

## WEEKLY TALLAHASSEE UPDATE



Last Friday the regular 2024 Florida Legislative Session adjourned with the "sine die" tradition in the Capitol rotunda. During the 2024 session, over 1900 bills were filed, of which more than 320 passed through both chambers. Passing the largest budget in Florida's history, the 2024 - 2025 State budget is sitting at \$117.5 billion before any line-item vetoes by Governor DeSantis. Here are some additional takeaways from the 2024 session:

This June, Florida's Business Rent Tax will be reduced to 2% from 4.5% as Florida's unemployment trust fund is being replenished. Florida is the only state that has a business rent tax, with an estimated savings of \$300 million each year for businesses for every percent decrease of the Florida Business Rent Tax.

The Florida Legislature took steps this year to bring further stability to Florida's insurance market by working to return Citizens Property Insurance Corporation to its intended position of being the insurer of last resort, while reducing the possibility for assessments and hurricane taxes. This was partially accomplished by allowing approved companies to take out policies from Citizens on properties that are non-primary residences or second homes.

Regarding cybersecurity, the Florida Legislature passed legislation to incentivize companies to follow nationally recognized cybersecurity protocols by offering protections for liability if a data breach were to happen. The legislation aims to ensure uninterrupted services across the state while fortifying our current cyber infrastructure.

"Availability and Affordability of Housing" was a popular topic during the 2024 legislative session. Legislation was passed aiming to expedite the approval process for residential building permits, which should lead to reduced costs by allowing for quicker build times. Another bill passed requires local governments to begin issuing temporary building permits once a temporary plat has been approved.

A main priority of Senate President Kathleen Passidomo, "Live Healthy" saw success from this legislative session. Live Healthy aims to address Florida's health care workforce shortages by creating new opportunities for education, training, and retention. Live Healthy also seeks to improve care by "reducing barriers for providers, such as increasing reimbursement rates and incentivizing providers." The legislation also includes provisions for creating a "framework for behavioral health teaching hospitals to develop a workforce necessary to meet the increasing need for our mental health services."

Affordable childcare for working families gained traction during the 2024 legislative session. For example, the School Readiness Plus program expands access to incentivized early learning. The 2024-2025 budget includes a provision that incentivizes employers to provide childcare for their employees, a long sought after win-win solution for employees and employers.

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Florida's businesses will be seeing consistency with new legislation that prohibits local governments and municipalities from "adopting a patchwork of heat illness ordinances for outdoor workers and eliminating the ability of local jurisdictions to mandate wages or benefits on private employers through their purchasing or procurement processes that are above what state or federal law requires."

Thank you for reading along each week throughout the 2024 Florida Legislative Session. I hope you have found these updates helpful, quick, and informative. If you have an interest in participating in the Public Policy Committee at the Venice Area Chamber of Commerce, please reach out to the VACC and express your interest. If you have any questions regarding the Florida legislative process or any topics covered during these weekly updates, please don't hesitate to reach out.

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**Sources:**

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