867 was approved by the House Health Care Budget Subcommittee on Wednesday, 1/28.

Employment Eligibility – SB 1278 by Sen. Jonathan Martin (R-Fort Myers) and **HB 197** by Rep. Berny Jacques (R-Clearwater) require all private employers, rather than only those employing more than specified number of employees, to use E-Verify system to verify new employee's employment.

Enforcement of Protections for Minors – SB 1010 by Sen. Clay Yarborough (R-Jacksonville) and **HB 743** by Rep. Melo (R-Naples) provide criminal penalties for health care practitioners who willfully or actively aid or abet a minor in obtaining sex-reassignment prescriptions or procedures.

HB 743 will be heard in the House Health Professions and Programs Subcommittee on Tuesday, 2/3.

Florida Birth-Related Neurological Injury Compensation Association – SB 1668 by Sen. Colleen Burton (R-Winter Haven) and **HB 1291** by Rep. Adam Anderson (R-Tarpon Springs) require the Florida Birth-Related Neurological Injury Compensation Association to reimburse the state Medicaid program for plan participants' medical expenses, expand compensation items to include additional medical, dental, habilitative, and guardianship expenses, revise the exclusiveness of remedy under the Florida Birth-Related Neurological Injury Compensation Plan, mandate continuous major medical health coverage for participants, require the association to maintain a plan of operation with provisions for fraud detection and to perform regular actuarial evaluations of the plan's fiscal soundness, and require the association to submit quarterly estimates.

HB 1291 was approved by the House Insurance and Banking Subcommittee on

Public Records/Uterine Fibroid

Research Database – SB 864 by Sen. Barbara Sharief (D-Davie) and **HB 1515** by Rep. Lisa Dunkley (DLauderhill) provide an exemption from public records requirements for certain records and personal identifying information submitted to the Department of Health for inclusion in the uterine fibroid research database.

HB 1515 will be heard in the House Health Professions and Programs Subcommittee on Tuesday, 2/3.

Recovery of Damages for Medical Negligence Resulting in Death – SB 1700 by Sen. Erin Grall (R-Fort Pierce) and **HB 6003** by Rep. Dana Trabulsky (R-Fort Peirce) and Rep. Anna Eskamani (D-Orlando) delete a provision prohibiting the recovery of certain damages by specified parties related to the decedent in wrongful death proceedings.

Recruitment and Retention of Speech-language Pathologists – SB 574 by Sen. Shevrin Jones (D-Miami Gardens) and **HB 471** by Rep. Kevin Chambliss (D-Homestead) require the Florida Department of Education to develop and maintain a statewide strategic plan for the recruitment and retention of speech-language pathologists, specify components of the plan and strategies for recruitment and retention, and provide school district and charter school requirements relating to submitting specified data for the plan.

Respiratory Care Interstate Compact – SB 970 by Sen. Tom Wright (R-Port Orange) and **HB 1235** by Rep. Bill Conerly (R-Lakewood Ranch) enact the Respiratory Care Interstate Compact and require member states to meet certain requirements to join and participate in the compact. The bills provide criteria that a respiratory therapist licensee must satisfy to practice under the compact, authorize a certain licensing authority or government agency to establish the scope of practice for a licensee providing therapy in a remote state, authorize member states to participate with other member states in joint investigations of licensees under certain circumstances, and establish the Respiratory Care Interstate Compact

Thursday, 1/29.

Health and Human Services - HB 693 by Rep. Mike Redondo (R-Miami) known as the “Big Beautiful Healthcare Frontier Act” and part of the Florida House’s “Florida’s New Frontier in Healthcare” proposal, aligns state rules with new federal requirements for Medicaid, CHIP and SNAP, tightens eligibility and verification standards, and deregulates certain aspects of healthcare delivery — including removing certificate-of-need requirements for long-term care providers, extending independent practice rights for advanced-practice nurses, creating interstate licensure compacts for physician assistants and EMS professionals, and broadening the scope of dental hygienists. **HB 695**, also by Rep. Redondo, provides exemptions from public meetings requirements for the Interstate Commission for EMS Personnel Practice and the Physician Assistant Licensure Compact Commission.

