

# THE INFORMED DEMOCRAT OF SWFL



## Florida Legislative Session: What You Need to Know

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*By Madison Fitzpatrick*

The 2025 session of the Florida State Legislature will begin on March 4th, 2025. Only a few days away! A session happens once every year for 60 consecutive days, and the purpose of a legislative session is for our elected state Senators and Representatives to present, debate, and vote on the issues that will affect Floridians every day. These include bills that will help and harm us. It is vital that Floridians understand the process of the session and the importance of keeping track of our officials and their voting habits. Here are a few things you should know:

1. Just because a bill is written, does not mean it will be passed or even seen in a committee, which is one of the many steps in how a bill becomes a law. In order for a bill to be seen by a committee, the Senate President or the House Speaker must assign a bill to a committee. The President and Speaker are chosen by their respective chambers and reflect the majority party. This year, Republicans have the majority in both chambers. This means the Republicans are choosing what bills will even be seen this year. This also gives Republicans an advantage in passing any bills they want this session.
2. There is a lengthy process for bills to go through, including being read, discussed, and debated in committees (usually 3), being passed in the Florida House of Representatives and the Senate, and being signed by the Governor. Democrats are the minority party for both chambers this year, with only a total of 44 Representatives out of 160 being Democrats! This makes it virtually impossible for Democrats to pass any bills that we, their constituents, want to be passed!
3. You can track bills through the [Florida House](#) and [Senate](#) websites. If there are any issues you are concerned about coming up (abortion, cannabis, education, gun reform, etc.) you can search those keywords on those websites to see what bills are being introduced. This allows you to have first-hand knowledge of what is happening in our legislature. Furthermore, you can livestream or watch back committee meetings from both chambers to hear what is being said by our elected officials and by the public who want to make their voices heard. You can use all of this to call your representatives and tell them your concerns and whether you like or dislike a bill. Remember, representatives and senators are meant to represent what we, the people of Florida, want.

The most important thing you should know is that voting matters in every election. The people passing bills this year were elected, whether we like it or not. The only way to hold them accountable for voting how we want on bills is by voting them in or out of their positions. So come next election, please get out and vote, because the fate of Florida depends on it.

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