



The Florida House of Representatives

Paul Renner
Speaker

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
May 5, 2023

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Florida House Approves Family First Funding Framework, Adjourns *Sine Die*

*2023 Session Features Transformative Investments in Families, Workers,
Education, Environment, and Infrastructure*

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (May 5, 2023) — Today, before adjourning *Sine Die*, the Florida House passed Senate Bill 2500, the General Appropriations Act, a balanced state budget for the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year. The budget features record per-child K-12 funding, record investments in land conservation, and record levels of reserves. Legislators also capped off the 2023 session with nearly \$3 billion in tax relief, focused on putting money back in the pockets of hard-working Floridians. Notably, the tax package includes several sales tax holidays and new, permanent sales tax exemptions on diapers and baby and toddler products.

Florida House Speaker Paul Renner (R-Palm Coast) said, “Florida’s future is bright because this budget makes prudent and strategic investments to address the needs of our families, local communities, schools, and environment. Feeling the strain of inflation and an affordability crisis, we are giving Florida families more of their money back. I commend Appropriations Chair Tom Leek, his subcommittee chairs, and House Appropriations staff for their diligent work in prioritizing the most urgent needs of this state. I am proud to put forward a budget that allows us to deliver on the promise of leaving Florida better off than we found it for future generations.”

Appropriations Chair Tom Leek (R-Ormond Beach) added, “This is a fiscally responsible budget that makes meaningful investments in Florida’s families, public servants, and infrastructure while maintaining historic levels of reserves. We increase state employee pay and provide salary increases for correctional officers, assistant state attorneys, and assistant public defenders. We were also able to reduce the retirement years for special risk law enforcement back to 25 years from the current 30 years. Thank you to Speaker Renner for the privilege of representing the House in the budget process this year.”

The \$117 billion budget is made up of \$46.5 billion in General Revenue, \$29.5 billion in State Trust Funds, and \$41 billion in Federal Trust Funds. It represents a 5.5% increase over the current year budget, notably offset by national inflation trends, record state visitation, and migration of over 1,000 people into Florida each day, straining resources, services, and infrastructure.

To boost education and make sure every student achieves their full potential, the budget includes \$252.8 million for classroom teachers and other instructional personnel salary increases. The hallmark of the PreK-12 budget is the updated Florida Education Finance Program funding formula which aligns the FEFP with the state's education choice policy. The new FEFP received a \$2.2 billion (9.04%) increase over the current year and provides an increase of \$404.67 (4.91%) for a total funds per student of \$8,648.11.

PreK-12 funding also provides:

- Additional \$20 million to increase the base student allocation for the VPK program;
- \$100 million increase to the School Readiness Allocation;
- \$24 million to establish the Florida School for Competitive Academics;
- \$16 million for additional reading literacy support to students in kindergarten through grade 5 enrolled in a public school and who scored below a certain level;
- \$10 million for honorably discharged or retired military veterans and retired first responders who commit to joining the teaching profession as full-time classroom teachers; and
- \$5 million to fund a grant program for school districts and charter schools interested in implementing the new school start time requirements prior to the July 1, 2026, deadline.

The budget includes \$47.3 billion to address health care needs across the state, including \$76.1 million to increase Medicaid reimbursement rates for pediatric physicians, \$20.6 million to increase the income eligibility threshold for KidCare coverage to 300% of the federal poverty level, \$125 million for nursing home rate increases tied to quality initiatives, \$79.6 million to serve an anticipated 1,200 individuals from the Home and Community-Based Services Medicaid Waiver who are determined to be in crisis, and \$295.4 million for prevention and treatment services that address the opioid epidemic.

The Legislature allocated \$6.7 billion to fund our justice system, including \$33.3 million to expand education programs within the Department of Corrections. The budget increases funding of the State-Operated Institutions Inmate Welfare Trust Fund by \$29.5 million to offer inmates improved and increased access to wellness activities. It puts \$24.5 million toward IT, investigative, and protection resources for the Department of Law Enforcement and \$20 million toward the State Assistance for Fentanyl Eradication (S.A.F.E.) in Florida program to support drug trafficking prevention and interdictions.

To address the long-term infrastructure needs of an ever-growing state, the budget allocates \$20.9 billion, which includes full funding (\$13.6 billion) of the Department of Transportation's 5-year Transportation Work Program and \$4 billion to accelerate the completion of selected road projects to provide traffic congestion relief in the State of Florida. It also funds the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program with \$100 million to expand high-speed internet access and allots \$401 million for local transportation projects.

The budget allocates \$8.3 billion to fund Florida's higher education system, currently ranked the best in the nation. Of that, \$350 million goes to the State University System for performance-based incentive funding, and \$155.7 million goes to the Florida College System for workload funding. \$36.2 million is set

aside to fully fund each school district career college and technical center. The budget holds the line on state college and university tuition rates.

Understanding the immense value of Florida's natural resources, the Agriculture and Natural Resources portion of the budget allocates \$7.5 billion to support and preserve environmental assets. It includes \$1.1 billion for land acquisition, which accounts for funding of the Florida Forever Program, the Rural and Family Lands Protection Program, and immediate acquisition of lands within the Florida Wildlife Corridor. The Resilient Florida Program receives \$320 million for projects included in the Statewide Flooding and Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan and for Resilient Florida planning grants. \$206 million is allocated to assist local governments with beach and dune restoration, nourishment, and inlet management. This portion of the budget also allocates \$1.6 billion to protect Florida's water resources, including:

- \$694.6 million for Everglades restoration;
- \$200 million for wastewater grants to help communities across Florida reduce excess nutrient pollution within a basin management action plan; and
- \$50 million for springs restoration, protection, and preservation.

To address Florida's administrative and technology needs, the budget invests \$111.4 million for Fixed Capital Outlay for deferred maintenance of state buildings, \$100 million for grants to harden Floridians' homes that qualify under the My Safe Florida Home Program, \$40 million for a cybersecurity competitive grant program for local governments, and \$59.4 million for distributions to fiscally constrained counties.

The Budget, also passed by the Senate today, now goes to Governor DeSantis' desk for his signature.

For more information on SB 2500, please visit www.myfloridahouse.gov.

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