



Journal of the Senate

Number 2—Regular Session

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

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CALL TO ORDER

The Senate was called to order by President Albritton at 4:00 p.m. A quorum present—39:

Mr. President	DiCeglie	Osgood
Arrington	Gaetz	Passidomo
Avila	Garcia	Pizzo
Berman	Grall	Polsky
Bernard	Gruters	Rodriguez
Boyd	Harrell	Rouson
Bracy Davis	Hooper	Sharief
Bradley	Jones	Simon
Brodeur	Leek	Smith
Burgess	Martin	Truenow
Burton	Massullo	Trumbull
Calatayud	Mayfield	Wright
Davis	McClain	Yarborough

PRAYER

The following prayer was offered by Pastor Earl Glisson, Anchor Faith Church, St. Augustine:

Dear Heavenly Father, throughout the ages it has been foretold of the days we currently live—days of difficult times where people will love only themselves and their money. They will boast of great things and they will strut around in their arrogant pride being belligerent haters of what is good and right. They will become addicted to hateful and malicious slander. With brutal treachery, they will be ferocious, they will act without restraint, bigoted and wrapped in clouds of their conceit. They will ignore their own families being disobedient to their parents. They will be ungrateful and ungodly. They will find their delight in the pleasures of this world more than the pleasures of the loving God. They will go on pretending to be devoted to God, but they will refuse to let that devotion change the way they live.

Lord, we come to you in prayer, asking you grant these men and women of the Florida Senate the wisdom, knowledge, and moral clarity to legislate in the midst of chaotic events in our nation and the world. It is because of these difficult times many, if not all, have been elected to this Senate and ran for office. It is for this reason they were voted for by the citizens of our great state. For we have hope in them to fulfill their words to protect our freedoms, liberties, and rights as Floridians. May this Senate never be accused of living a double life or failing to honor the

oath it swore. But instead they unified for the common good of not only Floridians today but those in our future. That together they faced challenges with courage upholding the Constitution of our state. May this session be the greatest achievement of any Florida Senate because they were all willing to yield to the leading of your spirit.

Father, this fortitude does not come without persecution so, we pray for your divine protection over them, their families, and their staffs, shielding them from every false or misleading accusation. Strengthen them as they serve all who live in Florida, and remind them that they were called for such a time as this. In Jesus' name, Amen.

PLEDGE

Senate Pages, Isabella Komando of Jacksonville; Leilany Otero of Miami Lakes; and Jerrett Vaughan of Tallahassee, son of Senate staffer Scotti Vaughan, led the Senate in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

DOCTOR OF THE DAY

The President recognized Dr. Frank Rosemeier of Orlando, sponsored by Senator Brodeur, as the doctor of the day. Dr. Rosemeier specializes in anesthesiology and critical care medicine.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE RELATING TO EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

The Honorable Ben Albritton
 President, The Florida Senate
 Suite 409, The Capitol
 404 South Monroe Street
 Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100
 January 14, 2026

Dear President Albritton:

The following executive appointments were referred to the Senate Committee on Agriculture and the Senate Committee on Ethics and Elections for action pursuant to Rule 12.7 of the Rules of the Florida Senate:

<i>Office and Appointment</i>		<i>For Term Ending</i>
Florida Citrus Commission		
Appointees:	Ezell, Emily	05/31/2027
	Frielich, Sean H.	05/31/2027
	Hollingsworth, Vernon C., III	05/31/2028
	Hunt, Daniel H.	05/31/2026
	Johnson, Steve Allen	05/31/2028
	Martinez, Carlos H.	05/31/2026
	Poulton, William Scott	05/31/2028
	Schirard, John Patrick	05/31/2027
	Sutton, Daniel	05/31/2026
Board of Professional Surveyors and Mappers		
Appointees:	Cannon, Jennifer Hooten	10/31/2029
	Cross, Landon	10/31/2029
	Getz, Andrew R.	10/31/2028
	Sullivan, Jim	10/31/2028

The following executive appointments were referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment, and General

Government and the Senate Committee on Ethics and Elections for action pursuant to Rule 12.7 of the Rules of the Florida Senate:

Office and Appointment

*For Term
Ending*

<i>Office and Appointment</i>	<i>For Term Ending</i>	Board of Trustees, University of Florida	
		Appointees: Brandon, David Lee	01/06/2030
		Corr, Christopher T.	01/06/2031
		Hosseini, Morteza "Mori"	01/06/2031
		Powers, Marsha D.	01/06/2031
		Ridley, Fred	01/06/2031
Governing Board of the St. Johns River Water Management District		The following executive appointment was referred to the Senate Committee on Community Affairs and the Senate Committee on Ethics and Elections for action pursuant to Rule 12.7 of the Rules of the Florida Senate:	
Appointees: Burnett, Douglas	03/01/2029		
Ghyabi-White, Maryam	03/01/2029		
Governing Board of the South Florida Water Management District			
Appointees: Hurley, Thomas W.	03/01/2029		
Spottswood, Robert A., Jr.	03/01/2026		
Big Cypress Basin Board of the South Florida Water Management District		<i>Office and Appointment</i>	<i>For Term Ending</i>
Appointee: Lenhard, Michele	03/01/2026		
Governing Board of the Southwest Florida Water Management District		Florida Housing Finance Corporation	
Appointees: Turner, James "Jim"	03/01/2027	Appointee: Henderson, Fox Reynolds	11/13/2028
Watkins, Nancy Hemmingway	03/01/2029	The following executive appointment was referred to the Senate Committee on Criminal Justice and the Senate Committee on Ethics and Elections for action pursuant to Rule 12.7 of the Rules of the Florida Senate:	
The following executive appointments were referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee on Higher Education and the Senate Committee on Ethics and Elections for action pursuant to Rule 12.7 of the Rules of the Florida Senate:		<i>Office and Appointment</i>	<i>For Term Ending</i>
<i>Office and Appointment</i>	<i>For Term Ending</i>	Secretary of Juvenile Justice	
Board of Trustees of Daytona State College		Appointee: Walsh, Matthew	Pleasure of Governor
Appointee: Lupoli, Nellie	05/31/2029	The following executive appointments were referred to the Senate Committee on Education Pre-K - 12 and the Senate Committee on Ethics and Elections for action pursuant to Rule 12.7 of the Rules of the Florida Senate:	
Board of Trustees of Hillsborough Community College			
Appointees: Garcia, Michael J.	05/31/2029		
Hollis, Mark Clayton, III	05/31/2029		
Board of Trustees of Lake-Sumter State College		<i>Office and Appointment</i>	<i>For Term Ending</i>
Appointees: Croft, Roger L.	05/31/2029		
Scott, Samantha	05/31/2027		
Board of Trustees of State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota		Education Practices Commission	
Appointees: Infanti, Jennifer	05/31/2029	Appointees: LaPee, Kenneth	08/18/2028
Rose, Karen	05/31/2027	Noblin, Jessica	09/30/2028
		Wicker, Alexandria	09/30/2028
Board of Trustees of North Florida College		Commission for Independent Education	
Appointees: Hines, Malcolm L.	05/31/2029	Appointee: Caballero, Nelson	06/30/2026
Taylor, Adrienne	05/31/2026	The following executive appointment was referred to the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources and the Senate Committee on Ethics and Elections for action pursuant to Rule 12.7 of the Rules of the Florida Senate:	
Tillman, Daniel Brett	05/31/2029		
Board of Trustees of Northwest Florida State College			
Appointee: Stevens, Lyndsi	05/31/2029		
Board of Trustees of Pasco-Hernando State College		<i>Office and Appointment</i>	<i>For Term Ending</i>
Appointee: Harrington, Jeffrey E.	05/31/2026		
Board of Trustees of Polk State College		Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	
Appointee: Barnhart, Ann M.	05/31/2029	Appointee: Kellam, Joshua	08/01/2027
Board of Trustees of South Florida State College		As required by Rule 12.7, the committees conducted an inquiry into the qualifications, experience, and general suitability of the above-named appointees for appointment to the office indicated. In aid of such inquiry, the committees held public hearings which members of the public were invited to attend and to offer evidence concerning the qualifications, experience, and general suitability of the appointees. After due consideration of the findings of such inquiry and the evidence adduced at the public hearings, the Senate Committee on Ethics and Elections and other referenced committees respectfully advise and recommend that in accordance with s. 114.05(1)(c), F.S.:	
Appointee: Grimsley, Denise	05/31/2029		
Board of Trustees of Tallahassee State College			
Appointee: Caban, Christian	05/31/2029		
Florida Prepaid College Board			
Appointee: Starkey, Adria D.	06/30/2028		
Board of Trustees, Florida State University			
Appointee: Murphy, Brian	01/06/2030		
Board of Trustees, Florida Gulf Coast University			
Appointee: Saad, Henry	01/06/2030		
Board of Trustees, Florida Polytechnic University			
Appointees: Kigel, Beth Rochelle	07/15/2030		
Neelam, Sumanth	07/15/2029		

