

THE FLORIDA SENATE
2023-C SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION PASSED
Committee on Fiscal Policy

CS/HB 1-C — Disaster Relief

by Appropriations Committee and Rep. Shoaf and others (SB 2-C by Senator Simon)

To mitigate the impacts of recent disasters affecting the state, the bill does the following:

- Provides that certain agricultural equipment that was unable to be used for 60 days due to Hurricane Idalia would be assessed at salvage value on the 2024 property tax roll.
- Grants refunds of sales tax paid on fencing materials used to repair or replace farm fences, on lands classified as agriculture, that were damaged due to Hurricane Idalia.
- Grants refunds of sales tax paid on building materials used to repair or replace nonresidential farm buildings damaged as a result of Hurricane Idalia.
- Grants refunds of motor fuel taxes used for agricultural shipments and debris removal after Hurricane Idalia.
- Funds applications current as of October 15 for the My Safe Florida Home Program and directs the Department of Financial Services to stop taking applications when available funding is exhausted.
- Authorizes the Division of Emergency Management (DEM) to enter into agreements with eligible local governments impacted by Hurricane Idalia to provide funds for the non-federal share of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reimbursement program.
- Authorizes the Department of Commerce to extend loans made under the Local Government Emergency Revolving Bridge Loan Program from 24 months to 5 years.
- Directs the Florida Housing Finance Corporation to use appropriated funds for the Hurricane Housing Recovery Program within eligible counties impacted by Hurricane Idalia and provides the activities for which funds may be used.
- Directs the DEM to provide grants and loans for hurricane repair and recovery projects within certain counties designated under the FEMA disaster declaration for Hurricane Idalia.
- Directs the Department of Transportation to fund transportation projects within certain counties designated under the FEMA disaster declaration for Hurricane Idalia.
- Extends the prohibition on burdensome or restrictive local building processes enacted in the 2023 session in response to Hurricanes Ian and Nicole to October 1, 2026, and specifies that such restrictions apply to certain counties and the municipalities therein.
- Directs the DEM to provide planning and design grants to fiscally constrained counties designated in the FEMA disaster declaration for Hurricane Idalia for new facilities for emergency operations.
- Authorizes the Department of Commerce to award grants under the Rural Infrastructure Fund to fiscally constrained counties impacted by Hurricane Idalia.
- Creates the Agriculture and Aquaculture Producers Natural Disaster Recovery Loan Program within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) to provide low interest or interest-free loans to agricultural producers that have experienced damage or destruction from a declared natural disaster.
- Authorizes the DACS to award cost sharing grants to assist timber landowners with site preparation and tree replanting in counties impacted by Hurricane Idalia.

This summary is provided for information only and does not represent the opinion of any Senator, Senate Officer, or Senate Office.

For the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the bill appropriates:

- \$176,170,000 in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund to the Department of Financial Services to provide mitigation grants under the My Florida Safe Home Program for applications submitted on or before October 15, 2023, and \$5,280,100 in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund for administrative costs for implementation of the mitigation grants.
- \$30 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund to the DEM to provide the required local share of matching funds for FEMA Public Assistance grants related to Hurricane Idalia.
- \$25 million in nonrecurring funds from the Local Government Housing Trust Fund to the Florida Housing Finance Corporation for hurricane recovery purposes related to Hurricane Idalia.
- \$50 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund to the DEM to provide grants or loans for hurricane repair and recovery projects related to Hurricane Idalia.
- \$10 million in nonrecurring funds from the State Transportation Trust Fund to the Department of Transportation for transportation projects under the Small County Outreach Program for projects related to related to Hurricane Idalia.
- \$3 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund to the DEM to provide planning and design grants for new emergency operations facilities in fiscally constrained counties impacted by Hurricane Idalia.
- \$5 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund to the Department of Commerce for the Rural Infrastructure Fund for projects in fiscally constrained counties impacted by Hurricane Idalia.
- \$75 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Inspection Trust Fund within the DACS as fixed capital outlay for the Agriculture and Aquaculture Producers Natural Disaster Recovery Loan Program after the sum is transferred from the General Revenue Fund into the General Inspection Trust Fund.
- \$37.5 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund to the DACS as fixed capital outlay to administer a cost-sharing grant program to assist timber landowners in eligible counties impacted by Hurricane Idalia.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect upon becoming law.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 110-0

