



Week Four Legislative Update

2026 Florida Legislative Session (February 2-6)

House OKs Dental Therapy, Nursing Titles, Autonomous Practice

The full House gave the green light to four separate health care proposals on Wednesday, sending the bills to the Senate. One proposal ([HB 363](#)), by GOP Rep. Linda Chaney, would allow dental therapists to perform preventive and routine restorative care—including fillings, temporary crowns and certain tooth extractions—under agreements with supervising dentists. “This bill will help fill the gap in a lack of about 1,300 dentists in the state of Florida,” Chaney said. “Sixty-six of our 67 counties are federally designated as Health Professional Shortage Areas, that’s 5.9 million Floridians living in these 274 HPSAs.” While supporters emphasized that dental therapists would be trained and regulated, and would help underserved and rural communities, opponents warned that the legislation could affect the quality of dental care. “We need to be honest about who would receive this second-tier of care,” argued Fort Lauderdale Democrat Rep. Daryl Campbell during debate. “It will not be the wealthy, it will be low-income Floridians, seniors, and children—the very people with the highest medical risk will be the ones treated by providers with less training.” The proposal passed on an 80-29 vote, sending it to the Senate, where no companion measure was filed. Two other bills that cleared the full House would expand the scope of practice for certain psychiatric nurses and certified registered nurse anesthetists, or CRNAs. The first proposal ([HB 301](#)) would add psychiatric nurses to those authorized to practice autonomously and establish their own practices, provided they meet specific requirements. Currently, only advanced practice registered nurses, or APRNs, are permitted to practice independently, or without physician supervision, within primary care, family medicine, general pediatrics, and general internal medicine under certain circumstances in Florida. The other bill ([HB 375](#)) would allow CRNAs to practice autonomously, removing a requirement for written supervisory agreements with physicians at hospitals and ambulatory surgical centers. While the measures have Senate companions, [SB 138](#) and [SB 462](#), respectively, neither Senate version has been heard in committee. The House psych nurse bill passed on an 88-18 vote, and the CRNA proposal advanced on a 78-28 vote. The only health care bill to receive unanimous support Wednesday on the House floor was [HB 237](#) dealing with nursing titles, despite the issue becoming controversial in previous years. The legislation would tighten rules around who can use certain professional titles by restricting the use of Doctor of Nursing Practice (D.N.P.) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) titles

to those holding a Florida or multistate nursing license. It would also require any doctoral degree holder using the title “doctor” to clearly indicate their profession. The proposal heads to the upper chamber, where an identical Senate companion ([SB 36](#)) is also moving through the committee process.

On the fiscal side, The Florida Senate announced that it will delay releasing its proposed 2026–2027 budget by a week to stay aligned with the House’s schedule, with committees set to begin reviewing portions of the plan on Feb. 12 and the full Appropriations Committee expected to consider the bill on Feb. 18. Lawmakers aim to avoid the prolonged overtime sessions seen last year, with leadership emphasizing ongoing communication between the chambers.

In election related developments, state officials announced that no citizen initiated constitutional amendments have qualified for the 2026 statewide ballot. The Department of State reported that all active petition efforts failed to meet statutory signature thresholds, though the campaign behind a proposed recreational marijuana amendment disputes the determination and may pursue legal remedies. The development follows tighter petition gathering requirements enacted last year and marks a notable departure from recent election cycles.

From the Executive branch, Governor Ron DeSantis announced additional state observances tied to the nation’s 250th anniversary. February 16 will be recognized as a paid state holiday, and admission fees will be waived at state parks and other public lands for several days in mid-February.

Bills That Passed the Florida House (Floor Passage)

✓ HB 301 — Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Autonomous Practice

- **Passed the House on Feb. 4, 2026: YEAS 88, NAYS 18.** ([The Florida Senate](#))
- **What it does:** Authorizes certain **advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs)** to practice **autonomously** when providing mental health services without a required supervising physician protocol. ([The Florida Senate](#))
- **Next step:** Sent to the Florida Senate for consideration.