(1) the executive appointments of the above-named appointees, to the office and for the term indicated, be confirmed by the Senate;

(2) Senate action on said appointments be taken prior to the adjournment of the 2026 Regular Session; and

(3) there is no necessity known to the committees for the deliberations on said appointments to be held in executive session.

Respectfully submitted,
Don Gaetz, Chair

On motion by Senator Gaetz, the report was adopted and the Senate confirmed the appointments identified in the foregoing report of the committee to the offices and for the terms indicated in accordance with the recommendation of the committee.

The vote was:

Yeas—39

Mr. President	DiCeglie	Osgood
Arrington	Gaetz	Passidomo
Avila	Garcia	Pizzo
Berman	Grall	Polsky
Bernard	Gruters	Rodriguez
Boyd	Harrell	Rouson
Bracy Davis	Hooper	Sharief
Bradley	Jones	Simon
Brodeur	Leek	Smith
Burgess	Martin	Truenow
Burton	Massullo	Trumbull
Calatayud	Mayfield	Wright
Davis	McClain	Yarborough

Nays—None

Vote Preference:

Senator Arrington was recorded as voting “nay” on the appointment of Joshua Kellam to the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Senator Smith was recorded as voting “nay” on the appointment of Joshua Kellam to the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

SPECIAL ORDER CALENDAR

SB 250—A bill to be entitled An act relating to rural communities; reenacting and amending s. 20.60, F.S.; revising the list of divisions and offices within the Department of Commerce to conform to changes made by the act; revising the annual program reports that must be included in the annual report of the Department of Commerce; amending s. 163.3168, F.S.; requiring the state land planning agency to give preference for technical assistance funding to local governments located in a rural area of opportunity; requiring the agency to consult with the Office of Rural Prosperity when awarding certain funding; amending s. 201.15, F.S.; requiring that a certain sum be paid to the credit of the State Transportation Trust Fund for the exclusive use of the Florida Arterial Road Modernization Program; amending s. 202.18, F.S.; re-directing the transfer of certain communication services tax proceeds; amending s. 212.20, F.S.; revising the distribution of sales and use tax revenue to include a transfer to fiscally constrained counties; amending s. 215.971, F.S.; providing construction regarding agreements funded with federal or state assistance; requiring a state agency to expedite payment requests from a county, municipality, or rural area of opportunity for a specified purpose; requiring each state agency to report to the Office of Rural Prosperity by a certain date with a summary of certain information; requiring the office to summarize the information it receives for its annual report; amending s. 218.67, F.S.; revising the conditions required for a county to be considered a fiscally constrained county; authorizing eligible counties to receive a distribution of sales and use tax revenue; revising the sources that the Department of Revenue must use to determine the amount distributed to fiscally constrained counties; revising the factors for allocation of the distribution of revenue to fiscally constrained counties; requiring that the computation and amount distributed be calculated using certain methods; authorizing specified uses for the revenue; conforming a cross-reference; amending s. 288.001, F.S.; requiring the Florida Small Business Development Center Network to use certain funds appropriated for a specified purpose; authorizing the network to dedicate funds to facilitate certain events; amending s. 288.007, F.S.; revising which local governments and economic development organizations

seeking to recruit businesses are required to submit a specified report; creating s. 288.013, F.S.; providing legislative findings; creating the Office of Rural Prosperity within the Department of Commerce; requiring the Governor to appoint a director, subject to confirmation by the Senate; providing that the director reports to and serves at the pleasure of the secretary of the department; providing the duties of the office; requiring the office to establish by a specified date a certain number of regional rural community liaison centers across this state for a specified purpose; providing the powers, duties, and functions of the liaison centers; requiring each regional rural community liaison center, to the extent possible, to coordinate with certain entities; requiring the liaison centers to engage with the Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI); requiring at least one staff member of a liaison center to attend the monthly REDI meetings in person or by means of electronic communication; requiring the director of the office to submit an annual report to the Administration Commission within the Executive Office of the Governor; specifying requirements for the annual report; requiring that the annual report also be submitted to the Legislature by a specified date and published on the office’s website; requiring the director of the office to attend the next Administration Commission meeting to present detailed information from the annual report; requiring the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) to evaluate the effectiveness of the office and submit a report of its findings to the Legislature by a certain date annually until a specified date; requiring OPPAGA to submit its report the office at specified intervals; requiring OPPAGA to review certain strategies from other states; requiring OPPAGA to submit a report of its findings to the Legislature at certain intervals; creating s. 288.014, F.S.; providing legislative findings; requiring the Office of Rural Prosperity to administer the Renaissance Grants Program to provide block grants to eligible communities; requiring the Office of Economic and Demographic Research to certify to the Office of Rural Prosperity certain information by a specified date; defining the term “growth-impeded”; requiring the Office of Economic and Demographic Research to certify annually that a county remains growth-impeded until such county has positive population growth for a specified amount of time; providing that such county, after 3 consecutive years of population growth, is eligible to participate in the program for 1 additional year; requiring a county eligible for the program to enter into an agreement with the Office of Rural Prosperity in order to receive the block grant; giving such counties broad authority to design their specific plans; prohibiting the Office of Rural Prosperity from determining how such counties implement the block grant; requiring regional rural community liaison center staff to provide assistance, upon the county’s request; requiring participating counties to report annually to the Office of Rural Prosperity with certain information; providing that a participating county receives a specified amount from funds appropriated to the program, or an equal share of the funds appropriated if the total of such appropriated funds is insufficient to provide that amount; requiring participating counties to make all attempts to limit the amount spent on administrative costs; authorizing participating counties to contribute other funds for block grant purposes; requiring participating counties to hire and retain a renaissance coordinator; providing that funds from the block grant may be used to hire the renaissance coordinator; providing the responsibilities of the renaissance coordinator; requiring the regional rural community liaison center staff to provide assistance and training to the renaissance coordinator, upon request; requiring participating counties to design a plan to make targeted investments to achieve population growth and increase economic vitality; specifying requirements for such plans; requiring participating counties to develop intergovernmental agreements with certain entities in order to implement the plan; requiring the Auditor General to conduct an operational audit every 2 years for a specified purpose; requiring the Office of Economic and Demographic Research to provide an annual report on a specified date of renaissance block grant recipients by county; specifying requirements for the annual report; requiring that the report be submitted to the Legislature; providing that funds appropriated from the program are not subject to reversion; providing for expiration; creating s. 288.0175, F.S.; creating the Public Infrastructure Smart Technology Grant Program within the Office of Rural Prosperity; defining terms; requiring the office to contract with one or more smart technology lead organizations to administer the grant program for a specified purpose; providing the criteria for such contracts; requiring that projects funded by the grant program be included in the office’s annual report; amending s. 288.018, F.S.; requiring the office, rather than the Department of Commerce, to establish a grant program to provide funding for regional economic development organizations; revising who may apply for such

