



# Palm Beach County State Legislative Update

## Department of Legislative Affairs

### Legislative Session Week 8

February 26 - March 1, 2024

#### Budget Conference Update

Throughout the week the House and Senate held several budget conference committee meetings to work out the details of Florida's FY 24-25 spending plan. Many budget matters were negotiated and agreed upon at the subcommittee level, however, on Thursday all outstanding items to reconcile were bumped up to the chamber's budget chairs to continue to work through. Member projects in the health care budget, water projects, and a potential cost of living adjustment for FRS members will all be decided by the chamber chairs or presiding officers over the next few days. A final budget agreement must be reached by March 5 to adhere to the constitutionally mandated 72-hour "cooling off" period if the Legislature is to end its session on time on March 8.

Included below is a list of the present status of the appropriations requests submitted by Palm Beach County. To view the live spreadsheet with the full list of appropriation projects sponsored by members of the Palm Beach County Legislative Delegation, click [HERE](#).

<i>County Road 880 Reconstruction Phase 1</i>	<i>\$2,000,000</i>
<i>Central Palm Beach County Historic Infrastructure Improvements</i>	<i>\$1,000,000</i>
<i>Peanut Island Historic Restoration</i>	<i>\$1,000,000</i>
<i>Green Cay Phase II</i>	<i>\$500,000</i>
<i>Palm Beach County Fire Rescue Water Vessels</i>	<i>\$385,000</i>
<i>Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative</i>	<i>\$270,500</i>
<i>Westgate CRA Enhanced Lighting &amp; Safety Initiative</i>	<i>\$250,000</i>
<i>Loxahatchee River Preservation Initiative</i>	<i>\$90,000</i>
<i>Senior Art, Education, &amp; Recreation Programs</i>	<i>\$0</i>
<i>Balanced Community Justice Project</i>	<i>\$0</i>
<i>Fresh Food Boxes &amp; Early Bird Elder Meals Pilot Program</i>	<i>\$0</i>
<i>Palm Beach Lakes Boulevard Bridge Widening &amp; Reconstruction</i>	<i>\$0</i>
<i>RESTORE Re-entry Program</i>	<i>\$0</i>
<i>Discounted Bus Passes Program</i>	<i>\$0</i>
<i>West Delray Regional Park All Abilities Nature-based Playground</i>	<i>\$0</i>

## **Governor's Activity**

During a legislative session, the Governor has seven consecutive days upon receiving a bill to sign, veto, or allow the legislation to become law without signature.

One of House Speaker Paul Renner's top legislative priorities, **CS/HB 1**, was presented to the Governor last week after clearing both the House and Senate. The bill prohibits minors under the age of 16 from having social media accounts, requires social media platforms to perform reasonable age verification before permitting access to users, and requires websites that publish harmful materials to minors to perform age verification to prevent minor access. Since the bill's passage, some parental rights groups have advocated for the Governor to veto the bill. Critics have cited court decisions blocking similar social media laws in other states and argue that parents should be able to decide whether their children should be permitted to use social media, which was not provided for in the bill. Ultimately, the Governor chose to veto the bill on Friday but explained that he anticipated the Legislature would produce a "different, superior bill" to send him in the coming days. **CS/CS/HB 3** was placed on the Senate Special Order Calendar for Monday and a late-filed delete everything amendment was filed to the bill just moments after the Governor's veto. The amendment mirrors CS/HB 1 but provides for a parental permission exception for Floridians who are 14 and 15 years old. The added exception comes with the caveat that, if a court rules against it individually, the rest of the legislation will be allowed to stand, potentially paving the way for an all-out ban for those younger than 16 years old. CS/CS/HB 3 is expected to pass and will likely be signed once it is presented to Governor DeSantis.

Earlier this week, the Legislature unanimously passed **CS/HB 117** to allow for the public release of grand jury documents related to the 2006 investigation into Jeffrey Epstein. Governor DeSantis signed the bill in Palm Beach on Thursday, just one day after it was presented to him.

## **Bills Passed This Week**

Listed below are several bills of interest that passed the Legislature this week and are now ready to be presented to the Governor. The House and Senate have one more week to pass legislation before session is set to adjourn.

**HB 187, Antisemitism:** Defines the term "antisemitism" in Florida law based on the working definition developed and adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance.

**CS/CS/CS/HB 275, Offenses Involving Critical Infrastructure:** Defines the term "critical infrastructure," to include water treatment facilities, pump stations, wastewater treatment plants, water intake structures, and airports. The bill also provides criminal penalties for individuals who trespass on, tamper with, or interrupt the function of critical infrastructure.

**CS/CS/CS/HB 149, Continuing Contracts:** Raises the maximum construction cost for projects under a governmental continuing contract from \$4 million to \$7.5 million and mandates annual adjustments based on the Consumer Price Index.

**CS/CS/SB 328, Affordable Housing:** Makes several revisions to various provisions of the Live Local Act (2023). As it pertains to the act's preemption of certain local zoning and land use regulations to expedite the development of affordable housing, the bill: preempts a local government's floor area ratio for qualifying developments; modifies the height preemption provisions to address situations where a qualifying development is adjacent to single family parcels; exempts airport impacted areas; clarifies that a local government's "currently allowed" density, height, and floor area ratio does not include any bonuses, variances, or other special exceptions provided in their regulations; modifies parking reduction requirements for qualifying developments located near certain transportation facilities and; prohibits qualifying developments within one-quarter mile of a military installation from utilizing the act's administrative approval process. The bill also appropriates \$100 million for the Florida Hometown Hero Program and makes specific changes to the act's ad valorem tax exemptions.

**CS/CS/CS/HB 1065, Substance Abuse Treatment:** Amends the definition of "certified recovery residence" (CRR) to include standards regarding the level of care provided at those residences. The bill prohibits a recovery residence from denying an individual access to the residence solely on the basis the individual has been prescribed federally approved medication for the treatment of substance use disorders, prohibits a local ordinance from regulating the frequency or duration of a resident's stay, and authorizes an increase in the number of residents in a CRR actively managed at any given time from 100 to 150 residents if certain requirements are met.

**CS/HB 1415, Peer Support for First Responders:** Expands peer support for first responders by including more professions under the definition to include 911 public safety telecommunicators, correctional officers, and correctional probation officers.