✓ HB 375 — Autonomous Practice by a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist

- **Passed the House on Feb. 4, 2026: 78 Yea – 28 Nay.** ([The Florida Senate](#))
- **What it does:** Authorizes certain **CRNAs (certified registered nurse anesthetists)** to perform specified anesthesia-related services **without physician supervision protocols**, revising clinical privileges and expanding autonomous practice authority. ([The Florida Senate](#))



- **Next step:** Sent to the Senate (in messages). ([The Florida Senate](#))

Key Takeaway: Both bills represent expansion of **nurse scope of practice and autonomy**, the FOMA continues to advocate against these bills.

Health-Related Bills That Advanced in House Committees (Week 4)

While only two healthcare bills *passed the House floor* during the week of Feb. 2–6, several **other significant health policy and practice bills moved forward through House committees** during Week 4:

HB 693 — Major Health and Human Services Omnibus

- **Advanced out of the *Health Care Facilities & Systems Subcommittee*** (Jan. 29, just prior to Week 4) and was actively being *considered in Health & Human Services and Budget committees*. ([Online Sunshine](#))
- Includes major reforms such as:
 - Eliminating remaining *Certificate of Need* requirements for health facilities.
 - Expanding authority for **APRNs and PAs** (physician assistants).
 - Broader deregulation of certain delegation duties, Medicaid changes, EMS licensure compacts, and insurer payment reforms. ([Online Sunshine](#))
- Still pending further House committee action as of Feb. 3 (reported to Health & Human Services and Budget). ([Online Sunshine](#))

HB 697 — Drug Prices and Coverage

- **Moved further in House Budget Committee** after earlier subcommittee approval. ([Online Sunshine](#))
- Would:
 - Require drug manufacturers to report international pricing data.
 - Set *reference pricing* for prescription drugs in Florida.
 - Prohibit certain PBM formulary practices and cap costs for cash-paying customers up to reference prices. ([Online Sunshine](#))
- As of Week 4, status: actively in the *Health Care Budget Committee* and awaiting further scheduling for committee review or a House calendar slot. ([Online Sunshine](#))

Other Healthcare Policy Action (Week 4)

Other relevant developments in Tallahassee included:



- Advocacy around **Medicaid expansion and Medicaid policy reform bills** such as [SB 1758](#) - Public Assistance – 2026 in the Senate Health Policy Committee (heard during Week 4). Favorable with CS by Health Policy; 8 Yeas, 3 Nays. HB693 is similar – see below for update.

BILL TRACKING

Scope of Practice and Professional Licensure

- **Big Beautiful Healthcare Frontier Act – [HB 693](#) / [HB 695](#) (Redondo)**
Filed as part of a Speaker-supported legislative package, these bills propose multiple scope-of-practice expansions across health care professions. *(Passed the Health Care Facilities Subcommittee 12-4; Awaiting HHS Committee Agenda.)*
- **Autonomous Practice by Physician Assistants – [SB 668](#) (Truenow)**
Authorizes physician assistants to practice independently. *(There is no House companion – this bill is dead)*
- **Prescribing for Physician Assistants – [HB 683](#) / [SB 374](#) (Partington / Trumbull)**
Allows physician assistants to practice independently during a declared state of emergency. *(These bills have not been heard in their first committee's – they are dying)*
- **Autonomous Practice by a CRNA – [HB 375](#) / [SB 462](#) (Giallombardo / Rodriguez)**
Permits certified registered nurse anesthetists to practice independently. *(PASSED HOUSE FLOOR – sent to Senate; Senate bill has not been heard.)*
- **Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Autonomous Practice – [HB 301](#) / [SB 138](#) (Shoaf / Truenow)**
Expands autonomous practice authority for psychiatric advanced practice registered nurses. *(PASSED HOUSE FLOOR – sent to Senate; Senate bill has not been heard.)*
- **Naturopathic Medicine – [HB 223](#) / [SB 688](#) / [SB 542](#) (Smith / Rodriguez / Garcia)**
Creates a licensure pathway for naturopathic practitioners. *(Bills have not been heard in their first committee – bills are dying.)*
- **Chiropractic Medicine – [HB 439](#) / [SB 1524](#) (Cobb / Simon)**
Authorizes chiropractic physicians to possess, prescribe, and administer specified substances, including vitamins, dietary supplements, and epinephrine. *(House passed bill this week, moves to final committee stop; Senate has not held first committee hearing.)*
- **Acupuncture – [HB 169](#) / [SB 672](#) (Alvarez / Calatayud)**
Updates statutory language governing acupuncture practice. *(House bill passed this week; Senate has not held first committee meeting. Bill is on life support)*
- **Use of Professional Nursing Titles – [HB 237](#) / [SB 36](#) (Salzman / Sharief)**
Authorizes use of doctoral nursing titles while requiring clarification of professional role when using the term “doctor.” *(PASSED HOUSE FLOOR this week; Senate passed its first of three committee stops. Bill is moving.)*
- **Mobile Opportunity by Interstate Licensure Endorsement Act [SB154](#)/[HB151](#) (Harrell/Conerly)** Expand ineligibility criteria for licensure by endorsement under the

