

**The Florida Senate**  
**BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

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Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Appropriations

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BILL: HB 5503, 1st Eng.

INTRODUCER: Transportation & Economic Development Budget Subcommittee and Representative Griffiths, Jr.

SUBJECT: Trust Funds/Re-creation/Emergency Preparedness and Response Fund/EOG

DATE: February 27, 2026      REVISED: 3/3/26 \_\_\_\_\_

| ANALYST         | STAFF DIRECTOR  | REFERENCE | ACTION                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------|------------------------|
| 1. <u>Urban</u> | <u>Sadberry</u> | <u>AP</u> | <u>Fav/1 amendment</u> |

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**Please see Section IX. for Additional Information:**

AMENDMENTS - Significant amendments were recommended

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**I. Summary:**

HB 5503 recreates the Emergency Preparedness and Response Fund (EPRF) within the Executive Office of the Governor. The bill extends the termination of the EPRF to July 1, 2030. The bill provides that the act operates retroactively to February 17, 2026.

The bill has no impact on state expenditures or revenues. See Section V., Fiscal Impact Statement.

The bill takes effect upon becoming a law

**II. Present Situation:**

**Funding available for a declared state of emergency**

The Governor is responsible for meeting the dangers presented to this state and its people by emergencies.<sup>1</sup> In the event of an emergency or threat of one, the Governor may declare a state of emergency by executive order or proclamation.<sup>2</sup> The state of emergency continues until the Governor finds that the threat or danger has been dealt with or to the extent that the emergency conditions no longer exist; however, no state of emergency may continue for longer than 60 days

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<sup>1</sup> Section 252.36(1)(a), F.S.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

unless renewed by the Governor.<sup>3</sup> The Legislature, at any time by concurrent resolution may terminate a state of emergency.<sup>4</sup>

The policy of the state is that funds to meet emergencies must always be available.<sup>5</sup> Prior to the creation of the EPRF the Governor was authorized to expend funds appropriated for other purposes, unappropriated surplus funds, or funds from the Budget Stabilization Fund.<sup>6</sup> The Legislature created the EPRF during the 2022 Regular Session<sup>7</sup> to serve as the depository for moneys specifically transferred or appropriated to the fund as the primary source of funding for the Governor to prepare or respond to a disaster declared by the Governor as a state of emergency.<sup>8</sup>

The Governor is authorized to expend funds specifically appropriated to state and local agencies for disaster relief and response.<sup>9</sup> Then, if demand upon these funds is unreasonably great, the Governor is authorized to expend funds available in the EPRF.<sup>10</sup> If the Governor determines additional funds are needed he may request the Legislative Budget Commission (LBC) to transfer additional money into the EPRF.<sup>11</sup> The LBC is authorized to convene to transfer or appropriate unappropriated surplus funds to the EPRF.<sup>12</sup> Since the creation of the EPRF, the Legislature has transferred a total of \$4.77 billion to the fund.

| <b>Legislative Transfers</b>         |                      |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b><u>Timing</u></b>                 | <b><u>Amount</u></b> |
| 2022 Regular Session <sup>13</sup>   | \$500 million        |
| October 2022 <sup>14</sup>           | \$360 million        |
| 2023-B Special Session <sup>15</sup> | \$650 million        |
| 2023 Regular Session <sup>16</sup>   | \$910 million        |
| 2023 Regular Session <sup>17</sup>   | \$500 million        |
| 2024 Regular Session <sup>18</sup>   | \$500 million        |
| June 2025 <sup>19</sup>              | \$850 million        |

<sup>3</sup> Section 252.36(2), F.S.; for a listing of Agency Emergency Orders, see Division of Administration Hearings, *Florida Agency Emergency Orders Search*, <https://www.doah.state.fl.us/FLAEO/> (last visited Feb. 25, 2026).

<sup>4</sup> Section 252.36(3), F.S.

<sup>5</sup> Section 252.37(1), F.S.

<sup>6</sup> Section 252.37(2), F.S. (2021).

<sup>7</sup> Chapter 2022-2, Laws of Fla.

<sup>8</sup> Section 252.3711, F.S.

<sup>9</sup> Section 252.37(2), F.S.,

<sup>10</sup> *Id.*

<sup>11</sup> *Id.*

<sup>12</sup> Section 11.90(8), F.S.

<sup>13</sup> Chapter 2022-1, s. 3, Laws of Fla.

<sup>14</sup> Legislative Budget Commission, Meeting Packet (Oct., 12, 2022), *EOG Number: B2023-0197*, available at <https://www.leg.state.fl.us/Data/Committees/Joint/JLBC/Meetings/Packets/101222.pdf> (last visited Feb. 3, 2026).

<sup>15</sup> Chapter 2023-1, s. 4, Laws of Fla.

<sup>16</sup> Chapter 2023-239, s. 228, Laws of Fla.