HB 693 and HB 695 were approved by the House Health Care Facilities and Systems Subcommittee on Thursday, 1/29.

Health Care – SB 1756 by Sen. Clay Yarborough (R-Jacksonville) and **HB 917** by Rep. Jeff Holcomb (R-Springhill) make changes to vaccination policy in Florida statutes including in public health advisories and public health emergencies, require licensed health care practitioners to inform a parent or legal guardian of a minor child of risks, benefits, safety, and efficacy of specified vaccines, obtain signatures from parents or legal guardians before the administration of a vaccine, and provide a parent or legal guardian with the option of alternative vaccination schedules. The bills authorize pharmacists to provide ivermectin without prescription and immunity from civil and criminal liability and disciplinary action. Finally, the bills authorize parents to exempt their children from health examinations or from administration of immunizing agents based on conscience grounds, and require DOH to make publicly available, by posting on its Internet website, exemption forms for parents and legal guardians. In addition, HB 917 contains provisions that creates

Commission. **SB 972**, also by Sen. Wright, and **HB 1237**, by Rep. Conerly provide a public records exemption for the Commission.

HB 1235 and HB 1237 will be heard in the House Health Professions and Programs Subcommittee on Tuesday, 2/3.

Sickle Cell Disease Care Management and Treatment Continuing Education – SB 844 by Sen. Shevrin Jones (D-Miami Gardens) and **HB 353** by Rep. Felicia Robinson (D-Miami Gardens) revise requirements for a continuing education course on prescribing controlled substances, require physicians and certain nurses to complete a 2-hour continuing education course on sickle cell disease care management as part of the first licensure or certification renewal.

SB 844 will be heard in the Senate Health Policy Committee on Monday, 2/2.

Statewide Provider and Health Plan Claim Dispute Resolution Program – SB 1082 by Sen. Erin Grall (R-Fort Pierce) and **HB 1449** by Rep. Demi Busatta (R-Coral Gables) specify additional circumstances under which a disputed claim is not subject to review under the statewide provider and health plan claim dispute resolution program.

SB 1082 was approved by the Senate Health Policy Committee on Monday, 1/26.

Temporary Certificates for Practice in Areas of Critical Need – SB 1480 by Sen. Colleen Burton (R-Winter Haven) and **HB 809** by Rep. Benarroch (R-Naples) authorize a certificate holder to continue providing primary care services to patients in an area of critical need after the area has lost its designation if the practitioner maintains an active primary care treatment relationship in the area with at least one patient and satisfies all other applicable requirements.

SB 1480 was approved by the Senate Health Policy Committee on Monday, 1/26.

Use of Professional Nursing Titles - SB 36 by Sen. Barbara Sharief (D-Davie) and **HB 237** by Rep. Michelle Salzman (R-Cantonment) authorize certain nurses the title Doctor of Nursing Practice and the

liability for health care providers under the Florida Patient bill of rights and prohibits discrimination against a patient based on the patient's vaccination status.

SB 1756 was approved by the Senate Health Policy Committee on Monday, 1/26.

abbreviation D.N.P., and the title of Doctor of Philosophy and the abbreviation PhD. The bills also require doctoral degree holders to specify their profession when using the term "doctor."

HB 237 will be heard on the House Special Order Calendar on Wednesday, 2/4.

SB 36 will be heard in the Senate Health Policy Committee on Monday, 2/2.

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.

Florida Physical Therapy Association

800 N Calhoun St. #1A
Tallahassee, FL 32303
www.fpta.org

FOLLOW US



Florida Physical Therapy Association | 800 N Calhoun St #1A | Tallahassee, FL 32303 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!