grants; providing that a grant award may not exceed a certain amount in a year; providing exceptions to a provision that the department may expend a certain amount for a certain purpose; amending s. 288.019, F.S.; revising the program criteria and procedures that agencies and organizations of REDI are required to review; revising the list of impacts each REDI agency and organization must consider in its review; requiring REDI agencies and organizations to develop a proposal for modifications which minimizes the financial and resource impacts to a rural community; requiring that ranking of evaluation criteria and scoring procedures be used only when ranking is a component of the program; requiring that match requirements be waived or reduced for rural communities; providing that donations of land may be treated as in-kind matches; requiring each agency and organization that applies for or receives federal funding to request federal approval to waive or reduce the financial match requirements, if any, for projects in rural communities; requiring that proposals be submitted to the office, rather than the department; requiring each REDI agency and organization to modify rules or policies as necessary to reflect the finalized proposal; requiring that information about authorized waivers be included on the office's online rural resource directory; requiring the rural liaison from the related regional rural community liaison center districts to assist the rural community to make waiver or reduction requests; conforming a cross-reference; amending s. 288.021, F.S.; requiring, when practicable, the economic development liaison to serve as the agency representative for REDI; amending s. 288.065, F.S.; defining the term "unit of local government"; requiring the office to include in its annual report certain information about the Rural Community Development Revolving Loan Fund; conforming provisions to changes made by the act; amending s. 288.0655, F.S.; revising the list of grants that may be awarded by the office under the Rural Infrastructure Fund; deleting the authorization for local match requirements to be waived for a catalyst site; revising the list of departments the office must consult with to certify applicants; requiring the office to include certain information about the Rural Infrastructure Fund in its annual report; conforming provisions to changes made by the act; amending s. 288.0656, F.S.; revising legislative intent; providing legislative findings; providing that REDI is created within the Office of Rural Prosperity, rather than the department; deleting the definitions of the terms "catalyst project" and "catalyst site"; requiring that an alternate for each designated deputy secretary be a deputy secretary or higher-level staff person; requiring that the names of such alternates be reported to the director of the office; requiring at least one rural liaison to participate in REDI meetings; requiring REDI to meet at least each month; deleting a provision that a rural area of opportunity may designate catalyst projects; requiring REDI to submit a certain report to the office, rather than to the department; specifying requirements for such report; conforming provisions to changes made by the act; making technical changes; repealing s. 288.06561, F.S., relating to reduction or waiver of financial match requirements; amending s. 288.0657, F.S.; requiring the office, rather than the department, to provide grants to assist rural communities; providing that such grants may be used for specified purposes; requiring the rural liaison to assist those applying for such grants; providing that marketing grants may include certain funding; amending s. 288.1226, F.S.; revising required components of the 4-year marketing plan of the Florida Tourism Industry Marketing Corporation; repealing s. 288.12266, F.S., relating to the Targeted Marketing Assistance Program; amending s. 288.9961, F.S.; revising the definition of the term "underserved"; requiring the office to consult with regional rural community liaison centers on development and update of a certain strategic plan; requiring rural liaisons to assist rural communities with providing assistance in coordination with the regional rural community liaison centers; requiring the office to submit reports with specified information to the Governor and the Legislature within certain timeframes; repealing s. 290.06561, F.S., relating to designation of rural enterprise zones as catalyst sites; amending s. 319.32, F.S.; revising the disposition of fees collected for certain title certificates; amending s. 334.044, F.S.; revising the powers and duties of the Department of Transportation; amending s. 339.0801, F.S.; revising the allocation of funds received in the State Transportation Trust Fund; amending s. 339.2816, F.S.; requiring, rather than authorizing, that certain funds received from the State Transportation Trust Fund be used for the Small County Road Assistance Program; requiring the department to use other additional revenues for the Small County Road Assistance Program; providing an exception to the prohibition against funding capacity improvements on county roads; amending s. 339.2817, F.S.; revising the criteria that the Department of Transportation must consider for evaluating projects for County Incentive Grant Program as-

sistance; requiring the department to give priority to counties located either wholly or partially within the Everglades Agricultural Area and which request a specified percentage of project costs for eligible projects; specifying a limitation on such requests; providing for future expiration; amending s. 339.2818, F.S.; deleting a provision that the funds allocated under the Small County Outreach Program are in addition to the Small County Road Assistance Program; deleting a provision that a local government within the Everglades Agricultural Area, the Peace River Basin, or the Suwannee River Basin may compete for additional funding; conforming provisions to changes made by the act; making a technical change; amending s. 339.68, F.S.; providing legislative findings; creating the Florida Arterial Road Modernization Program within the Department of Transportation; defining the term "rural community"; requiring the department to allocate from the State Transportation Trust Fund a minimum sum in each fiscal year to fund the program; providing that such funding is in addition to any other funding provided to the program; providing criteria the department must use to prioritize projects for funding under the program; requiring the department to submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature by a specified date; requiring that such report be submitted every 2 years thereafter; providing the criteria for such report; requiring the Department of Transportation to allocate additional funds to implement the Small County Road Assistance Program and amend the tentative work program for a specified number of fiscal years; requiring the department to submit a budget amendment before the adoption of the work program; requiring the department to allocate sufficient funds to implement the Florida Arterial Road Modernization Program; requiring the department to amend the current tentative work program for a specified number of fiscal years to include the program's projects; requiring the department to submit a budget amendment before the implementation of the program; requiring that the revenue increases in the State Transportation Trust Fund which are derived from the act be used to fund the work program; creating s. 341.0525, F.S.; creating a rural transit operating block grant program to be administered by the Department of Transportation; limiting rural transit block grant funds to certain public transit providers; requiring the annual allocation of certain funds from the State Transportation Trust Fund for the program; providing for the distribution of funds to each eligible public transit provider in at least a certain amount; providing authorized uses of grant funds; prohibiting state participation in certain costs above a specified percentage or amount; prohibiting an eligible provider from using block grant funds in a certain manner; providing an exception; prohibiting the state from giving a county more than a specified percentage of available funds or a certain amount; providing eligibility requirements; requiring an eligible provider to return funds under certain circumstances; authorizing the department to consult with an eligible provider before distributing funds to make a certain determination; requiring an eligible provider to repay to the department funds expended on unauthorized uses if revealed in an audit; requiring the department to redistribute returned and repaid funds to other eligible providers; amending s. 381.402, F.S.; revising eligibility requirements for the Florida Reimbursement Assistance for Medical Education Program; revising the proof required to make payments for participation in the program; creating s. 381.403, F.S.; providing legislative findings; creating the Rural Access to Primary and Preventive Care Grant Program within the Department of Health for a specified purpose; defining terms; requiring the department to award grants under the program to physicians, physician assistants, and autonomous advanced practice registered nurses intending to open new practices or practice locations in qualifying rural areas; specifying eligibility criteria for the grants; requiring the department, by a specified date, to create an application process for practitioners applying for grants under the program; specifying requirements for the application and application process; authorizing the department, subject to specific appropriation, to award grants under the program; specifying limitations on the awarding of grants; specifying expenses for which grant funds are authorized and prohibited; requiring the department to enter into a contract with each grant recipient; specifying requirements for the contracts; authorizing the department to adopt rules; requiring the department, beginning on a specified date and annually thereafter, to provide a report containing specified information to the Governor and the Legislature; providing for future legislative review and repeal of the program; creating s. 381.9856, F.S.; creating the Stroke, Cardiac, and Obstetric Response and Education Grant Program within the Department of Health; specifying the purpose of the program; defining terms; requiring the department to award grants under the program to certain entities meeting specified criteria; requiring the department to give priority to