<sup>17</sup> Section 2023-239, s. 245, Laws of Fla.

<sup>18</sup> Chapter 2024-231, s. 289, Laws of Fla.

<sup>19</sup> Legislative Budget Commission, Meeting Packet (June, 4, 2025), *EOG Number: B2025-0681*, available at <https://www.leg.state.fl.us/Data/Committees/Joint/JLBC/Meetings/Packets/060425.pdf> (last visited Feb. 3, 2026).

|                             |                       |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| December 2025 <sup>20</sup> | \$500 million         |
| <b><u>Total:</u></b>        | <b>\$4.77 billion</b> |

**Trust Funds**

Article III, s. 19(f) of the Florida Constitution requires the termination of a trust fund within four years of the effective date of the act authorizing the initial creation of the trust fund, unless the trust fund is exempted from termination by the Florida Constitution.<sup>21</sup> The EPFR took effect upon becoming a law, which was on February 17, 2022. Therefore, in accordance with s. 19(f)(2), Art. III of the Florida Constitution, the EPRF terminated February 17, 2026.

**III. Effect of Proposed Changes:**

The bill recreates the Emergency Preparedness and Response Fund (EPRF) within the Executive Office of the Governor. The bill clarifies that the EPRF is established for use as a depository for *state* moneys specifically transferred or appropriated to the fund *by the Legislature*.

The bill authorizes money in the fund to be used for a state of emergency that is a natural emergency as defined in s. 252.34(8), F.S., which defines “natural emergency” to mean “an emergency caused by a natural event, including, but not limited to, a hurricane, a storm, a flood, severe wave action, a drought, or an earthquake.”<sup>22</sup> Upon renewal, which is required after 60 days, of a state of emergency that is a natural emergency the use of moneys in the fund is subject to the notice, review, and objection procedures set forth in s. 216.177, F.S.

Additionally, the bill authorizes moneys in the fund to be used, subject to s. 216.177, F.S., for a state of emergency that is a manmade emergency or a technological emergency as defined in s. 252.34, F.S. The term “manmade emergency” is defined to mean “an emergency caused by an action against persons or society, including, but not limited to, enemy attack, sabotage, terrorism, civil unrest, or other action impairing the orderly administration of government.”<sup>23</sup> The term “technological emergency” is defined to mean “an emergency caused by a technological failure or accident, including, but not limited to, an explosion, transportation accident, radiological accident, or chemical or other hazardous material incident.”<sup>24</sup>

The bill provides that notwithstanding s. 216.177(2)(b),<sup>25</sup> either the chair *or* the vice chair of the Legislative Budget Commission *or* the President of the Senate *or* the Speaker of the House of Representatives may timely advise, in writing, that an action or proposed action exceeds the delegated authority or is contrary to legislative policy and intent.

<sup>20</sup> Chapter 2025-198, s. 273, Laws of Florida.

<sup>21</sup> FLA. CONST. art. III, s. 19(f).

<sup>22</sup> Section 252.34(8), F.S.

<sup>23</sup> Section 252.34(7), F.S.

<sup>24</sup> Section 252.34(12), F.S.

<sup>25</sup> Section 216.177(2)(b), F.S., authorizes actions of the Governor or the judicial branch to be voided upon a determination by the chair *and* vice chair of the Legislative Budget Commission or the President of the Senate *and* the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

The bill prohibits moneys in the fund from being used to purchase aircraft, boats, or motor vehicles. The bill requires any interest earnings be appropriated to the General Revenue Fund as provided in s. 17.57, F.S. Additionally, the bill prohibits federal reimbursements of state emergency expenditures from being deposited into the fund and requiring such funds to be deposited in the General Revenue Fund.

The bill requires the Executive Office of the Governor to submit a report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives which includes all of the following:

- The projected year-end cash balance of the fund.
- An updated cash flow statement for that fiscal year.
- An accounting of all inventory and assets purchased, separated by emergency event and agency, for preparing for, responding to, or recovering from a state of emergency and the current status of such assets.
- A written attestation, under penalty of perjury, from the director of the Division of Emergency Management that the information in the report is true, accurate, and complete.

The bill extends the scheduled termination date of the fund to July 1, 2030.

The bill provides that this act shall operate retroactively to February 17, 2026.

The bill takes effect upon becoming a law.

#### **IV. Constitutional Issues:**

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

Article III, s. 19(f)(1) of the Florida Constitution requires bills that create or re-create trust funds to pass by three-fifths vote of the membership of each house of the legislature in a separate bill for that purpose only.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

**V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**

## A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

## B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

## C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Statutes Affected:**

This bill substantially amends section 252.3711 of the Florida Statutes.

This bill creates an undesignated section of law.

**IX. Additional Information:**

## A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

## B. Amendments:

**Barcode 347342 by Appropriations on March 2, 2026:**

This amendment deletes everything and does not insert additional language.

(WITH TITLE AMENDMENT)