MOBILE Act to include nonaccredited dental program graduates. Revises the list of individuals ineligible for a health care license by endorsement under the MOBILE Act. Adds a new provision making those who have not graduated from an accredited dental school or dental hygiene program ineligible for licensure by endorsement under chapter 466.

- **Patient-directed Medical Orders [SB 312/](#)[HB369](#) (Rodriguez/Plasencia)** Patient-directed Medical Orders: Revising definitions and defining the term “patient-directed medical order”; authorizing the execution of a patient-directed medical order for a specified purpose; requiring that certain health care services be provided to the principal regardless of the decision to withhold or withdraw life-prolonging procedures; authorizing physicians, physician assistants, and advanced practice registered nurses to withhold or withdraw life-prolonging procedures under certain circumstances without penalty; requiring the Agency for Health Care Administration to create and update a database for the storage of patient-directed medical orders, etc. *(Bill is on life support)*
- **Ambulatory Surgical Centers [SB1156/](#)[HB1207](#) (Trumbull/Oliver)** Establish new licensure and regulatory requirements for ambulatory surgical centers under a newly created chapter separate from hospital regulations, strengthening standards, reporting, and oversight. *(Both Senate and House heard the bills this week; Senate version was Temporarily Postponed; House version moves to its final stop. This bill was moving.)*

Pharmacy Practice

Multiple bills address pharmacy practice and pharmacist authority:

- **Pharmacy – [SB 1142](#) / [HB 1425](#) (Wright / Booth)**
Expands consultant pharmacy provisions to include clinics. *(Bills are on life support – neither bill have been heard in their first committee.)*
- **Administration of Medications by Pharmacists – [HB 407](#) / [SB 294](#) (Alvarez / Rodriguez)**
Authorizes pharmacists to administer medications for medication-assisted treatment and opioid addiction. *(Bills are on life support – neither bill have been heard in their first committee.)*
- **Practice of the Profession of Pharmacy – [HB 1021](#) / [SB 868](#) (Young / Sharief)**
Allows pharmacists to administer medications in Level I and Level II trauma centers. *(Bills are on life support – neither bill have been heard in their first committee.)*

Wrongful Death and Medical Liability

- **Medical Negligence/Wrongful Death – [HB 6003](#) / [SB 1700](#) (Trabulsky / Grall)**
Removes the prohibition on recovery of noneconomic damages in certain medical

negligence wrongful death cases involving adult children and parents. *(House version passed FLOOR and is in Senate Messages; Senate bill has not been heard in its first committee.)*

- **Civil Liability for the Wrongful Death of an Unborn Child – [HB 289](#) / [SB 164](#) (Greco / Grall)**

Expands Florida’s Wrongful Death Act to allow parents of an unborn child to recover damages. *HB289 passed the house floor and is not in Senate Messages and has been referred to Senate Rules Committee. The Senate version is at its third and final stop. These bills are moving.)*

