SBM PARTNERS

TO: Brevard County Board of County Commissioners
FROM: Steve Crisafulli
DATE: July 1, 2026
RE: 2026 Legislative Briefing

The 2026 Regular Session of the Florida Legislature concluded on March 13, 2026, without the Legislature reaching agreement on the Fiscal Year 2026–2027 General Appropriations Act. Unlike the previous year, when lawmakers extended the regular session to complete the state budget, the Legislature adjourned *sine die*, resulting in all legislation that had not been passed by both chambers prior to adjournment failing for the session.

In mid-May, the Governor convened the Legislature in Special Session to finalize the state budget. Brevard County was successful in securing funding through the appropriations process, with the Legislature approving funding for eight of the County's twelve legislative funding requests. Of those eight appropriations, two were subsequently vetoed by the Governor (see below).

The County's success during the appropriations process was made possible through the strong advocacy and support of House Majority Leader Tyler Sirois and Senator Debbie Mayfield. The following items summarize the projects that received legislative funding, with those subject to a gubernatorial veto clearly identified.

Projects:

Signed by the Governor

North Banana River Drive South Bridge (Replacement)	$1,798,000
Brevard County - Septic Upgrades to Advance Treatment Units	$1,500,000
Brevard County Sykes Creek Phase II Environmental Dredging	$2,162,000
Brevard Newfound Harbor Drainage Improvements	$630,612
Brevard Indian River Lagoon Circulation Project	$175,000
Brevard County Indialantic Stormwater Drainage Project Design - Phase 7	$105,000

Vetoed by the Governor

Maemir/Martin/Fiske Area Drainage Improvements – Multi-basin Study	$250,000
Brevard County Stadium and Cuddington Signal	$250,000

Other legislatively funded items for Brevard County and approved by the Governor:

Brevard County Animal Care Center Animal Project		$5,000,000
Arterial Highway Construction	Transportation Work Program	$2,500,664
Aviation Development Grants	Transportation Work Program	$84,665,000

Bridge Construction	Transportation Work Program	$6,269,939
Construction Inspection Consultants	Transportation Work Program	$7,906,254
Highway Maintenance Contracts	Transportation Work Program	$2,673,078
Highway Safety Construction Grants	Transportation Work Program	$3,538,393
Intermodal Development Grants	Transportation Work Program	$7,741,960
Intrastate Highway Construction	Transportation Work Program	$55,242,853
Preliminary Engineering Consultants	Transportation Work Program	$2,500,000
Public Transit Development Grants	Transportation Work Program	$1,998,604
Resurfacing	Transportation Work Program	$71,344,026
Right-of-Way Land Acquisition	Transportation Work Program	$13,583,000
Right-of-Way Support	Transportation Work Program	$2,641,571
Seaport Grants	Transportation Work Program	$15,000,000
Traffic Engineering Consultants	Transportation Work Program	$1,940,043
Transportation Planning Grants	Transportation Work Program	$2,039,674

Session Overview

- The 2026 Florida Legislature approved a **$114.5 billion state budget** during a May special session after failing to reach a budget agreement during the regular session.
- Lawmakers filed **1,896 measures** during the 2026 Regular Session, but due to House and Senate gridlock, only **237 measures** were passed, including **192 general bills**—one of the lowest bill passage totals in recent years.

Budget & Finance Highlights

- **Total Budget:** $114.5 billion, with Governor Ron DeSantis subsequently issuing **$810 million in line-item vetoes**.
- **Education Funding:** Provides **$30 billion** for Florida's K-12 public school system, establishing a record **$9,338 per student**, and increases the state's recurring investment in teacher salary enhancements to **$1.56 billion**.
- **Worker & Law Enforcement Support:** Allocates **$50 million** for the Hometown Heroes housing program and provides **4% pay raises** for state law enforcement officers and firefighters.
- **Tax Relief Package:** Delivers an estimated **$290 million** in tax relief through sales tax holidays for hunting and camping supplies, home hardening tax exemptions, and assessment caps for mobile homes.