certain applicants; limiting individual grants to a specified amount per year; requiring grant recipients to submit quarterly reports to the department; requiring the department to monitor program implementation and outcomes; requiring the department to submit an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature by a specified date; authorizing the department to adopt rules; providing that implementation is limited to the extent specifically funded by legislative appropriation; providing for future legislative review and repeal of the program; amending s. 395.6061, F.S.; providing that rural hospital capital improvement grant program funding may be awarded to rural hospitals to establish mobile care units and telehealth kiosks for specified purposes; defining terms; amending s. 420.9073, F.S.; revising the calculation of guaranteed amounts distributed from the Local Government Housing Trust Fund; reenacting and amending s. 420.9075, F.S.; authorizing a certain percentage of the funds made available in each county and eligible municipality from the local housing distribution to be used to preserve multifamily affordable rental housing; specifying what such funds may be used for; providing an expiration; amending s. 1001.451, F.S.; revising the services required to be provided by regional consortium service organizations when such services are found to be necessary and appropriate by such organizations' boards of directors; revising the allocation that certain regional consortium service organizations are eligible to receive from the General Appropriations Act; requiring each regional consortium service organization to submit an annual report to the Department of Education; requiring that unexpended amounts in certain funds be carried forward; requiring each regional consortium service organization to provide quarterly financial reports to member districts; requiring member districts to designate a district to serve as a fiscal agent for certain purposes; providing for compensation of the fiscal agent district; requiring regional consortium service organizations to retain all funds received from grants or contracted services to cover indirect or administrative costs associated with the provision of such services; requiring the regional consortium service organization board of directors to determine products and services provided by the organization; requiring a regional consortium service organization board of directors to recommend the establishment of positions and appointments to a fiscal agent district; requiring that personnel be employed under specified personnel policies; authorizing the regional consortium service organization board of directors to recommend a salary schedule for personnel; authorizing regional consortium service organizations to purchase or lease property and facilities essential to their operations; providing for the distribution of revenue if a regional consortium service organization is dissolved; deleting a provision requiring applications for incentive grants; authorizing regional consortium service organization boards of directors to contract to provide services to nonmember districts; requiring that a fund balance be established for specified purposes; deleting a requirement for the use of certain funds; authorizing a regional consortium service organization to administer a specified program; creating s. 1001.4511, F.S.; creating the Regional Consortia Service Organization Supplemental Services Program; providing the purpose of the program; authorizing funds to be used for specified purposes; requiring each regional consortium service organization to report the distribution of funds annually to the Legislature; providing for the carryforward of funds; creating s. 1009.635, F.S.; establishing the Rural Incentive for Professional Educators Program within the Department of Education; requiring the program to provide financial assistance for the repayment of student loans to eligible participants who establish permanent residency and employment in rural areas of opportunity; providing eligibility requirements; providing that eligible participants may receive up to a certain amount in total student loan repayment assistance over a certain timeframe; requiring the department to verify certain information of participants in the program before it disburses awards; providing that the program is administered through the Office of Student Financial Assistance within the department; requiring the program to develop procedures and monitor compliance; requiring the State Board of Education to adopt rules by a certain date; amending s. 1013.62, F.S.; revising the calculation methodology used to determine the amount of revenue that a school district must distribute to each eligible charter school; amending s. 1013.64, F.S.; revising conditions under which a school district may receive funding on an approved construction project; providing appropriations for specified purposes; amending ss. 163.3187, 212.205, 257.191, 257.193, 265.283, 288.11621, 288.11631, 443.191, 571.26, and 571.265, F.S.; conforming cross-references and provisions to changes made by the act; reenacting s. 288.9935(8), F.S., relating to the Microfinance Guarantee Program, to incorporate the amendment made to s. 20.60, F.S., in a reference thereto; reenacting ss. 125.0104(5)(c),

193.624(3), 196.182(2), 218.12(1), 218.125(1), 218.135(1), 218.136(1), 252.35(2)(cc), 288.102(4), 403.064(16)(h), 589.08(2) and (3), and 1011.62(1)(f), F.S., relating to authorized uses of tourist development tax revenue; applicability of assessments of renewable energy source devices; application of exemptions of renewable energy source devices; appropriations to offset reductions in ad valorem tax revenue in fiscally constrained counties; offset for tax loss associated with certain constitutional amendments affecting fiscally constrained counties; offset for tax loss associated with reductions in value of certain citrus fruit packing and processing equipment; offset for ad valorem revenue loss affecting fiscally constrained counties; Division of Emergency Management powers; one-to-one match requirement under the Supply Chain Innovation Grant Program; applicability of provisions related to reuse of reclaimed water; land acquisition restrictions; and funds for operation of schools, respectively, to incorporate the amendment made to s. 218.67, F.S., in references thereto; reenacting s. 403.0741(6)(c), F.S., relating to grease waste removal and disposal, to incorporate the amendments made to ss. 218.67 and 339.2818, F.S., in references thereto; reenacting s. 163.3177(7)(e), F.S., relating to required and optional elements of comprehensive plans and studies and surveys, to incorporate the amendment made to s. 288.0656, F.S., in a reference thereto; reenacting s. 288.9962(7)(a), F.S., relating to the Broadband Opportunity Program, to incorporate the amendment made to s. 288.9961, F.S., in a reference thereto; reenacting s. 215.211(1), F.S., relating to service charges and elimination or reduction for specified proceeds, to incorporate the amendment made to s. 319.32, F.S., in a reference thereto; reenacting s. 339.66(5) and (6), F.S., relating to upgrades of arterial highways with controlled access facilities, to incorporate the amendment made to s. 339.68, F.S., in references thereto; reenacting ss. 420.9072(4) and (6), 420.9076(7)(b), and 420.9079(2), F.S., relating to the State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program, adoption of affordable housing incentive strategies and committees, and the Local Government Housing Trust Fund, respectively, to incorporate the amendment made to s. 420.9073, F.S., in references thereto; providing an effective date.

—was read the second time by title.

Senator Simon moved the following amendments which were adopted:

Amendment 1 (655052) (with title amendment)—Delete lines 2388-2644.

Delete lines 3241-3266.

