

PBC Legislative Update



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Legislative Update — December 2017

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FEDERAL ISSUES

Tax Reform

By: Alcalde and Fay

Early last Saturday morning, the Senate passed its tax reform bill by a 51 to 49 vote, with Senator Bob Corker (R-TN) the only Republican to vote against the bill. Below is a side-by-side comparison of various provisions included in the House and Senate tax bills.

| Provision/Policy | House | Senate |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| SALT Deduction | Eliminates the deduction for state/local income and sales taxes paid, and caps the deduction for property taxes at \$10,000 | Eliminates the deduction for state/local income and sales taxes paid, and caps the deduction for property taxes at \$10,000 |
| Corporate Rates | Decreases rate from 35% to 20% | Decreases rate from 35% to 20%, but implementation is delayed until 2019 |
| Standard Deduction | \$12,200 for single filers, up from \$6,350, and \$24,400 for joint filers, up from \$12,700 (indexed to chained CPI) | \$12,000 for single filers, up from \$6,350, and \$24,000 for joint filers, up from \$12,700 (indexed to chained CPI) |
| Mortgage Interest Deduction | Reduces the cap on the deduction from \$1 million to \$500,000 and limits to primary residence | No changes to \$1 million cap on the deduction for primary and secondary residence |
| Individual Mandate | No changes | Repeals the individual mandate |
| Child Tax Credit | Increases credit from \$1,000 to \$1,600. Also creates a \$300 per-person credit for filers, their spouse, and non-child dependents. Phase-out threshold for joint filers starts at \$230,000. | Increases credit from \$1,000 to \$2,000 and expands eligibility from 17-year-olds to 18-year-olds. Phase-out threshold for joint filers starts at \$500,000. |
| Estate Tax | Double the exemption from \$5.5 million to \$11 million, phase out the tax after six years | Double the exemption from \$5.5 million to \$11 million |
| Private Activity Bonds | Interest on newly issued PABs would be subject to tax. | No changes |
| Tax-Exempt Municipal Bonds | Tax-exempt status is retained, except for those bonds used for stadiums | Tax-exempt status is retained |
| Advance Refunding Bonds | Eliminates the tax-exempt status of these bonds | Eliminates the tax-exempt status of these bonds |

Despite the Freedom Caucus briefly threatening to derail the tax bill earlier this week in an effort to secure spending cuts on the upcoming Continuing Resolution (further outlined below), the House and Senate are now set to begin conference negotiations on a final bill. Congressional leadership is still aiming to have a bill on the President's desk by Christmas, which they say will allow enough time for a conference committee to negotiate a final package that can pass both the House and Senate.

The House Republican Conferees are led by House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Kevin Brady (R-TX), joined by four Ways and Means members: Peter Roskam (R-IL), Devin Nunes (R-CA.), Diane Black (R-TN) and Kristi Noem (R-SD). The House conferees also include Rob Bishop (R-UT), Don Young (R-AK), Greg Walden (R-OR) and John Shimkus (R-IL), who were appointed to negotiate aspects of the bill outside of the jurisdiction of the Ways and Means Committee, including provisions related to drilling in Alaska and selling oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. The House Democratic Conferees are: Richard Neal (D-MA), Ranking Democrat on Ways and Means, Sander Levin (D-MI), Lloyd Doggett (D-TX), and from the Energy and Commerce Committee and Natural Resources Committees Raul Grijalva (D-AZ) and Kathy Castor (D-FL).

On Wednesday, Senate Majority Leader McConnell (R-KY) named the following eight Republican conferees: Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch (R-UT), Senate Budget Committee Chairman Mike Enzi (R-WY), Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Chairwoman Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Senate Commerce Committee Chairman John Thune (R-SD), Majority Whip John Cornyn (R-TX), Rob Portman (R-OH), Tim Scott (R-SC), and Pat Toomey (R-PA). Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) named the following Democratic Conferees: Finance Committee Ranking Member Ron Wyden (D-OR), Budget Committee Ranking Member Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Energy and Natural Resources Ranking Member Maria Cantwell (D-WA), Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Robert Menendez (D-NJ) and Tom Carper (D-DE).