*Of significance to Brevard County the **SB 180 "Glitch Bill" Failed:** The Senate unanimously passed SB 840 to narrow and clarify the sweeping land-use restrictions enacted in SB 180 (2025). Despite broad bipartisan Senate support, the House never took up the bill for consideration, leaving the original SB 180 provisions in place. Consequently, local governments remain subject to the law's restrictions while constitutional challenges continue through the courts.

The following is a list of bills that passed this session that may impact County operations. Many of these bills were signed into law by the governor with a few being vetoed, they are noted as such.

Growth Management & Development Regulations

HB 399 – Land Use and Development Regulations (***signed into law by the Governor)***

This bill makes multiple changes to Florida's land-use and development regulatory framework affecting local governments. The bill establishes new requirements for development permit fees, land-use compatibility standards, comprehensive plan amendment procedures, and local regulation of certain housing and tourism facilities.

The bill requires that application fees for development permits or development orders charged by counties or municipalities be reasonably related to the direct and indirect costs of reviewing and processing the application. Local governments are prohibited from calculating these fees as a percentage of construction costs, project valuation, or site costs.

The legislation also requires local comprehensive plans and land development regulations to include factors for evaluating compatibility of residential uses and to incorporate objective design standards or mitigation measures to address potential incompatibility.

Additionally, the bill:

- Requires local governments to administratively approve certain minor special exceptions or variances for qualifying large destination resorts.
- Establishes requirements related to school district–local government interlocal agreements addressing access to easements and rights-of-way for school facilities.
- Clarifies that amendments to the future land-use element of a comprehensive plan must be adopted by a majority vote of the governing body present at the hearing.
- Requires the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) to study the impacts of removing Urban Development Boundaries (UDBs) or similar growth boundaries in counties.

HB 803 – Building Permits and Inspections (***signed into law by the Governor)***

This bill revises several provisions related to building permits, inspections, and the use of private providers under the Florida Building Code. The bill aims to streamline permitting processes, establish uniform forms, and expand the role of private inspection services.

The legislation requires the Florida Building Commission to develop uniform residential and commercial building permit applications that must be used statewide. Local governments may not alter the forms adopted by the commission.

The bill modifies procedures for private providers that conduct building code inspection services, including registration requirements, documentation procedures, electronic submission of records, and audit processes. Local governments must accept certain inspection documents electronically and cannot discourage the use of private providers or impose additional verification requirements beyond registration information.

It establishes shorter timelines for certain building permit decisions. For example, local governments must review completed permit applications for certain residential improvements under $15,000 within five business days.

Additional provisions address the expiration of residential building permits, allow placement of certain residential manufactured buildings in specified locations, and prohibit local governments from requiring permits for certain retaining walls or barriers.

HB 1389 – Affordable Housing (Live Local) (*signed into law by the Governor)***

The bill expands Florida's existing affordable housing preemption laws for counties and municipalities. It requires local governments to allow certain multifamily and mixed-use residential developments on land zoned for commercial, industrial, or mixed use, including qualifying public land and certain religious-institution property over three acres that has had a house of worship for at least 10 years. The bill limits local height, setback, and step back restrictions for those projects, extends certain parcel-assemblage language through July 1, 2030, and revises how affordable housing tax exemptions may be limited by local taxing authorities.

It also clarifies that airport-zoning protections still apply unless the airport governing body approves the project, authorizes local incentives for land donations supporting affordable housing for military families, expands fair-housing protections involving development financing, waives sovereign immunity for certain actions under that section, and directs OPPAGA to study mezzanine finance and tiny homes for affordable housing.

SB 1614 – Enforcement of the Florida Building Code (*signed into law by the Governor)***

The bill revises how local governments may use excess revenues generated from Florida Building Code enforcement activities. Under current law, counties and municipalities may retain a limited amount of building permit and inspection fee revenue. If revenues exceed the allowable carryforward amount, the excess must be used for specified purposes outlined in statute. The bill removes one of those allowable uses.