And the title is amended as follows:

Delete lines 330-378 and insert: for participation in the program; amending s. 420.9073, F.S.; revising

Amendment 2 (211610)—Delete lines 3268-3285 and insert: *\$193,075 in recurring funds from the General Revenue Fund and \$244,538 in recurring funds from the Medical Care Trust Fund are appropriated to the Agency for Health Care Administration to establish a Diagnosis-Related Grouping (DRG) reimbursement methodology for critical access hospitals, as defined in s. 408.07, Florida Statutes, for the purpose of providing inpatient reimbursement to such a hospital in amounts comparable to the reimbursement the hospital would receive for inpatient services from the federal Medicare program. The 2026-2027 fiscal year General Appropriations Act shall establish the DRG reimbursement methodology for critical access hospital inpatient services as directed in s. 409.905(5)(c), Florida Statutes. Health plans that participate in the Statewide Medicaid Managed Care program shall pass through the fee increase to providers in this appropriation.*

Section 57. *For the 2026-2027 fiscal year, the sums of \$7,741,492 in recurring funds from the General Revenue Fund and \$9,804,954 in recurring funds from the Medical Care Trust Fund*

On motion by Senator Simon, by two-thirds vote, **SB 250**, as amended, was read the third time by title, passed, ordered engrossed, and then certified to the House. The vote on passage was:

Yeas—39

Mr. President	Avila	Bernard
Arrington	Berman	Boyd

Bracy Davis	Gruters	Pizzo
Bradley	Harrell	Polsky
Brodeur	Hooper	Rodriguez
Burgess	Jones	Rouson
Burton	Leek	Sharief
Calatayud	Martin	Simon
Davis	Massullo	Smith
DiCeglie	Mayfield	Truenow
Gaetz	McClain	Trumbull
Garcia	Osgood	Wright
Grall	Passidomo	Yarborough

Nays—None

CS for SB 318—A bill to be entitled An act relating to educational scholarship programs; creating s. 1011.687, F.S.; creating a categorical fund for implementing the Family Empowerment Scholarship Program; providing requirements for the use and disbursement of funds; defining the term “full-time equivalent student”; requiring the Department of Education to release funds if certain criteria are met; providing requirements for the release of each payment; providing requirements for excess funds; providing that the department has access to certain records; creating s. 1011.689, F.S.; creating the educational enrollment stabilization program to provide supplemental state funds to address changes in full-time equivalent student enrollment; requiring the department to use funds to ensure that a school district’s funds are not lower than a specified calculation; providing for the calculation of the supplemental payment; requiring the department to ensure funding is available for certain scholarship programs; requiring the department to appropriate funds from the General Appropriations Act to keep the educational enrollment stabilization program at a minimum balance; amending s. 1002.40, F.S.; renaming the Hope Scholarship Program as the Hope Program; amending s. 1002.421, F.S.; defining terms; requiring an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization to provide a parent with certain information on scholarship programs; requiring an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization to create a single application for all educational scholarship programs; providing requirements for such application; prohibiting an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization from charging a fee for the application; requiring an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization to establish two application approval windows; providing an exception; providing deadlines for such application approval windows; requiring an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization to review applications and award scholarships in a specified order of priority; requiring an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization to award scholarships to newly eligible students on a first-come, first-served basis; requiring a parent to notify the eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization within a specified timeframe if a scholarship offer is accepted or declined; specifying fund distribution for the scholarship terms; prohibiting a parent from applying for multiple scholarships for an individual student at the same time; authorizing specified students to apply for a scholarship at any time but only receive payments prospectively; prohibiting an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization from restricting or reserving scholarships for use at a particular school; requiring such organization to notify each parent of a scholarship applicant that participation in the program does not guarantee enrollment at a private school; providing that a parent who submitted an application by a specified date need not submit a new application; authorizing a parent to withdraw his or her application and reapply; prohibiting an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization from requiring documentation beyond the requirements of the scholarship program; requiring an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization to verify a student’s eligibility upon receipt of an application; requiring an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization to send a list of verified eligible students to the department by specified dates; requiring the department to assign each verified eligible student a Florida student identification number; requiring the organization to use such number for tracking and reporting scholarship data; requiring the department to cross-check each list of verified eligible students with certain other lists; requiring the department to send the cross-checked list to the applicable school district; requiring the department to require the organization to suspend payments for any period of time the student is found to be ineligible; requiring the department to notify an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization of specified information; requiring the department to provide cer-

tain lists of students to certain parties; requiring an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization to verify a student’s continued eligibility before disbursing each payment; providing criteria for verifying continued eligibility; requiring parents of students receiving scholarship payments to verify specified information; providing criteria for verifying continued eligibility; requiring parents of students receiving scholarship payments to verify specified information; providing that the scholarship program award amounts are the amounts provided in the General Appropriations Act; providing parameters for the calculation of the scholarship amounts for certain students; requiring an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization to establish and maintain a scholarship account for each student; providing requirements for such accounts; providing that accrued interest is in addition to and not part of a student’s account; providing that program funds include awarded funds and accrued interest and are available only for authorized expenditures; requiring eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organizations to make payments by funds transfer; providing requirements for such funds transfer; prohibiting a student’s scholarship award from being reduced to cover certain fees; requiring that commodities or services related to the funds transfer system be procured by a specified method; providing an exception; prohibiting an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization from transferring funds to an account that has a balance in excess of a specified amount; specifying certain qualifications for educational expenditures; providing that a parent who fails to comply with such qualifications forfeits the scholarship; authorizing certain students in a scholarship program to take specified tests and certain assessments; providing an exception; requiring a participating private school to administer or provide for students to take specified tests and assessments; requiring a participating private school to submit a certain written request to the department by a specified date; requiring a school district to administer tests and assessments at a participating private school; requiring an owner or operator or individual providing services to undergo a background screening; providing requirements for the submission of fingerprints; requiring the Department of Law Enforcement to retain such fingerprints in a specified manner; providing screening requirements for specified individuals; prohibiting such owner or operator from transferring ownership or management authority to a relative; defining the term “relative”; requiring an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization to report the annual audit of background screening results to the Department of Education; providing that a participating private school may be sectarian or nonsectarian; revising information required to be provided to the department by a private school; deleting obsolete language; providing construction; requiring the department to publish and update information on its website relating to scholarship programs; requiring the department to investigate complaints; requiring the department to maintain and annually publish a list of tests that satisfy a specified requirement; requiring the department to develop a standard withdrawal form for parents withdrawing a student from public school; providing requirements for such form; requiring the department to produce a specified annual report; authorizing the department to suspend or revoke program participation or the use of program funds for specified entities; requiring the department to develop a uniform reimbursement process; requiring an organization, by a specified date, to approve, deny, or request more information relating to a reimbursement request; requiring the department to annually report to the state its accountability actions; deleting the definition of the term “owner or operator”; requiring a school district, by a specified date, to inform certain households of eligibility to apply for a scholarship program; requiring the school district to coordinate with the department to provide a participating private school with statewide assessments; requiring a school district to publish information about a scholarship program on its website; requiring a school district to provide a parent with the withdrawal form upon request; deleting obsolete language; amending s. 1002.394, F.S.; deleting obsolete language; providing a title for a scholarship granted to a student who meets specified eligibility requirements; providing that authorized uses of program funds include digital devices; providing that authorized uses of program funds include membership dues and activity fees for career and technical student organizations; providing that tuition and fees that meet certain requirements are eligible for program funds; revising conditions under which a student is no longer eligible for scholarship funding; requiring an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization to notify a parent before closing a student’s account; requiring an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization to report certain information to the Department of Education regarding scholarship accounts closed under certain circumstances; requiring an eligible nonprofit scholarship-

