

# FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

## BILL ANALYSIS

*This bill analysis was prepared by nonpartisan committee staff and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.*

**BILL #:** [HB 929](#)

**TITLE:** Local Government Regulation of Chickees

**SPONSOR(S):** Cobb and Gentry

**COMPANION BILL:** [SB 1020](#) (Truenow)

**LINKED BILLS:** None

**RELATED BILLS:** None

### Committee References

[Industries & Professional Activities](#)  
14 Y, 0 N

[Intergovernmental Affairs](#)

[Commerce](#)

## SUMMARY

### Effect of the Bill:

The bill prohibits a county or municipality from enacting an ordinance that prevents a member of the Miccosukee or Seminole Tribes from constructing a chickee under certain conditions.

### Fiscal or Economic Impact:

The bill may have a positive indeterminate fiscal impact on the private sector.

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## ANALYSIS

### **EFFECT OF THE BILL:**

The bill prohibits counties from enacting any ordinance or policy that prevents or has the effect of preventing a member of the [Miccosukee Tribe of Indians](#) of Florida or [Seminole Tribe of Florida](#) from constructing a [chickee](#) as defined in [553.73, F.S.](#) if:

- In a side yard if the chickee is at least 10 feet away from the property line.
- Near another structure if the chickee is at least 10 feet away from any other structure.

The bill also prohibits counties from enacting and ordinance or regulation concerning chickees that is more restrictive than federal floodplain management regulations. (Section [1](#))

The bill prohibits municipalities from enacting any ordinance or policy that prevents or has the effect of preventing a member of the Miccosukee or Seminole Tribe from constructing a chickee as defined in [553.73, F.S.](#) if:

- In a side yard if the chickee is at least 10 feet away from the property line.
- Near another structure if the chickee is at least 10 feet away from any other structure.

The bill also prohibits municipalities from enacting and ordinance or regulation concerning chickees that is more restrictive than federal floodplain management regulations. (Section [2](#))

The bill revises the definition of "chickee" in statute for purposes of exemption from the [Florida Building Code](#) to include chickees that may:

- Have a wooden deck.
- Incorporate nonwood fasteners.
- Incorporate electrical or plumbing features in accordance with a [building permit](#) for those specific features.

The bill adds a criminal penalty for a person who is not a member of the tribe who constructs a chickee in an attempt to assert an exemption. (Section [3](#))

**STORAGE NAME:** h0929a.IPA

**DATE:** 1/21/2026

## RELEVANT INFORMATION

### SUBJECT OVERVIEW:

#### Indian Tribes in Florida

Two tribes, the [Seminole Tribe of Florida](#) and the [Miccosukee Tribe of Indians](#) of Florida, currently reside and have tribal lands in the state. Most state law governing the relationship between the state and the federally-recognized tribes with tribal lands in the state is contained in ch. 285, F.S.<sup>1</sup>

#### Chickee

Chickee is the word Seminoles use for “house”. Chickees are palmetto thatch over cypress log frame.



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Florida law currently defines “chickee” as an open-sided wooden hut that has a thatched roof of palm or palmetto or other traditional materials, and that does not incorporate any electrical, plumbing, or nonwood features. They are exempt from the Florida Building Code when constructed by the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida or the Seminole Tribe of Florida.<sup>3</sup>

#### Florida Building Code

Chapter 553, part IV, F.S., is known as the “Florida Building Codes Act” (Act). The purpose and intent of the Act is to provide a mechanism for the uniform adoption, updating, interpretation, and enforcement of a single, unified state building code. The Building Code must be applied, administered, and enforced uniformly and consistently from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.<sup>4</sup>

#### Building Permits

It is the intent of the Legislature that local governments have the power to inspect all buildings, structures, and facilities within their jurisdiction in protection of the public’s health, safety, and welfare.<sup>5</sup> Every local government must enforce the Florida Building Code and issue building permits.<sup>6</sup>

A building permit is an official document or certificate issued by the local building official that authorizes performance of a specific activity.<sup>7</sup> It is unlawful for a person, firm, or corporation to construct, erect, alter, repair, secure, or demolish any building without first obtaining a building permit from the local enforcement agency or from such persons as may, by resolution or regulation, be directed to issue such permit.<sup>8</sup>

Any construction work that requires a building permit also requires plans and inspections to ensure the work complies with the Florida Building Code. The Florida Building Code requires certain building, electrical, plumbing, mechanical, and gas inspections. Construction work may not be done beyond a certain point until it passes an inspection. Generally speaking, a permit for construction work that passes the required inspections are considered completed or closed.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [Ch. 285, F.S.](#)

<sup>2</sup> Seminole Tribe of Florida, <https://www.semtribe.com/culture/chickee> (last visited Jan. 15, 2026).

<sup>3</sup> [S. 553.73\(10\)\(i\), F.S.](#)

<sup>4</sup> See [s. 553.72\(1\), F.S.](#)

<sup>5</sup> S. [553.72, F.S.](#)

<sup>6</sup> Ss. [125.01\(1\)\(bb\)](#), [125.56\(1\)](#), and [553.80\(1\), F.S.](#)

<sup>7</sup> S. [468.603, F.S.](#); [S. 202 of the Eighth edition of the Florida Building Code \(Building\)](#).

<sup>8</sup> Ss. [125.56\(4\)\(a\)](#) and [553.79\(1\), F.S.](#)

**BILL HISTORY**

COMMITTEE REFERENCE	ACTION	DATE	STAFF DIRECTOR/ POLICY CHIEF	ANALYSIS PREPARED BY
<a href="#">Industries &amp; Professional Activities</a>	14 Y, 0 N		Anstead	Miralia
<a href="#">Subcommittee</a>				
<a href="#">Intergovernmental Affairs</a>				
<a href="#">Subcommittee</a>				
<a href="#">Commerce Committee</a>				

<sup>9</sup> Section 110 of the Eighth Edition of the Florida Building Code (Building).