Budget

By: Alcalde and Fay

Congress passed a continuing resolution (CR) on Thursday, narrowly avoiding a government shutdown, and the President signed the bill into law earlier today. The two-week stopgap Estate Tax Double the exemption from \$5.5 million to \$11 million, phase out the tax after six years Double the exemption from \$5.5 million to \$11 million Private Activity Bonds Interest on newly issued PABs would be subject to tax. No changes Tax-Exempt Municipal Bonds Tax-exempt status is retained, except for those bonds used for stadiums Tax-exempt status is retained Advance Refunding Bonds Eliminates the tax-exempt status of these bonds Eliminates the tax-exempt status of these bonds spending bill passed by a vote of 235 to 193 in the House and was approved by the Senate shortly thereafter in an 81 to 14 vote. The CR extends the funding of the government through December 22nd, allowing Congressional leadership additional time to negotiate a broader budget deal on FY 2018 (and potentially FY 2019) topline discretionary funding levels.

While negotiations are ongoing, Congress is expected to vote on another short-term before the current stopgap expires in two weeks to fund the government into January 2018. But securing a long-term spending agreement remains fraught. On Thursday, Congressional leadership went to the White House to discuss a budget deal with the President, which centered on Republicans seeking \$54 billion more for defense while Democrats are requesting an equal increase to non-defense discretionary spending. Any forthcoming budget agreement would be subject to a 60-vote threshold in the Senate,

thereby requiring bipartisan compromise. This provides Democrats with a potential point of leverage in negotiations, which they hope to parlay into a policy win on either health care, or far more likely, DACA. Congressional leadership remains confident that a budget deal will be reached before the current CR expires, and furthermore is aiming for a final omnibus spending agreement to be reached by the end of January 2018.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Program

By: Alcalde and Fay

The future of protections provided to individuals under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program (DACA) continues to be a key sticking point as many in Congress are seeking a resolution to this issue in the immediate future. The program remains in a state of uncertainty, as Republican leadership has expressed a desire to address DACA, but to do so separately from the budget negotiations as part of a larger legislative package around immigration that includes increased funding for border security, including funding for construction of a wall along the southern border. Democratic leadership wants to secure its continued existence in a deal around the FY18 budget. Earlier this week House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) said Democrats, "will not leave" for the Christmas holiday without a fix for young undocumented immigrants enrolled in the program. There are, however, members of the GOP caucus advocating for Congress to provide protections for the Dreamers. This week, thirty-four House Republicans signed a letter to Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) on Tuesday, in support of a permanent legislative fix for DACA recipients before the end of the year that "protects DACA recipients from deportation and gives them the opportunity to apply for a more secured status in our country as soon as possible."

Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Meeting

By: Becker & Poliakoff

The purpose of this meeting of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee was to markup H.R.4460, the Disaster Recovery and Reform Act, H.R.3814, No Human Trafficking on Our Roads Act, and H.R.3813, Combatting Human Trafficking in Commercial Vehicles Act.

The first bill to be marked up was the Disaster Recovery and Reform Act. Ranking Member DeFazio (D-OR) explained that this bill is meant to shift FEMA's focus more towards disaster mitigation projects. FEMA under this legislation would be required to transfer 6% of a disaster's cost into a pre disaster mitigation fund. FEMA would also be forced to publish details of each contract grant on their website within five days of it being awarded. The hope is that by increasing transparency, FEMA will no longer be able to award no bid contracts like in the case of Whitefish.

Representative Johnson (D-GA) also provided support for the amendment. He believes it is important to focus on resiliency when rebuilding after disasters. The Congressman articulated that it's a problem that buildings after disasters are often rebuilt to be in the same condition they were before the storm struck. Their condition must be improved if the government hopes to save money in the long term.

There were several amendments offered on this legislation. Congressman Maloney (D-NY) offered Amendment No. 2 which was approved by the Committee. It was formulated in response to FEMA awarding a contract to Bronze Star even though the company had no employees or experience in the industry. The Congressman's amendment would require a professional and independent review of FEMA's contractual process.

Congressman Huffman (D-CA) introduced Amendment No. 116. This would amend the Stafford Act to allow wildfires to be designated as a major disaster. Chairman Shuster (R-PA) opposed the amendment since he believes Congressman Westerman's (R-AR) wildfire legislation would be a better solution. Congressman DeFazio supported the amendment because he does not believe Congressman Waterman's wildfire legislation will have a chance to pass the Senate. The amendment was rejected 31-22.