Specifically, it eliminates the ability for a local government to use excess building code enforcement funds to construct a building or structure that houses the local government's building code enforcement agency. After the change, excess funds above the statutory carryforward limit must instead be used for other authorized purposes, including rebating or reducing fees, upgrading technology systems used for permitting and inspections, or providing training for building officials, inspectors, and plans examiners.

The legislation amends provisions of the Florida Building Code enforcement funding structure but does not otherwise modify fee authority or the carryforward limits themselves.

SB 594 – Local Housing Assistance Plans (*signed into law by the Governor)***

The bill revises Florida's State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) Program requirements relating to local housing assistance plans (LHAPs). The bill expands how counties and eligible municipalities may use SHIP funds to support mobile homeowners, particularly those facing housing instability due to rising lot rents or park closures.

The legislation authorizes local governments to use SHIP funds to provide lot rental assistance for mobile homeowners for up to six months of rent. The bill clarifies that this assistance qualifies as a homeownership activity for purposes of SHIP funding allocations.

In addition, the bill requires each county and eligible municipality to include strategies in their LHAPs that specifically address the needs of mobile homeowners, including assistance for those displaced by mobile home park closures.
The bill also clarifies that SHIP funds may be used for rehabilitation and emergency repairs to mobile homes, and it removes an existing statutory limitation restricting the percentage of SHIP funds that can be used for manufactured housing.

HB 929 – Local Government Regulation of Chickees (*signed into law by the Governor)***
The bill addresses the regulation of "chickees," traditional open-sided structures with thatched roofs historically used by the Seminole Tribe of Florida and the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida. The bill restricts the authority of counties and municipalities to regulate the construction of these structures under certain circumstances.
The bill prohibits a county or municipality from adopting or enforcing an ordinance, regulation, or policy that prevents a tribal member from constructing a chickee if certain conditions are met. Specifically, a chickee may be constructed in a side yard if it is at least 10 feet from a property line, and near another structure if it is at least 10 feet away from that structure.
Local governments are also prohibited from adopting regulations related to chickees that are more restrictive than applicable federal floodplain management regulations. The bill revises the statutory definition of "chickee" for purposes of exemption from the Florida Building Code, allowing such structures to include features such as wooden decks, non-wood fasteners, and permitted electrical or plumbing components associated with the structure.
Additionally, the bill creates a criminal penalty for individuals who are not members of the tribes who construct chickees in an attempt to claim statutory exemption, and it provides certain exemptions from the Florida Fire Prevention Code when specified spacing or fire-safety measures are present.

SB 488 – **Transportation (***signed into law by the Governor)***
The bill makes a broad set of transportation and motor vehicle law changes. The most significant county impact appears in the bill's revisions to s. 337.401, F.S. Those changes further limit county authority over communications-facility permitting in county rights of-way. Counties may not require certain surveys or facility inventories, may not impose taxes, fees, costs, charges, or exactions for placement of communications facilities beyond what state law authorizes, may not require cash escrow or certain extra agreement terms, and may not impose landscaping or vegetation-management requirements except as specifically allowed. Counties may still require certain bonds or financial instruments, but under tighter statutory limits.
The bill also affects county sheriffs and local law enforcement because fewer lower-value property-damage crashes may require mandatory law-enforcement notification after the threshold increase to $2,000.

SB 686- **Agricultural Enclaves (***signed into law by the Governor)***
The bill rewrites Florida's process for developing certain "agricultural enclaves," meaning qualifying unincorporated agricultural land mostly surrounded by development. Instead of relying primarily on a comprehensive plan amendment pathway, the bill creates a certification process

through the local government. If certified, the owner or authorized agent may submit development plans that must be treated as a conforming use even if the local comprehensive plan, future land use designation, or zoning would otherwise conflict. The bill also broadens the definition of agricultural enclave to cover additional parcel configurations, including some lands near interstate highways or within certain rural study areas, limits eligibility to counties with populations of 1.75 million or less, and provides that the new enclave provisions expire January 1, 2028, after which the statutory text reverts unless otherwise amended.