funding organization to notify a parent if, upon a student reaching a specified age, a balance exists in the student's account, the amount of the balance, and how the funds may be used; requiring an organization to annually report to the department the number of scholarship accounts closed under specified circumstances; requiring an organization to notify the department when a student withdraws from a scholarship program; deleting a provision allowing a public school student to receive a scholarship for transportation; revising the time frame for a school district to notify a parent of certain information; revising the percentage of funds that can be used for certain purposes; deleting obsolete language; amending s. 1002.395, F.S.; deleting obsolete language; deleting provisions related to scholarship priority; deleting a provision allowing a public school student to receive a scholarship for transportation; revising a provision requiring eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organizations to verify that scholarship funds are used for specified purposes; requiring an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization to report to the department the total number of scholarship accounts closed due to certain reasons; amending s. 1003.485, F.S.; conforming a cross-reference; amending s. 1008.25, F.S.; making a conforming change; amending s. 1010.305, F.S.; requiring the Auditor General to annually, rather than periodically, examine the records of eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organizations; providing for appropriate adjustments to be made and excess funds to be deducted if criteria and procedures have not been followed by an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization; amending s. 1011.61, F.S.; conforming a cross-reference; amending s. 1011.62, F.S.; deleting a requirement with respect to full-time equivalent student survey data; deleting obsolete language relating to the state-funded discretionary supplement; amending s. 11.45, F.S.; conforming a cross-reference; requiring the Auditor General to annually conduct an audit of specified records; amending ss. 212.099, 402.22, 1002.45, 1003.4935, and 1010.20, F.S.; conforming cross-references; providing legislative findings; requiring the Department of Education to provide a specified report regarding recommendations for implementing the educational scholarship programs; providing requirements for the recommendations; authorizing the department to make recommendations to specified entities; requiring certain contracts to be awarded through a competitive procurement process; requiring the department to include an outline of requirements for each program component; providing requirements for the outline; requiring the department to include recommendations for eligibility requirements of scholarship-funding organizations under specified circumstances; requiring the department to include a specified plan in its report; requiring the department to provide, by a specified date, the report to the Governor and the Legislature; providing for expiration; providing an effective date.

—was read the second time by title.

Senator Gaetz moved the following amendments which were adopted:

Amendment 1 (713876) (with title amendment)—Delete lines 332-365 and insert:

(1) *SCHOOL DISTRICT STABILIZATION.*—To maintain the stability of the operations of public schools, including charter schools, in each school district, the department may use funds in either of the following ways:

(a) To distribute to school districts if the state funds appropriated for the current operation of school districts in the Florida Education Finance Program are not sufficient to pay the state requirement in full pursuant to s. 1011.62(15).

(b) To provide supplemental payments to school districts as needed. Any supplemental funds provided pursuant to this paragraph may not be added to the district's total Florida Education Finance Program funds for any future calculation.

(2) *FAMILY EMPOWERMENT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.*—To maintain scholarship award amounts, the department shall use funds as appropriated to ensure that funding is available if the number of full-time equivalent students enrolled in the scholarship program is greater than the amount appropriated in the General Appropriations Act in the educational scholarship categorical fund established under s. 1011.687.

And the title is amended as follows:

Delete lines 16-19 and insert: authorizing the department to distribute funds to school districts under specified conditions; authorizing the department to provide supplemental payments to school districts; requiring the department to

Amendment 2 (789314)—Delete lines 684-703 and insert:

3. *If known, the student's Florida student identification*

Amendment 3 (629180)—Delete lines 807-834 and insert: *enrolled full time in a public school and is enrolled and in attendance, unless excused for illness or other good cause, in one of the following:*

1. *A home education program;*
2. *A personalized education program; or*
3. *A private school.*

(c) *The parent of a student enrolled at a private school may authorize the private school to satisfy the requirement in paragraph (b) on behalf of the parent by attesting that the student is enrolled in and in attendance at the private school. The private school and the organization must maintain records of the parental authorization, which must be renewed each school year and may be included as part of the parent's approval of the funds transfer authorized pursuant to subparagraph (6)(b)1. An improper attestation may be investigated as fraud pursuant to subparagraph (10)(a)6., and the private school may be liable to the state for payments made in violation of this subsection and, if found liable, must reimburse the state for funds improperly paid to the private school.*

(d) *The organization may not make any payment into a student's account prior to a parent's acceptance of a scholarship award, upon notification that the student is enrolled in a public school unless the organization can verify the student's eligibility, or for any period of time prior to the department's verification of the student's eligibility. An organization is liable to the state for payments made in violation of this subsection and must reimburse the state for funds that were improperly awarded which cannot be recovered.*

(e) *For a student who was enrolled in a public school prior to participation in the scholarship program as determined by the department, the organization must receive proof that the parent submitted the standard withdrawal form to the public school where the student was previously enrolled or, if the withdrawal occurred prior to the creation of the standard withdrawal form, another form of proof of withdrawal from the public school.*

On motion by Senator Gaetz, by two-thirds vote, **CS for SB 318**, as amended, was read the third time by title, passed, ordered engrossed, and then certified to the House. The vote on passage was:

Yeas—38

Mr. President	DiCeglie	Passidomo
Arrington	Gaetz	Pizzo
Avila	Garcia	Polsky
Berman	Grall	Rodriguez
Bernard	Harrell	Rouson
Boyd	Hooper	Sharief
Bracy Davis	Jones	Simon
Bradley	Leek	Smith
Brodeur	Martin	Truenow
Burgess	Massullo	Trumbull
Burton	Mayfield	Wright
Calatayud	McClain	Yarborough
Davis	Osgood	

Nays—None

MOTIONS

On motion by Senator Passidomo, by two-thirds vote, **SB 250** and **CS for SB 318** were ordered immediately certified to the House.

BILLS ON SPECIAL ORDERS

Pursuant to Rule 4.17(1), the Rules Chair, Majority Leader, and Minority Leader submit the following bills to be placed on the Special Order Calendar for Wednesday, January 14, 2026: SB 250 and CS for SB 318.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Passidomo, Rules Chair
Jim Boyd, Majority Leader
Lori Berman, Minority Leader

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The Committee on Commerce and Tourism recommends the following pass: SB 806

The bill was referred to the Committee on Agriculture under the original reference.

The Committee on Banking and Insurance recommends the following pass: SB 394; SB 832

The Committee on Commerce and Tourism recommends the following pass: SB 874

The bills contained in the foregoing reports were referred to the Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment, and General Government under the original reference.

The Committee on Community Affairs recommends the following pass: SB 504; SB 506

The Committee on Ethics and Elections recommends the following pass: SB 500

The bills contained in the foregoing reports were referred to the Appropriations Committee on Criminal and Civil Justice under the original reference.

The Committee on Education Postsecondary recommends the following pass: SB 176; SB 372; SB 720; SB 816

The bills were referred to the Appropriations Committee on Higher Education under the original reference.

The Committee on Education Pre-K - 12 recommends the following pass: SB 420

The bill was referred to the Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education under the original reference.

The Committee on Commerce and Tourism recommends the following pass: SB 528; SB 696

The Committee on Community Affairs recommends the following pass: SB 594

The bills contained in the foregoing reports were referred to the Appropriations Committee on Transportation, Tourism, and Economic Development under the original reference.

The Committee on Commerce and Tourism recommends the following pass: SB 826

The bill was referred to the Committee on Banking and Insurance under the original reference.

The Committee on Banking and Insurance recommends the following pass: SB 266

The bill was referred to the Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs under the original reference.

The Committee on Banking and Insurance recommends the following pass: SB 642

The bill was referred to the Committee on Criminal Justice under the original reference.

The Committee on Ethics and Elections recommends the following pass: SB 564

The bill was referred to the Committee on Education Pre-K - 12 under the original reference.

The Committee on Commerce and Tourism recommends the following pass: SB 930

The Committee on Community Affairs recommends the following pass: SB 526

The Committee on Ethics and Elections recommends the following pass: SB 572

The bills contained in the foregoing reports were referred to the Committee on Governmental Oversight and Accountability under the original reference.

The Committee on Community Affairs recommends the following pass: SB 840

The Committee on Ethics and Elections recommends the following pass: SB 620

The bills contained in the foregoing reports were referred to the Committee on Judiciary under the original reference.