A block of five amendments was proposed and approved. Congressman Gibbs (R-OH) introduced Amendment No. 15 which would allow recipients of hazard mitigation assistance to replace damaged utility poles with more resilient poles. Congressman Graves (R-LA) introduced Amendment Nos. 84, 85, and 88. Amendment 84 would allow relief organizations to be eligible to provide food to flood victims. Amendment 85 extends authorization for the arbitration panel, and Amendment 88 would provide for FEMA and the FHA to come together to develop the appropriate guidelines regarding the surface life impacts of inundated roads. Congressman DeFazio proposed Amendment No. 81 which would lift the cap on the amount of aid that can be extended to the U.S.'s four territories under the ER program for the next year. The Disaster Recover and Reform Act was approved with all the amendments and remanded to the House floor.

No amendments were offered for the No Trafficking on Our Roads Act and the Combatting Human Trafficking in Commercial Vehicles Act. Both pieces of legislation were approved by the Committee and reported favorably to the House. The No Trafficking on Our Roads Act would disqualify any individual from operating a commercial vehicle if they have used a vehicle in the past to commit a severe form of human trafficking. The Combatting Human Trafficking in Commercial Vehicles Act would direct the Secretary of Transportation to designate a human trafficker coordinator and create an advisory committee on the issue. It would furthermore give the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration flexibility to use funds to combat human trafficking.

STATE ISSUES

Florida Committee Week

By Ericks Consulting & County Staff

The Florida Legislature's second committee week has completed. The legislative process is ramping up, with a deadline of November 14th for local appropriations fast approaching.

Monday

- **Select Committee on Hurricane Response and Preparedness**

The House Select Committee on Hurricane Response and Preparedness went through 141 wide-ranging policy recommendations submitted by members for inclusion into a [Hurricane response package](#). Members were given an opportunity to ask questions and hear testimony on each recommendation. The Chair announced that the committee will have until Dec 15th to input any new items or ideas into the recommendations draft. The committee plans to then have a preliminary draft report by January 8th, so the committee can provide its full report of adopted recommendations within the first few weeks of Session.

The recommendations included local preemption for debris clean-up. Waste industry representatives testified that hurricanes do not respect local government boundaries, which complicates clean-up after a storm. They also asked for time restrictions on placing waste on the curbside, a designation of "second responders"

for waste workers to be allowed to return early to evacuated zones in order to begin the clean-up process, prioritized pick-up (such as waste first, recyclables second, bulk third), an extra hour be added to daily pick-up routines and different definitions of yard waste and storm debris, to make more clear what FEMA is responsible for.

- **Senate Criminal Justice**

SB 602 – Mandatory Minimum Sentences sponsored by Sen. Bracy (D-Ocoee) was heard on Monday in the Senate Criminal Justice Committee. SB 602 authorizes a court to depart from certain mandatory minimum terms of imprisonment for drug trafficking in various controlled substances, excluding opioids and opiates.

The departure is authorized if the court makes the following written findings:

- The violation only involved possession;
- The offender did not use or threaten violence or use a weapon during the commission of the offense;
- The offense did not result in a death or serious bodily injury of a person not a party to the offense; and
- A factor, consideration, or circumstance clearly demonstrates that imposing the mandatory minimum term of imprisonment would constitute or result in an injustice.

SB 602 was voted favorably out of committee (5-1), and moves to its next committee of reference, Senate Judiciary.

- **Senate Education**

SB 96 – Human Trafficking Education in Schools by Sen. Steube (R-Sarasota) was heard on Monday in the Senate Education Committee. SB 96 modifies the required health education in public schools to include information regarding the dangers and signs of human trafficking.

SB 96 was voted favorably out of committee (10-0), and moves to its next committee of reference, Senate Appropriations.

Additionally, SB 118 – Visitation of Schools by State Legislators sponsored by Sen. Hukill (R-Port Orange) was also heard in Senate Education. SB 118 would authorize a member of the State Legislature to visit any district school in his or her legislative District. SB 118 was voted favorably out of committee (10-0), and moves to its next committee of reference, Senate Rules.

