

FPF Legislative Session Report

March 27-31, 2017



As the fourth week of the session ended, we passed the halfway point. To date, there have been 2,130 bills filed in the House and 936 in the Senate. There are 755 Senate bills still in the committee process and 1,144 in the House. The Governor has been presented with 6 bills and he has signed 1 bill into law. There have not been any bills approved without his signature and none have been vetoed.

The session continues to move forward, although some committees are approaching their final meeting for this session, and some are not scheduled to meet again. The House and the Senate still have some philosophical differences, making the meaningful debate difficult. The House and Senate are split on several issues like gambling, Fracking, the Supreme Court, and Enterprise Florida, just to name a few.

The difference between the two proposed budgets is somewhere around 4 billion. There is clearly a **NO TO RAISING TAXES** in the House and allowing property taxes to rise with the values of the property as a tax increase. The Senate doesn't see it that way; if the rate of the tax doesn't change, it's just collecting more money based on growth.

These issues will make finalizing a budget that much more difficult. There are several issues in the budget that affect firefighters – state employees pay raise, and a bill to create career development for officers and firefighters. There is also the funding bill for the Florida Retirement System. This is extremely important because the State of Florida is not held to the same standard that local government is concerning paying the annual required contribution for retirement plans, or what is commonly referred to as the ARC.

Even though HB 143 did not make the agenda for the last meeting of the Oversight, Transparency & Administration Subcommittee, we continued our effort to move SB 158 forward in hopes of sending the bill to the House in messages. Many attempts were made to get Senator Lee to agenda the bill during the last meeting of the Community Affairs Committee. That effort was not successful and the Committee will hold their final meeting Monday, April 3rd.

We continue to closely monitor several bills; drug overdose and impaired health care practitioners. We are continuing to work these bills to get the proper amendments to protect the current status of the law and/or the rules created by statute. A bill, SB 1084, creates a designation of Life Time Firefighter. The language in the bill had a potential negative effect in the future, so we worked to get an amendment filed to protect the current statute while allowing the new ceremonial designation.

Our Brother and Representative, Matt Willhite, has done a great job with correcting the public records exemption for retired or former firefighters. HB 383 has passed out of committee and has been placed on the House calendar for second reading. The companion bill, SB 1108 by Senator Artiles, is in the Rules Committee, which has two more meetings scheduled.

HB 11 by Representative Plakon, which amends the annual reporting of certified bargaining units, passed the House. The bill specifically addresses Unions with less than 50% of the bargaining unit that pay dues and requires that bargaining unit to petition PERC for recertification. Although firefighters, corrections and police officers are exempt from the bill, we are opposed to the bill and are following it very closely.

The House bill passed all committees and was passed on the House floor by a 75 to 41 vote. Four Republicans voted **NO**: Ahern, Altman, Goodson, and Plasencia and four did not vote: Abruzzo, Harrell, Raulerson and Santiago. The Senate bill, 1292, has not been heard in any committee.

In addition to Vice President Rocco Salvatori and Secretary/Treasurer Gilbert Marsh, we had 5th DVP Doug Watler that traveled to Tallahassee; his assistance is greatly appreciated.

RETIREMENT

[**HB 603 Relating to Publicly Funded Defined Benefit Retirement Plans \(Fischer\)**](#)
[**Companion Bill: SB 632 \(Brandes\)**](#)

FPF Position: Watch **FPF Position: Oppose**

3/28/2017 HOUSE Favorable with CS by Oversight, Transparency & Administration Subcommittee; 9 Yeas, 5 Nays. 3/30/2017 HOUSE Committee Substitute Text (C1) Filed. 3/31/2017 HOUSE Now in Appropriations Committee.

EMS ISSUES

[**HB 61 Relating to Emergency Services for an Unintentional Drug Overdose \(L. Lee Jr.\)**](#)
[**Companion Bill: SB 558 \(Passidomo\)**](#)

FPF Position: Watch

3/27/2017 HOUSE Placed on Calendar, on 2nd reading.

[**HB 229 Relating to Programs for Impaired Health Care Practitioners \(Byrd\)**](#)
[**Companion Bill: SB 876 \(Young\)**](#)

FPF Position: Watch

3/28/2017 HOUSE On Committee agenda - Health & Human Services Committee, 03/30/17, 9:00 am, 17 H. 3/30/2017 HOUSE Favorable with CS by Health & Human Services Committee; 16 Yeas, 0 Nays.

[HB 249 Relating to Drug Overdoses \(Rommel\)](#)

[Companion Bill: SB 588 \(Passidomo\)](#)

[FPF Position: Support](#)

3/27/2017 HOUSE Committee Substitute Text (C2) Filed. 3/28/2017 HOUSE Placed on Calendar, on 2nd reading.

[SB 588 Relating to Drug Overdoses \(Passidomo\)](#)

[Companion Bill: HB 249 \(Rommel\)](#)

[FPF Position: Watch](#)

3/27/2017 SENATE Favorable with CS by Health Policy; 7 Yeas, 0 Nays. 3/29/2017 SENATE Committee Substitute Text (C1) Filed. 3/29/2017 SENATE Now in Criminal Justice.

GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

[HB 11 Relating to Labor Organizations \(Plakon\)](#)

[Companion Bill: SB 1292 \(Baxley\)](#)

[FPF Position: Oppose](#)

3/29/2017 HOUSE Read Second Time; Placed on Third Reading, 03/30/17. 3/30/2017 HOUSE Read Third Time; Passed (Vote: 75 Yeas / 41 Nays).

[SB 168 Relating to Career Development for Officers and Firefighters \(J. Latvala\)](#)

[Companion Bill: HB 247 \(Payne\)](#)

[FPF Position: Support](#)

3/27/2017 SENATE Favorable with CS by Governmental Oversight and Accountability; 7 Yeas, 0 Nays. 3/28/2017 SENATE Committee Substitute Text (C1) Filed. 3/29/2017 SENATE Now in Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government.

[SB 278 Relating to Local Tax Referenda \(Steube\)](#)

[Companion Bill: HB 139 \(Ingoglia\)](#)

[FPF Position: Watch](#)

3/28/2017 SENATE Now in Community Affairs.

[HB 383 Relating to Pub. Rec./Former Firefighters Personal Identifying Info \(Willhite\)](#)

[Companion Bill: SB 1108 \(Artiles\)](#)

[FPF Position: Support](#)

3/27/2017 HOUSE On Committee agenda - Government Accountability Committee, 03/29/17, 8:00 am, 17 H. 3/29/2017 HOUSE Favorable by Government Accountability Committee; 22 Yeas, 0 Nays. 3/29/2017 HOUSE Placed on Calendar, on 2nd reading.

[HB 455 Relating to Tax Exemptions for First Responders and Surviving Spouses \(Metz\)](#)

[Companion Bill: SB 764 \(Baxley\)](#)

[FPF Position: Support](#)

3/27/2017 HOUSE Now in Appropriations Committee.

[SB 764 Relating to Tax Exemptions for First Responders and Surviving Spouses \(Baxley\)](#)

[Companion Bill: HB 455 \(Metz\)](#)

[FPF Position: Support](#)

3/28/2017 SENATE Now in Appropriations Subcommittee on Finance and Tax.

[**SB 1108 Relating to Public Records/Firefighters and their Spouses and Children \(Artiles\)**](#)

[**Companion Bill: HB 383 \(Willhite\)**](#)

FPF Position: Support

3/27/2017 SENATE Favorable with CS by Governmental Oversight and Accountability; 6 Yeas, 0 Nays. 3/29/2017 SENATE Committee Substitute Text (C1) Filed. 3/29/2017 SENATE Now in Rules

STATE EMPLOYEES

[**SB 1020 Relating to Collective Bargaining Impasses \(Powell\)**](#)

FPF Position: Watch

3/27/2017 SENATE Placed on Special Order Calendar, 03/30/17. 3/30/2017 SENATE Read Second Time; Placed on Third Reading, 04/04/17.

[**HB 7007 Relating to State Group Insurance Program \(Health & Human Services Committee\)**](#)

[**Companion Bill: SB 900 \(T. Lee\)**](#)

FPF Position: Watch

3/29/2017 SENATE In Messages. 3/31/2017 SENATE Referred to Governmental Oversight and Accountability; Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government; Appropriations; Rules.

MISCELLANEOUS

[**HB 653 Relating to Community Associations \(Moraitis\)**](#)

[**Companion Bill: SB 744 \(Passidomo\)**](#)

FPF Position: Watch

3/28/2017 HOUSE Favorable with CS by Civil Justice & Claims Subcommittee; 10 Yeas, 4 Nays. 3/30/2017 HOUSE Committee Substitute Text (C2) Filed. 3/31/2017 HOUSE Reference to Government Operations & Technology Appropriations Subcommittee added; Remaining references: Government Operations & Technology Appropriations Subcommittee, Commerce Committee. 3/31/2017 HOUSE Now in Government Operations & Technology Appropriations Subcommittee.

[**SB 744 Relating to Community Associations \(Passidomo\)**](#)

[**Companion Bill: HB 653 \(Moraitis\)**](#)

FPF Position: Watch

3/28/2017 SENATE Favorable with CS by Regulated Industries; 10 Yeas, 0 Nays. 3/29/2017 SENATE Committee Substitute Text (C1) Filed. 3/30/2017 SENATE Now in Judiciary.

[**HB 901 Relating to Florida Building Commission \(McClain\)**](#)

[**Companion Bill: SB 7000 \(Community Affairs\)**](#)

FPF Position: Watch

3/28/2017 HOUSE Favorable with CS by Careers & Competition Subcommittee; 14 Yeas, 0 Nays. 3/29/2017 HOUSE Committee Substitute Text (C1) Filed. 3/30/2017 HOUSE Now in Commerce Committee.