HB 927**- Local Land Planning and Development (***signed into law by the Governor)***

The bill revises state law governing local government development review processes to accelerate permitting and development approvals. The bill requires counties with populations of 75,000 or more, as well as similarly sized municipalities, to establish a development preapplication consultation services program by January 1, 2027.

The program must allow applicants to meet with local government staff or authorized reviewers before submitting a formal development permit or development order application. During this process, local governments must identify the minimum information and documentation required for an application to be deemed complete. Applicants may also request review of site plans, engineering plans, or plats to determine whether they satisfy local requirements before formal submission. Once a completed application is submitted, the county must review the application for completeness within five business days and then issue a final decision—approval, approval with conditions, or denial—within 45 business days. If a local government fails to meet statutory deadlines and required notices are provided, the application may be deemed approved by operation of law.

The bill also expands the use of qualified contractors or private providers to review development applications and certify compliance with local regulations. Local governments must maintain a registry of qualified contractors and allow applicants to use them for certain review functions.

SB 962 **– Affordable Housing (***signed into law by the Governor)***

The bill modifies provisions in Florida's Live Local Act that allow affordable housing developments in certain non-residential zoning districts. The bill revises statutory definitions used to determine where these developments may be authorized by local governments. Under current law, counties and municipalities must allow certain affordable housing developments in areas zoned for commercial, industrial, or mixed use, provided the project meets affordability requirements (generally reserving at least 40% of units for households earning up to 120% of area median income for at least 30 years).

The bill clarifies that farms and farm operations, including activities related to the packaging and sale of products produced on the premises, are not considered commercial, industrial, or mixed use zoning categories for purposes of the Live Local Act. As a result, such agricultural uses cannot be used as the zoning basis to require local governments to approve qualifying affordable housing developments.

SB 382- **Micromobility Devices** (Vetoed by the Governor)
The bill updates Florida law governing electric bicycles and other micromobility devices, primarily focusing on safety requirements and improved crash data collection. The bill establishes new operational rules for electric bicycles, particularly in areas shared with pedestrians. Riders operating an electric bicycle on sidewalks or other pedestrian-designated areas may not exceed 10 miles per hour when a pedestrian is within 50 feet. Riders on shared paths not adjacent to roadways must yield to pedestrians and provide an audible signal before passing. Violations are treated as noncriminal traffic infractions punishable as nonmoving violations.
The legislation also creates a Micromobility Device Safety Task Force within the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV). The task force will examine the state's regulatory framework for electric bicycles and other micromobility devices and recommend policy improvements to enhance safety and reduce injuries and fatalities. Membership includes representatives from law enforcement, local governments, the Florida Association of Counties, and other stakeholders.
In addition, the bill requires the Florida Highway Patrol and local law enforcement agencies to maintain records of crashes involving micromobility devices and report those incidents to DHSMV for statewide analysis.

Finance, Tax & Administration

SB 110 – Homestead Exemptions (*signed into law by the Governor)***
The bill revises Florida law governing eligibility for the homestead property tax exemption. Specifically, the bill clarifies when a person holding a long-term residential lease may be considered to have "legal or beneficial and equitable title" to property for purposes of qualifying for the homestead exemption.
Under current law, individuals who possess certain ownership interests, such as purchasers under a recorded contract or lessees holding a long-term leasehold interest, may qualify for the homestead exemption if they permanently reside on the property.
The bill amends s. 196.041, F.S. to clarify that a lessee with a bona fide lease of 98 years or more for a residential parcel or condominium parcel is considered to hold sufficient equitable title to qualify for the homestead exemption even if the lease contains a provision terminating the lease upon the death of the lessee. The legislation states that the change is remedial and clarifying in nature, reinforcing existing policy that long-term leaseholders who effectively bear the benefits and burdens of ownership should be eligible for homestead tax treatment.