Vaccines, Parental Rights, and Medical Conscience

- **Parental Rights – [HB 173](#) / [SB 166](#) (Kendall / Grall)**
Requires parental consent in various health care situations, including contraceptive information and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases. *(House version passed one committee; Senate bill has not been heard.)*
- **Vaccines – [HB 917](#) / [SB 1756](#) (Holcomb / Yarborough)**
Addresses vaccination discrimination, parental consent and disclosures, alternative vaccination schedules, pharmacist authority to dispense ivermectin, exemptions from immunization requirements, and related liability provisions. *(House version not moving; Senate at second of three committee stops. Bill is dying.)*
- **Medical Conscience – [HB 551](#) / [SB 670](#) (Black / Yarborough)**
Authorizes health care providers to bring a civil cause of action based on medical conscience protections. *(Bills are on life support – neither bill have been heard in their first committee.)*
- **Advertisement of a Harmful Vaccine – [SB408](#) / [HB339](#) (Grall/Miller)** – defines advertisement for vaccine promotions and impose liability on manufacturers for harm caused by advertised vaccines. *SB408 passed its first committee stop on January 20 and moves to Health Policy committee. Bills are on life-support.)*
- **Prohibited Sex-reassignment Prescriptions and Procedures [SB1010](#) / [HB743](#) (Yarborough/Melo)** Prohibit health care practitioners from aiding or abetting in prohibited sex-reassignment prescriptions or procedures for minors and authorize the state to pursue civil actions and penalties. *(House bill passed its second committee stop this week; Senate version is at its second of three stops.)*

Patient Access to Records

- **Patient Access to Records – [HB 1309](#) / [SB 1140](#) (Booth / Grall)**
Requires medical records to be furnished within 14 days of request. *(Senate bill not moving; House version at final house committee awaiting agenda.)*

Health Insurance and Managed Care

Several bills propose reforms to insurance practices, managed care, and patient protections:

- **Managed Care Plans – [HB 531](#) / [SB 568](#) (Barnaby, Basabe / Harrell)**
Revises Medicaid managed care contract requirements, including limits on prior authorization reviews. *(Bills are on life support – neither bill have been heard in their first committee.)*
- **Insurance Claims Payments to Health Care Providers – [HB 1015](#) / [SB 1130](#) (Cassel / Massullo)** Prohibits certain insurance payment practices, including downloading requirements. *(Bills are on life support – neither bill have been heard in their first committee.)*
- **Insurance Claims Payments to Health Care Providers – [HB 1023](#) / [SB 1198](#) (Black / Massullo)** Addresses claim disputes, fees, and related insurance reforms. *(Bills are on life support – neither bill have been heard in their first committee.)*
- **Health Insurer Accountability – [HB 1097](#) (Berfield)**
Requires insurer credentialing within 30 days and includes prompt payment and retroactive denial provisions. *(No Senate companion – Bill is dying.)*
- **Step Therapy – [SB 70](#) (Harrell)** Requires AHCA approval of certain drug products for Medicaid recipients with serious mental illness without step-therapy prior authorization. *(No House companion – Bill is dying.)*
- **Continuity of Care in Health Insurance Contracts – [HB 577](#) / [SB 114](#) (Woodson / Jones)** Requires 60 days' notice to policyholders before termination of provider contracts. *(Bills are on life support – neither bill have been heard in their first committee.)*
- **Medicaid Providers [SB40/HB163](#) (Shareif/Robinson)** Medicaid Providers; Requiring the Agency for Health Care Administration to include specified requirements in its contracts with Medicaid managed care plans; defining the term “outside of regular business hours”. *(Bills are on life support.)*

Other Legislation of Interest

- **Health Care Patient Protection – [SB 68](#) (Harrell (R-Stuart)) and [HB 355](#) by Rep. (Oliver (R-Punta Gorda))** require AHCA, in consultation with the Florida Emergency Medical Services for Children State Partnership Program, to adopt rules that establish minimum standards for pediatric patient care in hospital emergency departments (ED). The bills require all hospitals with EDs to develop and implement policies and procedures for pediatric patient care in the ED, and to designate a physician, physician assistant, nurse, or paramedic to serve as the pediatric emergency care coordinator in the ED. Finally, the bills require all hospital EDs to conduct the National Pediatric Readiness Assessment in accordance with timelines established by the National Pediatric Readiness



Project. This bill passed the House and is now in Senate Messages and referred to Fiscal Policy.