The Committee on Commerce and Tourism recommends the following pass: SB 386

The Committee on Ethics and Elections recommends the following pass: CS for SB 92

The bills contained in the foregoing reports were referred to the Committee on Rules under the original reference.

The Committee on Fiscal Policy recommends the following pass: SB 320

The bill was placed on the Calendar.

The Committee on Environment and Natural Resources recommends committee substitutes for the following: SB 544; SB 546

The Committee on Regulated Industries recommends a committee substitute for the following: SB 796

The bills with committee substitute attached contained in the foregoing reports were referred to the Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment, and General Government under the original reference.

The Committee on Education Pre-K - 12 recommends a committee substitute for the following: SB 206

The bill with committee substitute attached was referred to the Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education under the original reference.

The Committee on Community Affairs recommends a committee substitute for the following: SB 354

The bill with committee substitute attached was referred to the Appropriations Committee on Transportation, Tourism, and Economic Development under the original reference.

The Committee on Commerce and Tourism recommends a committee substitute for the following: SB 838

The bill with committee substitute attached was referred to the Committee on Banking and Insurance under the original reference.

The Committee on Education Pre-K - 12 recommends a committee substitute for the following: SB 556

The bill with committee substitute attached was referred to the Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs under the original reference.

The Committee on Environment and Natural Resources recommends a committee substitute for the following: SB 848

The bill with committee substitute attached was referred to the Committee on Community Affairs under the original reference.

The Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs recommends a committee substitute for the following: SB 578

The bill with committee substitute attached was referred to the Committee on Fiscal Policy under the original reference.

The Committee on Community Affairs recommends a committee substitute for the following: SB 330

The bill with committee substitute attached was referred to the Committee on Governmental Oversight and Accountability under the original reference.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES RELATING TO EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

The Committee on Education Postsecondary recommends that the Senate confirm the following appointment made by the Governor:

<i>Office and Appointment</i>	<i>For Term Ending</i>
Board of Governors of the State University System	
Appointee: Broxson, Douglas V.	01/06/2031

The Committee on Education Pre-K - 12 recommends that the Senate confirm the following appointments made by the Governor:

<i>Office and Appointment</i>	<i>For Term Ending</i>
Commission for Independent Education	
Appointees: Euliano, John	06/30/2028
Lynn, Christopher	06/30/2027
Stefano, Troy A.	06/30/2027

The Committee on Education Pre-K - 12 recommends that the Senate confirm the following appointment made by the State Board of Education:

Office and Appointment

Education Practices Commission

Appointee: Monteagudo, Omar

*For Term
Ending*

09/30/2027

The appointments were referred to the Committee on Ethics and Elections under the original reference.

INTRODUCTION AND REFERENCE OF BILLS

FIRST READING

Senate Bills 7000-7016—Previously introduced.

By the Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs—

SB 7018—A bill to be entitled An act relating to child welfare; amending s. 39.01, F.S.; revising the definition of the term “visitor”; amending s. 409.1455, F.S.; renaming the Step into Success Workforce Education and Internship Pilot Program as the Step into Success Workforce Education and Internship Program; deleting a provision limiting the duration of the program; requiring the department’s Office of Continuing Care to develop certain cohorts within specified regions, collaborate with certain organizations and recruit mentors and organizations, and provide eligible former foster youth with internship placement opportunities; deleting a provision requiring that the program be administered in a certain manner; deleting obsolete language; requiring the Office of Continuing Care to develop trauma-informed training for mentors of certain former foster youth which meets certain requirements; authorizing the office to provide certain additional trainings on mentorship of special populations; revising the amount of monthly financial assistance that the office shall provide to participating former foster youth; requiring the office to assign experienced staff to serve as program liaisons for a specified purpose; revising qualifications to serve as a mentor; authorizing the department to offer certain training to mentors in subsequent years; authorizing an employee who serves as a mentor to participate in certain additional trainings; deleting a provision authorizing the offset of a reduction in or loss of certain benefits due to receipt of a Step into Success stipend by an additional stipend payment; amending s. 1004.615, F.S.; requiring the Florida Institute for Child Welfare, in collaboration with the department’s Office of Quality and Office of Child and Family Well-being, to establish a certain best practices program; providing an effective date.

—was referred to the Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services; and the Committee on Appropriations.

By the Committee on Agriculture—

SB 7020—A bill to be entitled An act relating to a review under the Open Government Sunset Review Act; amending s. 597.0042, F.S., which provides an exemption from public record requirements for certain aquaculture records held by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; removing the scheduled repeal of the exemption; providing an effective date.

—was referred to the Committees on Governmental Oversight and Accountability; and Rules.

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTES

FIRST READING

By the Committee on Education Pre-K - 12; and Senator Harrell—

CS for SB 206—A bill to be entitled An act relating to students with autism spectrum disorder; amending s. 1004.85, F.S.; requiring certain program participants at educator preparation institutes to complete the autism micro-credential; requiring each educator preparation institute to offer training on teaching students with certain disabilities; creating s. 1009.636, F.S.; providing legislative findings; creating the Autism

Educator Loan Forgiveness Program; providing eligibility requirements; providing criteria for loan repayment assistance; providing requirements for teachers to receive an annual payment; requiring the State Board of Education to adopt rules; amending s. 1012.22, F.S.; revising salary supplements a district school board must provide; revising which district school board duties collective bargaining may not preclude; amending s. 1012.551, F.S.; revising core curricula for teacher preparation programs; requiring a teacher preparation program to include the autism micro-credential; amending s. 1012.552, F.S.; providing that the Coaching for Educator Readiness and Teaching Certification Program must include completion of the autism micro-credential; amending s. 1012.585, F.S.; revising requirements for the renewal of a professional certificate; amending s. 1012.586, F.S.; providing that personnel certified in exceptional student education who complete the Autism Spectrum Disorder Endorsement are eligible for a stipend; amending s. 1012.98, F.S.; requiring a professional learning system to provide at least one autism-specific professional development opportunity; providing requirements for the professional development; providing an effective date.

By the Committee on Community Affairs; and Senator Bradley—

CS for SB 330—A bill to be entitled An act relating to disability provisions for firefighters and law enforcement and correctional officers; amending s. 112.18, F.S.; defining the terms “employing agency” and “heart disease”; revising definitions; providing that a certain previously conducted physical examination satisfies a requirement for a presumption; deleting obsolete language; making technical changes; amending s. 943.13, F.S.; authorizing law enforcement officers, correctional officers, and correctional probation officers, under a specified condition, to use a physical examination from a former employer for the purpose of claiming a specified presumption; providing a finding and declaration of important state interest; providing an effective date.

By the Committee on Community Affairs; and Senator McClain—

CS for SB 354—A bill to be entitled An act relating to blue ribbon projects; creating s. 163.3249, F.S.; providing a purpose and legislative intent; defining terms; requiring that a development project meet certain requirements to qualify as a blue ribbon project; specifying maximum residential density and nonresidential intensity permitted within the development area of a blue ribbon project; requiring that a specified percentage of the project’s residential units meet certain requirements; authorizing the development of the development area in phases for a specified purpose; providing that development rights and mitigation of project impacts shall be vested for at least a certain period, which may be extended under certain circumstances; requiring that a blue ribbon project have a blue ribbon plan; providing requirements for such plan; specifying that a plan is not required to demonstrate certain need; requiring that a project receive dollar-for-dollar credits from a local government under certain circumstances; specifying that a project may be located on land with any future land use designation or zoning designation; prohibiting the required amendment of a comprehensive plan or a required rezoning for approval of a project; authorizing a landowner to apply to the local government for approval of a project; requiring that a project that meets certain requirements receive administrative approval; limiting local government review of a project; providing for the automatic approval of a project under certain circumstances; authorizing applicants to hire private companies to conduct plan reviews and building inspections; requiring an applicant to publish notice of an approved project in a specified manner; requiring an applicant to record the plan for an approved project in the public records of the county in which the project property is located; prohibiting an applicant from amending a recorded plan without undergoing a specified review; authorizing an applicant to appeal the denial of a project application to the Department of Commerce in a specified manner; authorizing a person whose substantial interests are or may be affected by approval of a project to file a petition with the department requesting an administrative hearing in a specified manner; providing requirements for such petition; requiring the department to hold certain hearings before issuing certain orders; requiring the department to determine whether a project meets certain requirements and issue a final order; providing applicability; providing an effective date.

