

FPF Legislative Session Report

January 22-26, 2018



With the third week complete, the budget process will move into high gear. The House and Senate have released their proposed budgets. A vote by the full House will set the stage for negotiations with the Senate in the near future.

The House will be hosting the budget negotiations this session, and is proposing just under \$87.2 billion. The Senate is recommending about \$100 million more, but still less than the \$87.4 billion proposed by the Governor.

Governor Scott issued a proclamation recognizing January 22-26 as Florida First Responder Appreciation Week. He stated, "Florida is home to the world's best first responders who never hesitate to keep others safe. Every day they dedicate their lives to protect and serve Florida families. That's why I am proud to proclaim this week as Florida First Responder Appreciation Week. I encourage all Floridians to thank first responders for their service to their families and communities."

The Governor's budget proposal included \$5.3 billion for public safety, which is \$200 million more than the current budget. This should help our S-20 brothers and sisters with the present impasse resolution before the legislature.

The Governor recently announced his support for Proposal 49, which is being considered by the Constitution Revision Commission. Proposal 49 will provide free tuition to the families of fallen first responders, state law enforcement officers, and military members who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

Another proposal being considered by the Constitution Revision Commission, which could drastically impact the financing and taxing authority of our Fire Districts, was on the agenda Thursday morning. Proposal 69 would prohibit certain special districts from levying ad valorem taxes after January 7, 2029, or 10 years after the date of voter approval. We were in attendance prepared to address the negative impact of such action, but were pleased to find the proposal was withdrawn from consideration. We will watch for this issue to surface in other forms in the future.

As the legislature moves into the budget process, the committee process starts winding down. It had been suggested that many of the substitutive committees would not meet after this week; however, one of the key House committees is scheduling at least one more meeting.

SB 376 by Senator Book passed the Tourism and Commerce Committee last Tuesday, its second committee, with now two unanimous votes by the committees. The House companion bill, HB 227 by Representative Willhite, has now been placed on the agenda for the Oversight, Transparency & Administration Subcommittee for next Tuesday at 8:30 a.m.

Representative Emily Slosberg filed House Resolution 8029 today, declaring February 3-10, 2018, as Mental Health Awareness Week in Florida. Jon Carter, the Governmental Relations Director for student government at Florida Atlantic University, paved the way for this House Resolution. "I want to erase the stigma that asking for help makes you weak," said Jon Carter.

The resolution seeks to bring awareness to the over 43.6 million Americans, including first responders, who experience some form of mental illness. Over 660,000 adults and 181,000 children in the State of Florida live with some form of serious mental illness.

"Mental illness affects people of all walks of life, including first responders, who often face traumatic events in their line of work. First responders continually put their lives on the line to aid others," stated Representative Emily Slosberg. "The physical risk is unequivocal, and the resulting injuries are more easily identified. Unfortunately, the signs and extent of emotional damage are obscure and sometimes ignored. I am alive today because of the first responders' actions on February 23, 1996, after a fatal car crash in Boca Raton left 5 dead and others with severe injuries."

Our Cancer Bill, SB 900 by Senator Flores, has been placed on the agenda for its first committee of reference. Senator Baxley, Chair of Governmental Oversight and Accountability Committee, will hear the bill next Tuesday, January 30th. A lot of work has gone into getting this bill moving. We want to thank Senator Flores and her staff for all the time and effort they have put into this bill. We continued to work on moving the companion House bill, HB 695 by Representative Latvala, which is now scheduled for a workshop in the Oversight, Transparency & Administration Subcommittee next Tuesday at 8:30 a.m.

The House companion to SB 722 by Senator Garcia, HB 665 by Representative Clemons, which establishes a floor for the COLA calculations related to FRS members hired prior to July 1, 2011, is also scheduled for a workshop in the Oversight, Transparency & Administration Subcommittee next Tuesday at 8:30 a.m.

HB 309 by Representative Antone, which adds specific instructional curriculum to minimum standards that is related to the cancer and mental health risks within the Fire service, is also scheduled for the Oversight, Transparency & Administration Subcommittee for next Tuesday at 8:30 a.m.

The Union Certification bill, HB 25 by Representative Plakon, was passed on the House floor along mostly-party lines in a 65 to 41 vote. The bill requires public unions to report annually the number of employees eligible for representation, and how many actually pay dues.

If the union fails to report the numbers, they would be decertified as the official collective bargaining entity. If less than 50 percent of eligible employees paid dues to the union, the organization could be decertified.

This bill has been attempted over the past three years, but each year it was killed in the Senate. The companion bill, SB 1036 by Senator Steube, has not been heard in any committee.

We had two local bills pass out of the committee process to codify negotiated changes to the local plans for the Firefighters' Relief and Pension Fund of the City of Pensacola and The Firefighters and Police Pension Fund for the City of Tampa. Both bills passed out of their second committee unanimously, and both bills have one more committee reference. Local bills are only heard by the House, which then refers the local bills they pass to the Senate. The Senate will take up all the local bills at one time.

In addition to Vice President Rocco Salvatori and Secretary/Treasurer Gilbert Marsh, we had Omar Blanco, President Metropolitan Dade County Local 1403, and 3rd DVP Bernoska that traveled to Tallahassee; their assistance is greatly appreciated.

Retirement

HB 665 Retirement (Clemons)

Companion Bill: SB 722 (Garcia)

FPF Position: Support

1/26/2018 HOUSE On Committee agenda - Oversight, Transparency & Administration Subcommittee, 01/30/18, 8:30 am, 17 H – Workshop.

HB 977 Retirement of Instructional Personnel & Administrative Personnel (Fine)

Companion Bill: SB 1240 (Mayfield)

FPF Position: Watch

1/23/2018 HOUSE Favorable by Oversight, Transparency & Administration Subcommittee; 12 Yeas, 0 Nays.
1/23/2018 HOUSE Now in Appropriations Committee.

