News Release
FLORIDA HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES
DANIEL PEREZ
Speaker

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Media Contact
media@FLhouse.gov
(850) 717-5780

Florida House Speaker Perez's Floor Remarks as Prepared for Delivery

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. *(February 19, 2026)*

Members, today we have arrived at the turning point of our Session; where this road we have been traveling together narrows, and our choices ever more sharply shape our future. What happens in the days ahead will decide if we will be here another three weeks or another three months.

Last night, I read about the possibility of a Senate property tax plan that we have been waiting weeks – months - to see. I have tried very hard never to doubt the sincerity of the Senate's words.

The House, on the other hand, prefers actions.

Today, we are having a conversation about historic property tax reform. When we pass Representative Miller's bill off the Floor today, this may well be the most aggressive legislation ever passed by a legislative chamber on property taxes in the history of the United States.

Our actions today are not sudden, nor do they meet any reasonable definition of quick. The Governor pushed this topic into the forefront of our political conversation one year ago. The House has engaged in a steady, thoughtful conversation that began with the work of our Select Committee on Property Taxes. Although this HJR stands as the House's contribution to the property tax conversation, we continue to be open to any of the Senate's ideas – provided those ideas ever materialize as actions.

In this chamber, we have tried to collapse the space between what we say and what we do. We have tackled hard issues from E-Verify to civil liability of an unborn child to lowering the age to purchase a rifle from 21 to 18. Issues that have not seen the light of day in the Senate.

We have engaged with one another fairly and debated emotional issues with respect. We have kept our committee process open longer, and we have tried to empower our chairs to spread their wings. In the Florida House, we have no gatekeeper empowered to decide whether bills live or die, but instead have tried to respect the integrity of our committee process.

I know some of you have bills that have not survived the committee process, and I understand your disappointment. I have been there. But sometimes we have ideas that our colleagues don't share, and that means that we have to listen more, dig deeper, and find new ways to solve old problems. Some things take time.

Also know this, your success as a House Member is not a scorecard of bills passed; it is about how you contribute to this body – the conversations you have had, the work you have been a part of, the ideas you have championed, and the support you have given your colleagues. If this Speakership has had any theme, it has been this: Our whole is always greater than the sum of our parts.

No legislation we produce stands as a bigger testament to that than our budget. Since the great recession, the Florida House has produced its proposed General Appropriations Act by Week 6 and here we are today – on time and ready to proceed. Chairman McClure and our budget subcommittee chairs have done exceptional work. We have produced, for two years in a row, a budget that lowered spending over the prior year and embodies the principles of fiscal conservatism that many of us ran for office espousing.

The question, naturally, is what happens next. At the conclusion of session today, we will appoint conference committees, and we will stand ready to begin the allocation process.

It is our hope and prayer that we will make good progress and be in a position to conference by Week 8 of Session. We will talk to anyone; anytime; about anything. We will never let personalities or past resentments impede our work. But also, please understand, we will not be pushed by artificial deadlines. We will not sacrifice a little integrity, to gain a little time.

I can promise you this: at every step of the way, in every decision we make, this House will be guided by a simple principle: we will do what is best for the people of this beautiful state.

We have a lot to do today. Let's get to work.

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420 The Capitol, 402 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1300