Tuesday

- **Senate Community Affairs**

SJR 452 proposes an amendment to the Florida Constitution to extend from 2 to 3 years the “portability” period during which a Florida citizen has the ability to transfer up to \$500,000 of accumulated Save our Homes Cap Benefits from an existing or prior homestead property to a new homestead property. If adopted by the Legislature, the proposed amendment will be submitted to Florida’s electors for approval or rejection at the next general election in November 2018.

SB 454 is the implementing bill for SJR 452.

SB 454 – Limitations on Homestead Assessments by Sen. Brandes (R-St. Petersburg) was voted favorably out of committee (6-0) and moves to its next committee of reference, Appropriations Subcommittee on Finance and Tax.

SB 658 – Tourist Development Tax by Sen Brandes (R-St. Betersburg) is a bill that would expand use of Tourist Development Tax dollars to include work on “public facilities,” defined essentially as any capital project with a lifespan of 5+ years that is related to enhancing tourism. It also allows for related land acquisition. Projects would have to be recommended by local tourist development councils. The sponsor offered the example of hotels in his district that cannot enhance due to outdated water infrastructure and that infrastructure maintenance is necessary for attracting and retaining tourism population. The Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association (FRLA) and Florida Association of Destination Marketing Organizations, and Central Florida Hotel & Lodging Association opposed the bill out of concerns that it would take away money from promotion and be used for bonds instead. FRLA offered a recommendation of requiring majority votes of county commissioners to approve projects for funding and for a 5 year sunset. Multiple members who voted in favor of the bill expressed that they had concerns that the language was too broad and could result in funding going towards stadiums or create a slippery slope of losing promotional funding. The bill has two more committees of reference in the Senate. Its House companion has not yet been heard in its first committee.

SB 658 was voted favorably out of committee (6-0) and moves to its next committee of reference, Appropriations Subcommittee on Finance and Tax.

- **Senate Health**

SB 488 – Emergency Medical Services by Sen. Grimsley (R-Lake Placid) was heard on Tuesday in the Senate Health Committee. SB 488 exempts certain governmental entities that provide advanced life support non-transport services (ALSNS), as defined in the bill, from the requirement to obtain a certificate of public convenience and necessity (COPCN) as a condition of licensure to provide ALSNS. Governmental entities that maintain fire rescue infrastructure and provide first responders are eligible for this exemption.

SB 488 was voted favorably out of committee 7-0 and now moves to Senate Community Affairs.

- **House Ways and Means**

HB 317 – Local Tax Referenda by Rep. Ingoglia (R-Spring Hill) is a bill that would stipulate that local tax referenda must have 60% vote threshold to pass when the vote is during a special election. Under the bill, a majority of voters would be sufficient during a general election. The committee adopted an amendment that removed a requirement that 60% of a local governing board be needed to increase the millage. The bill has one more committees of reference in the House and three more committees of reference in the Senate.

HB 317 was voted favorably out of committee (18-0) and now moves to House Government Accountability Committee.

- **House Health and Human Services**

HB 517 – State Employees’ Prescription Drug Program by Rep. Magar (R-Hobe Sound) directs DMS to implement measures to manage the prescription drug formulary in the Prescription Drug Plan. The PBM must add drugs to the formulary and remove drugs from the formulary, as necessary, to implement cost-saving measures. However, any formulary management technique cannot restrict access to the most clinically appropriate, clinically effective, and lowest net-cost prescription drugs.

In addition, an excluded drug may be available for inclusion, and thereby covered by the Prescription Drug Plan, if a member's, or her or his dependent's, prescribing practitioner writes clearly on the prescription that the excluded drug is medically necessary. The bill is expected to result in a positive fiscal impact to DMS of approximately \$54 million annually, with roughly \$27 million in savings anticipated during the second half of FY 2018-19.

HB 517 was voted favorably out of committee (19-0) and now moves to the House Appropriations Committee.

- **Senate Judiciary**

SB 274 – Concealed Weapons and Firearms in Multiuse Facilities by Sen Stargel (R-Lakeland) provides that a person who is licensed to carry a concealed weapon or firearm is not prohibited from carrying a concealed weapon or firearm on private school property on which a religious institution is also located. As such, the bill creates an exception to the general statutory ban on the possession of a firearm or weapon on school property.

