



2019 TOP PRIORITIES

***BILLS PASSED; RESULTS**

Transportation

Action: We urge the Legislature to provide state funding for regional transportation projects in the Tampa Bay area as identified by the regional agencies charged with developing transportation solutions – specifically the Tampa Bay Transportation Management Area Leadership Group (TMA), the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority (TBARTA), and the Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Forward Pinellas.

Useful Resources:

http://tbregionaltransit.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/RTFP_Step3_Update_2018.03.23_2UP.pdf

<http://www.tbarta.com/en/regional-priorities/about/regional-priorities>

<http://forwardpinellas.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/TIP1819.pdf>

SB 7068: Creates the Multi-use Corridors of Regional Economic Significance Program within FDOT; goal is construction and/or expansion of three major toll roads through mainly rural areas. Projected cost: \$45 million in FY 2019-2020; \$90 million in 2020-2021; increasing to a recurring \$140 million in 2022-2023 and beyond.

HB 5: Passed after being amended to include the more favorable Senate Bill language requiring a discretionary sales tax referendum to take place only during a general election. The 2/3 approval threshold was removed for such referenda. Language imposing additional requirements for the citizen initiative process for amending the state constitution was added to this bill on the final day of the session.

HB 107: Makes texting while driving a primary offense, meaning law enforcement can stop motorists for just that offense.

HB 453: Micromobility Devices; Authorizes county or municipality to regulate operation of micromobility devices; authorizes county or municipality to require licensure; requires proof of certain insurance coverage; provides that regulation of micromobility devices is controlled by state & federal law; provides that operator has all rights & duties applicable to rider of bicycle; exempts micromobility device from certain requirements; provides that person is not required to have valid driver license to operate micromobility device; authorizes parking on sidewalk; requires securing of shared micromobility devices under certain circumstances; exempts micromobility devices from certain emblem requirements.



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HB 311: Autonomous Vehicles; Exempts autonomous vehicles & operators from certain prohibitions; provides that human operator is not required to operate fully autonomous vehicle; authorizes fully autonomous vehicle to operate regardless of presence of human operator; provides that automated driving system is deemed operator of autonomous vehicle operating with system engaged; authorizes Florida Turnpike Enterprise to enter into agreements to fund & operate facilities; provides requirements for insurance & operation of on-demand autonomous vehicle networks; revises registration requirements for autonomous vehicles; provides for uniformity of laws governing autonomous vehicles.

Affordable Housing

Action: Clearwater Regional Chamber of Commerce advocates for the allocation of the full amount of the dedicated documentary tax revenues for state and local affordable housing programs as mandated by the Sadowski Act of 1992.

Useful Resources:

<http://www.sadowskicoalition.org/about/>

<https://www.myclearwater.com/home/showdocument?id=2273>

<https://nlihc.org/gap/2016/fl>

Governor DeSantis' \$91 billion budget left the Sadowski Affordable Housing Trust Fund intact, but the Legislature pushed back, appropriating \$125 million of the \$332 million that were available. In the end \$200.6 million went to housing – and \$115 million of that will go to the Florida Panhandle for Hurricane Michael victims.

In the last 20 years, governors and legislators have raided roughly \$2.2 billion from the Sadowski funds to balance the budget. Last year, for example, they raided \$182 million for school security. Since 2012, they've made \$1.2 billion worth of "sweeps," as Tallahassee calls them.

With property values rising impressively over the last decade, the state's affordable housing crisis has worsened. And this year the Legislature weakened the ability of local governments to require that developers include affordable housing in their projects. Now consider that 44 percent of the state's families are poor or live paycheck to paycheck, according to the United Way of Florida's recent report. For the working poor, stable housing would reduce the chances of falling into poverty.



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Workforce Development

Action: The Clearwater Regional Chamber urges our Legislative Delegation to provide the funding and support for the ongoing effort to prepare our citizens for the workplace of tomorrow.

Useful Resources:

<https://www.pcsb.org/cms/lib/FL01903687/Centricity/domain/270/2018%20legislative%20platforms/Legislative%20Platform%202018.pdf>

<http://fsba.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Proposed-2018-Legislative-and-Federal-Platforms.pdf>

<https://www.launchcode.org/>

HB 7071: Workforce Education; Creates “Strengthening Alignment between Industry and Learning to 60” (SAIL to 60) Initiative, designed to increase the percentage of working-age adults who hold a high-value postsecondary certificate, degree or training experience to 60 percent by 2030. Requires Department of Education to aid in increasing public awareness of apprenticeship and preapprenticeship opportunities. Reconstitutes the Higher Education Coordinating Council as the Florida Talent Development Council, revising its membership, and requiring the Council to develop a strategic plan. Creates the Florida Apprenticeship Grant Program to provide competitive grants to expand and enhance apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs.

Red Tide

Action: We urge the Legislature to continue and increase its funding of scientific research related to red tide mitigation and prevention.

Useful Resources:

<https://start1.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/red-tide-mitigation.pdf>

<https://myfwc.com/research/red-tide/>

<https://mote.org/news/article/mote-launches-red-tide-institute-for-mitigation-and-control-thanks-to-found>

<https://www2.whoi.edu/site/andersonlab/current-projects/florida-clay-mitigation/>

SB 1552: Establishes the Florida Red Tide Mitigation and Technology Development Initiative as a partnership between the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission’s Fish and Wildlife Research Institute and the Mote Marine Laboratory. The purpose is to develop technologies and approaches needed to address the control and mitigation of red tide and its impacts. About \$3 million annually for the next six years.

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VISIT FLORIDA

Florida's tourism-marketing arm is looking to make staff cuts and put more of an emphasis on digital media instead of television, as it responds to a 34 percent reduction in state funding.

The Visit Florida Board of Directors will be asked Wednesday to approve several changes to address the Legislature's decision to reduce state funding from \$76 million in the current fiscal year to \$50 million during the year that starts July 1.

Shanna Pace, chief financial officer of Visit Florida, advised members of its Finance Committee on Tuesday staff funding faces an overall reduction by \$3.65 million, though individual positions have not been targeted.

The planned reduction represents 30 percent of the current year's \$12.1 million in overall salaries.

House Speaker Jose Oliva, R-Miami Lakes, backed off in the waning days of the session, after Gov. Ron DeSantis agreed to a Senate proposal of providing \$50 million, rather than the \$76 million the governor requested. The agreement also will keep Visit Florida afloat through next June.

Oliva said he accepted a request from the governor's office to keep Visit Florida in business for another year "so that he would have the opportunity to make an assessment of his own of how unnecessary it is."

The public-private agency anticipates with the reductions, projected revenue for the coming fiscal year will be \$112.1 million, down \$61.3 million from the current year that ends June 30. The total includes state money and private money.

Besides the staffing figure, the biggest hit will come in a \$17.8 million reduction in strategic marketing, specifically media buys directed at winter and family travelers.