- **Employment Eligibility** – [HB 197](#) by Rep. Berny Jacques (R-Clearwater) [SB1542](#) Sen. Pizzo (D-Miami) and [SB 1278](#) Sen. Martin (R-Lee) requires all private employers, rather than only those employing more than specified number of employees, use E-Verify system to verify new employee's employment. HB197 has passed the House and is currently in Senate Messages. Neither Senate bills have had their first hearing.
- **Florida Health Choices Program** – [SB 440](#) (Leek (R-St. Augustine)) and [HB 141](#) (Yarkosky (R-Clermont)) and [SB1460](#) (Martin (R-Lee)) rename the "Florida Health Choices Program" as "Florida Employee Health Choices Program" and revise purposes and components of the program. The bills revise eligibility and participation requirements for vendors under the program, the types of health insurance products that are available for purchase through program, removes certain pricing transparency requirements, revise the structure of the insurance marketplace process under the program, remove the option for risk pooling under the program, and remove exemptions from certain requirements of Florida Insurance Code under the program.
- **Rural Communities** – [SB 250](#) (Simon (R-Tallahassee)) and [HB723](#) (Abbott (R-Washington)) is a comprehensive package of legislative proposals to create opportunities for rural communities to expand education offerings, increase health care services, and modernize commerce. The bill invests in farm-to-market roads, requires the state land planning agency to give preference for technical assistance funding to local governments located in a rural area of opportunity, revises the conditions required for a county to be considered a fiscally constrained county, creates the Office of Rural Prosperity within the Department of Commerce, requires the Office of Rural Prosperity to administer the Renaissance Grants Program to provide block grants to eligible communities, creates the Public Infrastructure Smart Technology Grant Program within the Office of Rural Prosperity, expands the existing FRAME program to include medical doctors or osteopathic doctors who are board certified or board eligible in emergency medicine, establishes the Stroke, Cardiac, and Obstetric Response and Education (SCORE) Grant Program, appropriates additional funding to enhance Medicaid payments to reimburse rural hospitals similar to Medicare reimbursement, and creates the Florida Arterial Road Modernization Program within the Department of Transportation. SB250 is now in House Messages and waiting on action by the Florida House.
- **Sale and Purchase of Ivermectin** – [HB 29](#) (Holcomb (R-Springhill)) authorizes the sale and purchase of ivermectin suitable for human use as over-the-counter medication without prescription or consultation with a health care provider. (Still no companion in the House – bill is dying.).
- **Protection from Surgical Smoke** – [SB162](#)/[HB93](#) (Davis/Woodson) Requires hospitals & ambulatory surgical centers to adopt & implement policies requiring use of smoke

evacuation systems during certain surgical procedures. *(Bill was moving early – still alive, but shallow breathing.)*

- **Temporary Certificates for Practice in Areas of Critical Need [SB1480](#) [HB809](#) (Burton/Benarroch)** Allow continued practice by certain health care practitioners under temporary certificates in areas of critical need even if those areas lose their designation, provided specific conditions are met. *(House version passed first of two committees this week; Senate version at its last committee stop.)*
- **Statewide Provider and Health Plan Claim Dispute Resolution [SB1082](#)/[HB1449](#) (Grall/Busatta)** Specifies additional circumstances excluding disputed claims from the statewide provider and health plan claim dispute resolution program. Adds claims involving services initiated under s. 395.1041 or 42 U.S.C. s. 1395dd that have been submitted for resolution through the federal independent dispute resolution process to the list of exclusions. Excludes claims for services rendered by out-of-network providers that have been submitted for resolution through the federal independent dispute resolution process. *(Senate version goes to final committee stop; House version passed first committee this week. Bills are alive and kicking)*

Looking Ahead

- The **House floor passage of HB 301 and HB 375** marks significant movement on *nurse scope of practice* and *autonomy expansions*. ([The Florida Senate](#))
- Major omnibus health reform (HB 693) and drug pricing reform (HB 697) are still moving **through House committees** and are likely to be scheduled for floor consideration later in session. ([Online Sunshine](#))
- Bills like **HB 917** continue progressing through committee steps this week, signaling ongoing debate around *health care treatment standards* and *parental rights* provisions. ([Online Sunshine](#))