SB 1240 Retirement of Instructional Personnel and Administrative Personnel (Mayfield)

Companion Bill: HB 977 (Fine)

FPF Position: Watch

1/23/2018 SENATE Favorable with CS by Governmental Oversight and Accountability; 6 Yeas, 0 Nays. 1/24/2018 SENATE Committee Substitute Text (C1) Filed. 1/26/2018 SENATE Now in Education.

SB 1758 Special Risk Class (Montford)

Companion Bill: HB 493 (Diaz)

FPF Position: Watch

1/23/2018 SENATE Favorable by Governmental Oversight and Accountability; 7 Yeas, 0 Nays. 1/24/2018 SENATE Now in Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government.

SB 7014 State-Administered Retirement Systems (Governmental Oversight and Accountability)

FPF Position: Support

1/26/2018 SENATE On Committee agenda - Appropriations, 01/31/18, 1:00 pm, 412 K.

Safety and Health

HB 309 Fire Safety (Antone)

Companion Bill: SB 394 (Bracy)

FPF Position: Support

1/26/2018 HOUSE On Committee agenda - Oversight, Transparency & Administration Subcommittee, 01/30/18, 8:30 am, 17 H.

SB 394 Fire Safety (Bracy)

Companion Bill: HB 309 (Antone)

FPF Position: Support

1/23/2018 SENATE Favorable with CS by Governmental Oversight and Accountability; 7 Yeas, 0 Nays. 1/24/2018 SENATE Committee Substitute Text (C1) Filed. 1/26/2018 SENATE Now in Health Policy.

HB 695 Firefighters (C. Latvala)

Companion Bill: SB 900 (Flores)

FPF Position: Support

1/26/2018 HOUSE On Committee agenda - Oversight, Transparency & Administration Subcommittee, 01/30/18, 8:30 am, 17 H – Workshop.

[SB 820 Firesafety Inspectors \(Powell\)](#)

[Companion Bill: HB 637 \(Jacquet\)](#)

[FPF Position: Support](#)

1/23/2018 SENATE Favorable with CS by Governmental Oversight and Accountability; 6 Yeas, 0 Nays. 1/24/2018 SENATE Committee Substitute Text (C1) Filed. 1/26/2018 SENATE Now in Criminal Justice.

[SB 900 Firefighters \(Flores\)](#)

[Companion Bill: HB 695 \(C. Latvala\)](#)

[FPF Position: Support](#)

1/25/2018 SENATE On Committee agenda - Governmental Oversight and Accountability, 01/30/18, 10:00 am, 401 S.

[HB 1061 Community Association Fire and Life Safety Systems \(Moraitis\)](#)

[Companion Bill: SB 1432 \(Farmer\)](#)

[FPF Position: Oppose](#)

1/26/2018 HOUSE On Committee agenda - Careers & Competition Subcommittee, 01/30/18, 1:00 pm, 212 K.

[HB 8029 Mental Health Awareness Week \(Slosberg\)](#)

[FPF Position: Support](#)

Mental Health Awareness Week; Designates February 3-10, 2018, as "Mental Health Awareness Week" in Florida. 1/26/2018 HOUSE Filed.

Collective Bargaining Representation

[HB 25 Labor Organizations \(Plakon\)](#)

[Companion Bill: SB 1036 Labor Organizations \(Steube\)](#)

[FPF Position: Oppose](#)

1/24/2018 HOUSE Read Second Time; Placed on Third Reading, 01/25/18. 1/25/2018 HOUSE Read Third Time; Passed (Vote: 65 Yeas / 41 Nays).

Workers Compensation

[HB 227 Workers' Compensation Benefits for First Responders \(Willhite\)](#)

[Companion Bills: SB 126 \(Torres, Jr.\), HB 629 \(Asencio\), SB 376 \(Book\)](#)

[FPF Position: Support](#)

1/26/2018 HOUSE On Committee agenda - Oversight, Transparency & Administration Subcommittee, 01/30/18, 8:30 am, 17 H.

Watch Bills

[HB 317 Local Tax Referenda \(Ingoglia\)](#)

[Companion Bill: SB 272 \(Brandes\)](#)

1/23/2018 HOUSE Placed on Calendar, on 2nd reading. 1/25/2018 HOUSE Placed on Special Order Calendar, 01/31/18.

[HB 529 Florida Fire Prevention Code \(Diaz\)](#)

[Companion Bill: SB 746 \(Bean\)](#)

1/22/2018 HOUSE Committee Substitute Text (C1) Filed. 1/23/2018 HOUSE Placed on Calendar, on 2nd reading. 1/25/2018 HOUSE Placed on Special Order Calendar, 01/31/18.

SB 746 Florida Fire Prevention Code (Bean)

Companion Bill: HB 529 (Diaz)

1/23/2018 SENATE Favorable with CS by Banking and Insurance; 7 Yeas, 1 Nay. 1/25/2018 SENATE Committee Substitute Text (C1) Filed. 1/26/2018 SENATE Now in Regulated Industries.

HB 1109 State Emergency Communications and Warning System (Stark)

Companion Bill: SB 1466 (Farmer)

1/26/2018 HOUSE On Committee agenda - Oversight, Transparency & Administration Subcommittee, 01/30/18, 8:30 am, 17 H.

SB 1466 State Emergency Communications and Warning System (Farmer)

HB 1109 (Stark)

1/22/2018 SENATE On Committee agenda - Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security, 01/25/18, 1:30 pm, 37 S. 1/25/2018 SENATE Favorable with CS by Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security; 8 Yeas, 0 Nays. 1/26/2018 SENATE Committee Substitute Text (C1) Filed.