

NEWSLETTER

Session Recap-The First 60 Days

March 4-May 3, 2025



THE NEWS

The 2025 Florida legislative session addressed a wide range of priorities, with lawmakers advancing key measures on public safety, criminal justice, environmental protection, and healthcare. Major legislation included stronger penalties for sexual offenses and human trafficking, new boating safety requirements under 'Lucy's Law,' and restrictions on new waste management facilities. The session also tackled cyberharassment, expanded protections for vulnerable adults, and made changes to corrections policies and offender registration.

This year's session was extended beyond its scheduled end, and when lawmakers return, the focus will shift to finalizing the state budget and key appropriations. This means that we will no longer discuss policy. The Legislative session has been extended till June 6, 2025. By this date, the Legislature should have a budget for 2026.

SENATE AND HOUSE BILLS THAT PASSED

SB 28 (2025) – Relief of Darline Angervil and J.R.

This bill provides a \$6.1 million appropriation to compensate Darline Angervil and her minor child, J.R., for injuries and damages resulting from the negligence of the South Broward Hospital District.

SB 30 (2025) – Relief of the Estate of M.N.

This legislation authorizes a \$2.5 million payment to the estate of M.N. for injuries and subsequent death caused by the negligence of the Broward County Sheriff's Office.

SB 68 (2025) – Health Facilities

The bill expands the definition of "health facility" to include certain nonprofit entities and associations. It also grants health facilities authorities the power to issue specific loans and execute related agreements.

SB 106 (2025) – Exploitation of Vulnerable Adults

This bill enhances protections for vulnerable adults against exploitation by introducing provisions for substitute service on unascertainable respondents and requiring courts to provide specified service orders. It also mandates holding disputed transfers of funds or property for a specified period.

SB 628/HB 289 (2025) – Boating Safety ("Lucy's Law")

Known as "Lucy's Law," this legislation revises penalties for vessel collisions, accidents, and reckless operation, and mandates boater safety education for certain offenders.

SB 716/HB 1455 (2025) – Sexual Offenses by Repeat Offenders

The bill establishes mandatory minimum prison sentences for specified sexual offenses committed by registered sexual offenders or predators. It outlines sentencing requirements to enhance penalties for repeat sexual offenders.

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HB 481 (2025) – Anchoring Limitation Areas

This legislation empowers local governments to establish stricter anchoring zones in heavily impacted regions to address congestion, environmental damage, and safety risks. It also designates specific sections of Biscayne Bay in Miami-Dade County as grandfathered-in anchoring limitation areas.

SB 878 (2025) – Probation for Misdemeanor Offenses

The bill increases probationary periods for certain misdemeanor offenses involving controlled or chemical substances. It aims to enhance supervision and rehabilitation efforts for such offenders.

SB 1084/HB 1451 (2025) – Sexual Cyberharassment

This legislation provides criminal penalties for individuals who engage in sexual cyberharassment with specified intent or purpose. It also allows victims to initiate civil actions to recover punitive damages and sets time limitations for prosecution.

SB 1604/HB 903 (2025) – Corrections

The bill revises provisions related to the deferral of prepayment of court costs and fees for indigent prisoners challenging prison disciplinary reports. It also imposes a one-year limitation period for certain actions concerning prison conditions and requires exhaustion of administrative remedies before such actions can be brought.

SB 1654/HB 1351 (2025) – Registration of Sexual Predators and Offenders

This legislation revises reporting and verification requirements for sexual predators and offenders, including the implementation of an online reporting system. It aims to enhance the monitoring and management of registered individuals.

SB 1804 (2025) – Capital Human Trafficking of Vulnerable Persons

The bill creates a new crime of capital human trafficking for sexual exploitation of vulnerable persons, including children under 12 and mentally incapacitated individuals. Convicted offenders are designated as sexual predators and are subject to severe penalties, including mandatory HIV testing.

SB 1822/HB 1609 (2025) – Waste Management

This legislation prohibits local governments and the Department of Environmental Protection from issuing construction permits for certain new solid waste disposal or waste-to-energy facilities in specified areas. It aims to regulate the establishment of such facilities to protect environmental and public health.

SB 1828/HB 1447 (2025) – Trespass

The bill provides enhanced criminal penalties for trespassing on properties maintained or secured by law enforcement agencies when specified notice is posted. It also prohibits unauthorized entry or remaining in venues during certain ticketed events.

SB 1838/HB 1049 (2025) – Tampering with Court Officials

This legislation establishes criminal penalties for individuals who knowingly threaten, harass, or retaliate against court officials with the intent to intimidate or coerce them. It aims to protect the integrity of the judicial process and ensure the safety of court personnel.



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The Past 60 Days

Over the course of session, we've had the privilege of meeting with more than 90 advocacy groups, local governments, and state agencies to discuss issues affecting our communities. This included meetings with the cities of Sanibel, Cape Coral, Fort Myers, and Bonita Springs; state agencies like the Department of Corrections, Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Health, Department of Commerce, Department of Elder Affairs, Department of Juvenile Justice, Department of Veterans' Affairs, the Commission on Offender Review, and the Florida Highway Patrol; as well as the South Florida Water Management District. We also engaged with sheriffs from across the state, working closely with the Orange County, Miami-Dade, and Polk County sheriffs. Beyond agency meetings, we were excited to welcome students from Bishop Verot High School, Lee County YMCA youth, and several young women from our local PACE Center who visited the Capitol to learn more about state government."



Lee County school board members and Superintendent Dr. Carlin.



Meeting with Firefighters from around the state. It was a special privilege to welcome Lee County firefighters to the State Capitol.



My staff met with the Sanibel Captiva Conservation Foundation on Everglades Action Day.



Meeting with Sheriff Rosie from Miami-Dade.

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Human Trafficking

This session, several key bills addressed human trafficking, including SB 1804 and SB 1880, which strengthened penalties for traffickers, expanded protections for victims, and created new tools to combat this serious crime and safeguard vulnerable individuals in our state.

This Senate Resolution (SB 1880) encourages financial institutions in Florida to actively participate in combating human trafficking. It commends banks, credit unions, and other financial entities that commit to enhancing training, community partnerships, and investments to support law enforcement efforts against human trafficking. The resolution also formally recognizes the organization Financial Institutions Against Human Trafficking (F.I.G.H.T.) for its dedication to raising awareness within the financial sector and fostering collaborations to disrupt trafficking networks while supporting survivors.



After SB 1880 was adopted into the Senate Journal, members of F.I.G.H.T. joined me to take a photo to commemorate this event.



Committee Meetings and Bill Presentations

Throughout the first 60 days of session, we actively participated in 55 committee meetings and tracked 59 bill presentations, ensuring we remained engaged and informed at every stage of the legislative process. We've continued working to make Florida a safer place for all by supporting legislation that upholds public safety, strengthens protections for vulnerable populations, and reinforces our commitment to being a law-and-order state.

With Sincere Appreciation

I want to express my heartfelt thanks to everyone who traveled to Tallahassee to advocate for their organizations and share their voices this session. I am especially grateful to my dedicated staff, Nick Roch and Olivia Myers, and to our Legislative Intern, Dominique Pierre, for their hard work and commitment throughout the legislative process. Most of all, I want to thank my family for their unwavering support and encouragement every step of the way.

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