By the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources; and Senator Truenow—

CS for SB 544—A bill to be entitled An act relating to golf courses; transferring, renumbering, and amending s. 403.9339, F.S.; providing a short title; providing legislative findings and intent regarding golf course best management practices certification; defining the term “department”; providing for a type two transfer of the Golf Course Best Management Practices Certification program in the Department of Environmental Protection to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; providing an effective date.

By the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources; and Senators Mayfield and Harrell—

CS for SB 546—A bill to be entitled An act relating to conservation lands; amending s. 253.0341, F.S.; requiring the Division of State Lands to publish certain information on its website before the Acquisition and Restoration Council or the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund meets to review the proposed sale of conservation lands; amending s. 253.42, F.S.; requiring that certain parcels proposed for exchange be appraised in accordance with certain criteria; deleting provisions requiring the division to submit certain requests to the council for review; deleting provisions requiring the division to provide certain recommendations to the board; requiring the division to publish certain information on its website before the council or the board meets to review a proposed land exchange; requiring the division to submit certain requests to the council for review and requiring the council to provide recommendations to the division in certain circumstances; requiring the division to provide certain recommendations to the board of trustees in certain circumstances; making a technical change; amending s. 373.089, F.S.; requiring the governing board of a water management district to publish certain information on its website before meeting to review the proposed sale or exchange of certain lands; amending s. 215.196, F.S.; conforming a cross-reference; providing an effective date.

By the Committee on Education Pre-K - 12; and Senator Berman—

CS for SB 556—A bill to be entitled An act relating to requirements for a standard high school diploma; amending s. 1003.4282, F.S.; providing that students can substitute marching band experience for physical education and performing fine arts credit requirements for a standard high school diploma; providing that students with disabilities may participate in the Special Olympics to meet the physical education requirement for a standard high school diploma; providing an effective date.

By the Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs; and Senator Simon—

CS for SB 578—A bill to be entitled An act relating to the Alzheimer’s Disease Awareness Initiative; creating s. 430.5016, F.S.; requiring the Department of Elderly Affairs to contract for the development and implementation of the Alzheimer’s Disease Awareness Initiative; providing requirements for the initiative; providing requirements for the entity with which the department contracts to develop and implement the initiative; requiring the Alzheimer’s Disease Advisory Committee to make certain recommendations to the department and the Legislature annually; providing an effective date.

By the Committee on Regulated Industries; and Senator Bradley—

CS for SB 796—A bill to be entitled An act relating to veterinary medicine; providing a short title; amending s. 474.201, F.S.; revising legislative findings, intent, and purpose; amending s. 474.202, F.S.; defining the term “veterinary professional associate”; amending s. 474.2021, F.S.; increasing the amount of time for which prescriptions based solely on a veterinary telehealth evaluation may be issued for certain drugs; amending s. 474.203, F.S.; revising the applicability of certain exemptions; creating s. 474.2126, F.S.; providing requirements for veterinary professional associates to receive certificates of registration from the Department of Business and Professional Regulation; requiring the department to make a list of veterinary professional as-

sociate registrants publicly available on its website; authorizing the department to suspend the registration of a veterinary professional associate upon a certain determination by the Board of Veterinary Medicine; authorizing the department to rescind the registration of a veterinary professional associate under certain circumstances; prohibiting a person from holding himself or herself out as a veterinary professional associate under certain circumstances; authorizing a registered veterinary professional associate to engage in the practice of veterinary medicine under certain circumstances; prohibiting a registered veterinary professional associate from taking certain actions; providing exceptions; amending s. 828.30, F.S.; conforming provisions to changes made by the act; providing an effective date.

By the Committee on Commerce and Tourism; and Senator Yarborough—

CS for SB 838—A bill to be entitled An act relating to electronic payments of retail installment contracts; creating s. 520.105, F.S.; defining the term “electronic payment”; authorizing a holder of a retail installment contract, or its agent, to collect a fee for processing a retail buyer’s electronic payment only if certain conditions are met; providing an effective date.

By the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources; and Senator Truenow—

CS for SB 848—A bill to be entitled An act relating to stormwater treatment; amending s. 373.019, F.S.; defining the terms “compensating stormwater treatment” and “total land area”; amending s. 373.4134, F.S.; revising legislative findings; requiring compensating stormwater treatment to comply with certain provisions unless certain circumstances exist; authorizing entities to apply for a water quality enhancement area provisional permit under certain circumstances; requiring the Department of Environmental Protection to issue such provisional permit if certain criteria are met; requiring the department to allow the use of enhancement credits from a water quality enhancement area established under a provisional permit; requiring a water management district issuing an environmental resource permit to certain applicants to allow such applicants to use enhancement credits under certain circumstances; authorizing the department to modify a water quality enhancement area provisional permit after the adoption of certain rules; requiring the department and water management districts to recognize any enhancement credit used from a

water quality enhancement area established pursuant to a provisional permit; amending s. 373.414, F.S.; clarifying the types of mitigation measures for compensating stormwater treatment which the department or a water management district governing board must consider under certain circumstances; authorizing mitigation measures or enhancement credits intended to address certain impacts to be generated by third parties and sold and transferred to environmental resource permit applicants pursuant to specified provisions; requiring, beginning on a specified date, that public landowners direct private entities to cease certain activities upon a certain determination by the department; providing applicability; authorizing a public landowner to allow a private entity to resume compensatory stormwater treatment activities on public lands upon a certain final agency action determination by the department or final determination of a water management district; amending ss. 373.036, 373.250, 373.421, 403.813, and 556.102, F.S.; conforming cross-references; reenacting s. 373.4136(6)(d), F.S., relating to establishment and operation of mitigation banks, to incorporate the amendment made to s. 373.414, F.S., in a reference thereto; providing an effective date.

ENROLLING REPORTS

SCR 1466 has been enrolled, signed by the required constitutional officers, and filed with the Secretary of State on January 14, 2026.

Tracy C. Cantella, Secretary

CORRECTION AND APPROVAL OF JOURNAL

The Journal of January 13 was corrected and approved.

CO-INTRODUCERS

Senators Brodeur—SB 1758; Gaetz—SB 1760; Garcia—SB 674; Massullo—SB 26; Rouson—SB 1700, SB 1760; Yarborough—SB 420

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Senator Passidomo, the Senate adjourned at 5:15 p.m. for the purpose of holding committee meetings and conducting other Senate business to reconvene at 9:00 a.m., Thursday, January 22 or upon call of the President.

JOURNAL OF THE SENATE

**Daily Numeric Index for
January 14, 2026**

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BP — Bill Passed
CO — Co-Introducers
CR — Committee Report
CS — Committee Substitute, First Reading

FR — First Reading
MO — Motion
RC — Reference Change
SM — Special Master Reports
SO — Bills on Special Orders

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