SB 274 reported unfavorably out of committee (4-6).

SB 134 – Concealed Weapons or Firearms by Sen. Steube (R-Sarasota) authorizes a person who has a concealed weapon or firearm license to carry a concealed weapon or firearm into a courthouse if he or she immediately notifies management or security personnel of the presence of the weapon or firearm. Then, the licensee must follow security or management personnel's instructions for removing, securing, and storing the item, or the licensee must surrender the item until the licensee is leaving the courthouse.

SB 134 reported unfavorably out of committee (4-6).

SB 148 – Weapons and Firearms by Sen. Steube (R-Sarasota) modifies the nature and consequences of a violation of the ban on openly carrying a firearm by a person who has a license to carry a concealed weapon or firearm. The bill also clarifies the manner in which a legally concealed firearm may briefly be displayed without violating the open-carry ban.

SB 148 reported unfavorably out of committee (5-5).

Wednesday

- **House Agriculture and Natural Resources**

The House Agriculture and Natural Resources committee heard a number of appropriations projects, these projects are priorities of Palm Beach County:

- **HB 2179 - Palm Beach County Lake Worth Lagoon Monitoring and Administration** by Rep. Hager (R-Boca Raton) provides \$250,000 to Lake Worth Lagoon Monitoring and Administration. This moved favorably out of committee (14-0) and moves to Appropriations Committee
- **HB 2183 – Hypoluxo Septic to Sewer** by Rep. Hager (R-Boca Raton) provides \$333,660 to fund the Hypoluxo Septic to Sewer. This moved favorably out of committee (14-0) and moves to Appropriations Committee
- **HB 2193 J.W. Corbett Levee Construction Phase II** by Rep. Roth (R-Palm Beach Gardens) provides \$3,500,000 to fund the J.W. Corbett Levee Construction Phase II. This moved favorably out of committee (14-0) and moves to Appropriations Committee

- **HB 2277 Palm Beach Zoo and Conservation Society Water Quality and Recreation** by Rep. Silvers (D-West Palm Beach) provides \$250,000 to fund Palm Beach Zoo and Conservation Society Water Quality and Recreation. This moved favorably out of committee (14-0) and moves to Appropriations Committee

- **House Criminal Justice**

HB 471 – Unmanned Aircraft by Rep. Yarborough (R-Jacksonville) prohibits drone operation over, in contact with, or near a “fixed-site facility,” defined as:

- A state correctional institution,
- A secure detention center or facility, a high-risk residential facility, or a maximum-risk residential facility, or
- A county detention facility

HB 471 reported favorably out of committee (11-0), and moves to the House Justice Appropriations Subcommittee.

HB 491 – Theft by Rep. Roth (R-Palm Beach Gardens) extends the mandatory \$10,000 fine to theft of commercially farmed animals and bee colonies. The bill does not appear to have a fiscal impact on local governments. The bill has an insignificant positive fiscal impact on state government.

HB 491 reported favorably out of committee (9-0), and moves to the House Judiciary Committee.

- **House Justice Appropriations**

HB 57 - Appointment of Attorneys for Dependent Children with Special Needs by Rep. White (R-Pensacola) and Rep. Williams (D-Fort Lauderdale) requires the Justice Administrative Commission (JAC) to provide a pro bono attorney who represents a dependent child with special needs the same funding for expert witnesses, depositions, and other due process costs of litigation as a paid appointed attorney, subject to appropriations.

HB 57 reported favorably out of committee (12-0), and moves to the House Judiciary Committee

HB 167 – Victims of Human Trafficking by Rep. Spano (R-Riverview) creates a new civil cause of action for a victim of human trafficking that may be brought against a trafficker or a “facilitator” of human trafficking. The bill defines a facilitator as a person who knowingly, or in willful blindness, assists or provides goods or services to a trafficker that assist or enable the trafficker to carry out human trafficking. There is no statute of limitations for actions brought under the new civil cause of action.

HB 167 reported favorably out of committee (12-0), and moves to the House Judiciary committee

HB 169 – Rep. Spano (R-Riverview) creates the Trust Fund for Victims of Human Trafficking and Prevention in the Department of Law Enforcement. The trust fund will consist of funds obtained from civil actions brought by victims of human trafficking, from penalties imposed by the courts, and funds received from any other sources including legislative appropriations.