HB 145 – Sovereign Immunity (Vetoed by the Governor)
The bill revises Florida's waiver of sovereign immunity in tort. Specifically, it increases the general liability caps in s. 768.28 from $200,000 per person / $300,000 per incident to $350,000 per person / $500,000 per incident. It keeps excess judgments above those caps subject to further legislative action unless otherwise payable within insurance limits.
The bill also revises claim-processing and litigation rules, including claim presentment, when a claim is deemed denied, and the filing deadlines for certain tort actions. The bill applies to causes of action that accrue on or after October 1, 2026. It also makes conforming changes to several cross-references tied to s. 768.28.

[HB 655](#) – Attorney Meetings to Discuss Property Rights Claims (***signed into law by the Governor)***
The bill creates s. 70.90, F.S., to let a state or local agency, or its chief administrative or executive officer, meet privately with the agency's attorney during the 90-day pre-suit notice period for claims under the Bert J. Harris, Jr., Private Property Rights Protection Act. The closed session can only cover settlement negotiations or strategy related to the claim.

The bill requires the attorney to announce the need for advice at a public meeting, require reasonable public notice, require the session to be recorded by a certified court reporter, and require the meeting to reopen afterward with a public announcement that the session ended.

Transcripts and related records generated during the exempt session would remain confidential until the claim is settled or the limitations period expires without litigation or settlement. The exemption would sunset on October 2, 2031, unless reenacted.

HB 905 – Foreign Influence (***signed into law by the Governor)***
The bill establishes new safeguards aimed at limiting the influence of certain foreign governments and affiliated entities within Florida's political system and government. Countries of concern include China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, Cuba, Venezuela (Maduro regime), Syria, and Qatar.

The legislation establishes ethics restrictions for public officials and employees, prohibiting them from soliciting or accepting gifts or anything of value from foreign countries of concern or designated foreign terrorist organizations.

The bill also prohibits certain agreements or activities involving foreign countries of concern, terminates existing agreements by a specified date, and establishes criminal and civil penalties for violations.

HB 919 – Commercial Service Airports (***signed into law by the Governor)***
The bill preempts to the state the naming of "major commercial service airports," defined as medium- or large-hub commercial airports under Federal Aviation Administration criteria. It would codify the names of seven major commercial service airports in Florida, keeping the current names for Orlando, Miami, Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood, Tampa, Southwest Florida, and Jacksonville. It would also rename Palm Beach International Airport as "President Donald J. Trump International Airport," subject to FAA approval and an agreement allowing Palm Beach County to use that name at no cost for airport branding and related purposes. The bill requires the Department of Transportation to review the list annually and notify legislative leaders if airports should be added or removed because of FAA status changes. Government records created on or after July 1, 2026, would have to use the names listed in the bill. The bill also states that airport names are branding designations only and do not create a new legal entity.

SB 1134 – Official Actions of Local Governments (DEI) (***signed into law by the Governor)***
The bill creates new state-law prohibitions on county and municipal actions related to "diversity, equity, and inclusion" as defined in the bill. It bars counties and municipalities from funding, promoting, or taking official action on DEI through ordinances, resolutions, rules, regulations, programs, or policies, and it would declare existing local DEI related ordinances, resolutions, rules, regulations, programs, and policies void.

The bill also prohibits local governments from spending any funds to create, maintain, or staff a DEI office or to employ or contract with a DEI officer. In addition, it prohibits local funds from being used by employees, contractors, volunteers, vendors, or agents to promote DEI initiatives. The bill authorizes resident lawsuits against counties or municipalities for violations and allows courts to award declaratory and injunctive relief, damages, and costs.
Lastly, it requires prospective recipients of county or municipal contracts or grants to certify that they do not and will not use local funds for DEI-related instructional requirements as described in the bill.

HB 1329 – Local Government Finances (*signed into law by the Governor)***
Titled the "Local Government Financial Transparency and Accountability Act", the bill expands local budget transparency requirements for counties, municipalities, and special districts.

Requires counties and municipalities to post tentative budgets online at least five days before public hearings, and final budgets must remain posted for at least five years *(increased from two)*.

Mandates a budget workshop for both county and municipal governments to explore a 10% reduction exercise, with documentation posted online.