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HB 3-C — Family Empowerment Scholarship Program

by Rep. Tomkow and others (SB 4-C by Senator Collins)

The bill modifies the number of students served under the Family Empowerment Scholarship Program for students with disabilities (FES-UA). The bill revises the maximum number of students served for the 2023-2024 school year to be the number determined by the Department of Education and the scholarship funding organizations. Beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, the maximum number of students will increase annually by three percent of the exceptional student education full-time equivalent student membership, not including gifted students.

The change made by the bill does not require an additional appropriation as any additional students will be absorbed by the current Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) appropriation for the 2023-2024 fiscal year, which includes the \$350 million appropriated for the Educational Enrollment Stabilization Program created pursuant to s. 1011.62(18), F.S.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect upon becoming law.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 111-0

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CS/HB 7-C — Security Grants

by Appropriations Committee and Rep. Fine and others (SB 6-C by Senator Calatayud)

In 2023, the Florida Legislature created the Nonprofit Security Grant Program within the Division of Emergency Management (division). The program’s purpose is to award grants to increase security and safety for nonprofit entities at high risk for violent attacks and hate crimes.

The bill amends provisions governing the program to:

- Clarify that schools and museums can apply for a grant;
- Clarify that grants can be used to purchase and install materials for door hardening;
- Remove the prohibition on receiving both a state and federal grant;
- Direct the division to establish eligibility criteria based on the federal grant program;
- Prioritize applications for houses of worship or facilities that are frequented by children or students on a daily basis;
- Require the division to provide an annual list each June 1 to the Legislature of grants awarded; and
- Require the division to adopt rules to administer the program by December 31, 2023, and authorize the division to adopt emergency rules to implement the program.

The bill appropriates \$20 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund to the division for the purpose of implementing the program.

The bill appropriates \$15 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund to the Department of Education as fixed capital outlay to provide grants to full-time Jewish day schools and Jewish preschools for hardening security measures.

The bill appropriates \$10 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund to the Department of Education to provide grants to full-time Jewish day schools and Jewish preschools for nonhardening security measures, such as hiring security personnel or providing training.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor’s signature, these provisions take effect upon becoming law.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 109-0

Committee on Rules

HB 5-C — Scrutinized Companies

by Rep. Snyder and others (SB 10-C by Senator Avila)

The bill amends the Protecting Florida’s Investments Act to expand the definition of a “scrutinized company” to include those companies that do business with the government of Iran in the energy, petrochemical, financial, construction, manufacturing, textile, mining, metals, shipping, shipbuilding, and port sectors, in addition to the current sectors of oil-related activities and mineral-extraction activities. A new scrutinized company must have, on or after January 10, 2024, either: (1) at least 10 percent of its revenues or assets linked to Iran and involved in the scrutinized industry sectors, or (2) an investment that equals \$20 million or more within any 12-month period that involves one of the scrutinized industry sectors.

To conform to the expansion of the definition of a “scrutinized company,” the bill renames the “Scrutinized Companies with Activities in the Iran Petroleum Energy Sector List” to the “Scrutinized Companies with Activities in Iran Terrorism Sectors List.”

The State Board of Administration must divest its current holdings in the Florida Retirement System’s portfolio from these scrutinized companies and may not make new investments in them.

Additionally, the bill applies current statutory contracting restrictions and requirements on scrutinized companies to the scrutinized companies with activities in Iran terrorism sectors. Specifically, the scrutinized companies are ineligible to bid on, submit a proposal for, or enter into or renew a contract with an agency or local governmental entity for goods or services of \$1 million or more if the company is on the Iran Terrorism Sectors List.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor’s signature, these provisions take effect upon becoming law.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 100-2