HB 169 reported favorably out of committee (12-0), and moves to the House Judiciary committee

- **House Natural Resources and Public Lands**

HB 405 – Linear Facilities – by Rep. Williamson (R-Pace) and Rep. Payne (R-Palatka) would change the definition of development in relation to transmission lines. Local governments are somewhat split on the bill depending on whether or not they run a utility that expands into other boundaries or if they have utilities crossing into their boundaries, which the bill preempts. The bill is backed by utility companies. The bill has one more committee of reference in the House. The Senate bill was temporarily postponed this week in its final committee of reference.

HB 405 reported favorably out of committee (12-1), and moves to the House Commerce Committee

- **House Children and Families**

HB 721 – Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services – by Rep. Silvers (D-West Palm Beach) requires county jails to continue to administer psychotropic medications as were prescribed at mental health treatment facilities upon a facility client’s discharge and return to the county jail, unless the jail physician determines that there is a compelling medical reason to change or discontinue the medication for the health and safety of the individual.

HB 721 reported favorably out of committee (13-0), and moves to the House Health Care Appropriations Subcommittee.

Thursday

- **Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Criminal and Civil Justice**

SB 152 – Sale of Firearms by Sen. Steube (R-Sarasota) requires the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) to provide additional payment options to licensed firearm dealers, importers, and manufacturers when paying for criminal history record checks. Currently, the only payment methods authorized by administrative rule are personal checks, money orders, or cashier’s checks. The bill requires FDLE to establish, by rule, procedures that permit electronic payment or transmittal by debit cards, credit cards, or electronic funds transfers, but the payment methods are not limited solely to those options.

SB 152 reported favorably out of committee (6-0), and moves to the Senate Appropriations committee.

SB 222 – Guardian Ad Litem Direct-support Organization by Sen. Bean (R-Jacksonville) removes the scheduled repeal date for the law governing the Guardian ad Litem Foundation. The Foundation serves as a direct-support organization for the Statewide Guardian ad Litem Office

SB 222 reported favorably out of committee (6-0), and moves to the Senate Appropriations committee.

SB 484 – Sentencing by Sen. Bradley (R-Orange Park) amends s. 921.188, F.S., authorizing a court to sentence an offender to a term of imprisonment in the county jail, in the county where the offense was committed, for up to twenty-four months. A court can order such a sentence for offenses committed on or after July 1, 2018, if the offender’s:

- Total sentence points score is more than 44 points, but less than or equal to 60 points;
- Primary offense is not a forcible felony, unless the primary offense is a third-degree felony under ch. 810, F.S. (burglary and trespass); and

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- Primary offense is not subject to a minimum mandatory sentence of more than 24 months.

SB 484 reported favorably out of committee (6-0), and moves to the Senate Appropriations committee.

- **Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on the Environment and Natural Resources**

SB 204 – Land Acquisition Trust Fund by Sen. Bradley (R-Orange Park) increases the annual appropriation from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund (LATF) for spring restoration, protection, and management projects from \$50 million to \$75 million. Additionally, the bill requires \$50 million to be appropriated from the LATF to the St. Johns River Water Management District for projects dedicated to the restoration of the St. Johns River and its tributaries or the Keystone Heights Lake Region.

SB 204 reported favorably out of committee (6-0), and moves to the Senate Appropriations committee.

SB 370 – Land Acquisition Trust Fund by Sen. Bradley (R-Orange Park) creates a statutory distribution from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund requiring \$100 million to be appropriated annually to the Florida Forever Trust Fund. Funds appropriated into the Florida Forever Trust Fund are required to be distributed in accordance with the Florida Forever Act.

SB 370 reported favorably out of committee (6-0), and moves to the Senate Appropriations committee.

SB 232 – Coral Reefs – by Sen. Book (D-Plantation) creates the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Ecosystem Conservation Area. The conservation area consists of the sovereignty submerged lands and state waters offshore of Broward, Martin, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach Counties from the St. Lucie Inlet to the northern boundary of the Biscayne National Park.

SB 232 reported favorably out of committee (6-0), and moves to the Senate Appropriations committee.