Requires counties and municipalities to publish quarterly compensation summaries for all funded employees and to publish annual budget development calendars detailing key budget deadlines.

Creates new definitions of "impact fee" and "plan-based methodology" for concurrency and outlines allowable alternative transportation planning options, including explicit use of impact fees.

Implements stricter rules on adopting or increasing impact fees, including using a plan-based methodology, limiting the use of data older than four years, and capping fee increases beyond certain levels without demonstrating extraordinary circumstances.

Establishes refunds or credits for impact fee overpayments, with specific timelines for local governments, school districts, and special districts to respond.

SB 118- **Assessment Levied on RV Parks (***signed into law by the Governor)***
The legislation revises how counties, municipalities, and special districts may levy non-ad valorem special assessments on recreational vehicle (RV) parks regulated under chapter 513, Florida Statutes.

The bill clarifies that RV parks may not be assessed as residential units for special assessment purposes and must instead be treated similarly to commercial lodging properties such as hotels or motels. The bill also limits square-footage-based special assessments by prohibiting local governments from assessing more than 400 square feet per recreational vehicle campsite or parking space, regardless of the actual size of the campsite.

In addition, the legislation requires local governments to consider the occupancy rate of the RV park when apportioning special assessments among campsites to ensure assessments are fairly and reasonably allocated. These provisions apply to non-ad valorem assessments imposed by counties, municipalities, or special districts that fund services or improvements benefiting the property. The changes are intended to standardize how RV parks are assessed and to prevent assessment methodologies that treat RV campsites as residential units.

HB 925- **Clerks of Court (***signed into law by the Governor)***

The legislation makes several statutory changes affecting clerks of the court, legal notice publication, and the distribution of civil traffic penalties. The bill authorizes the use of cumulative excess funds retained in the Clerks of the Court Trust Fund as part of clerks' total combined budgets, subject to reserve requirements.

The bill updates budget development and oversight provisions for the Florida Clerks of Court Operations Corporation to incorporate these excess funds and clarifies reserve thresholds. The bill also expands the definition of a "publicly accessible website," allowing clerks to publish legal notices on their own or designated platforms.

Importantly, the bill revises the distribution of civil traffic penalties. It maintains that 28.2% of certain revenues from violations within municipalities are distributed to municipalities, while increasing the portion deposited into the county fine and forfeiture fund to 50.6%, with the remainder distributed pursuant to existing law.

Agriculture & Rural Affairs

HB 290 – Department of Agriculture and Consumer Affairs (*signed into law by the Governor)***

Commonly referred to as the 2026 Florida Farm Bill, it makes numerous statutory revisions affecting agricultural regulation, state land management, and environmental oversight by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS).

The bill preempts local governments from regulating or prohibiting gasoline-powered farm equipment and landscape maintenance equipment, preventing counties and municipalities from adopting ordinances that restrict such equipment or treat it differently from other similar equipment.

The legislation also expands state oversight and policy direction related to biosolids management, directing state agencies to evaluate and strengthen regulatory frameworks governing the land application, processing, and potential commercialization of biosolids and biosolids-derived products. These provisions are intended to encourage development of technologies that convert biosolids into usable agricultural products while addressing environmental concerns related to nutrient loading and contamination.

In addition, the bill modifies provisions governing the identification and disposition of surplus state lands, directing the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and other agencies to evaluate whether certain surplus state-owned lands may be suitable for agricultural production or rural economic development prior to sale or disposition. The bill also creates the Florida Food

Animal Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program, establishes the Florida Native Seed Research and Marketing Program, and revises duties and authority of the Florida Forest Service.

This bill will go into effect on July 1, 2026.

Water & Environmental Sustainability

SB 302 – Coastal Resiliency (*signed into law by the Governor)***

The bill establishes a statewide framework to encourage the use of nature-based solutions to improve coastal resilience. The bill creates s. 380.0938, F.S., directing the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to develop rules, guidance, and a regulatory framework for projects that use natural systems to reduce coastal flooding, erosion, and storm impacts.

The legislation defines key concepts such as nature-based solutions, green infrastructure, gray infrastructure, and hybrid infrastructure. These approaches include projects like living shorelines, mangrove restoration, dune systems, oyster reefs, and other natural or hybrid coastal protection features designed to mitigate flooding and storm surge while also supporting ecosystem health.

The bill also authorizes certain resilience-related restoration activities within aquatic preserves, including dredging or shoreline restoration when conducted for coastal resiliency purposes.

Additionally, DEP must conduct a statewide feasibility study evaluating how nature-based coastal infrastructure could reduce flood risk and potentially improve local governments' ratings under the National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System (CRS) or lower flood insurance costs. DEP must submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor, the Senate President, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by July 1, 2027. To support the study, the bill appropriates $250,000 in nonrecurring funds from the Resilient Florida Trust Fund.

HB 589 – Onsite Sewage Treatment and Disposal System Permits (*signed into law by the Governor)***

The bill addresses permitting for onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems (OSTDS)—commonly known as septic systems—used by single-family residences. The bill prohibits a municipality or political subdivision from requiring a homeowner or builder to obtain a finalized septic system construction permit from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) before the local government issues a building permit or plumbing permit. Instead, local governments must allow the permit process to move forward if the applicant provides proof that the septic system permit application has been submitted to DEP.

The bill is intended to reduce delays in residential construction caused by waiting for septic system permits to be issued. By allowing building permits to be issued while the septic permit application is still under review, the legislation seeks to streamline the permitting process for single-family homes that rely on septic systems.

Additionally, the bill provides that new rules related to the use or installation of onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems may not apply to permit applications submitted within 90 days after the rule is adopted, offering a transition period for applicants.

SB 848 – Stormwater Treatment (*signed into law by the Governor)***

The bill revises Florida law governing stormwater treatment and water quality enhancement programs. The legislation updates how compensating stormwater treatment and water quality enhancement credits are generated, used, and regulated in the state. The bill defines new terms such as "compensating stormwater treatment" and clarifies regulatory standards for systems designed to treat stormwater from multiple parcels.

It authorizes the use of water quality enhancement area (WQEA) credits by permit applicants or governmental entities to meet environmental resource permit (ERP) stormwater treatment performance standards or achieve required net water quality improvements. Importantly, when an applicant uses enhancement credits, the legal responsibility for meeting applicable regulatory stormwater treatment requirements shifts from the credit purchaser to the entity that generates the credit.

The bill also establishes additional oversight of regional stormwater management systems, requiring applicants to demonstrate financial responsibility for construction, operation, and long-term maintenance through mechanisms such as bonds, insurance, or trust agreements.

Finally, the legislation authorizes the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to adopt rules implementing these provisions and allows provisional permits for water quality enhancement areas while rules are being developed.

HB 1019 – Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) (*signed into law by the Governor)***

The bill addresses environmental and public health concerns related to perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), commonly referred to as "forever chemicals." The bill phases out the use, sale, and distribution of aqueous film-forming foam (AFFF) containing intentionally added PFAS, which has historically been used for firefighting, particularly at airports, industrial facilities, and emergency response agencies.

The legislation establishes timelines and restrictions on the possession and use of PFAS containing firefighting foam and requires certain entities to inventory existing PFAS foam and submit disposal plans to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The DEP is directed to maintain a registry of PFAS-free alternatives and may administer grants or cost-share programs to assist with the transition to safer products.

The bill also creates new monitoring requirements for public wastewater facilities. Public entities that dispose of domestic wastewater biosolids above a specified system size must conduct periodic sampling for PFAS compounds and report results to DEP. Violations of the law may result in civil penalties, enforcement actions, and injunctive relief.

[HB 1103](#) – Local Administration of Vessel Restrictions (*signed into law by the Governor)***
The bill authorizes Florida counties and municipalities to take a larger role in managing vessels that are at risk of becoming derelict, enforcing long-term anchoring requirements, and establishing certain boating restrictions in coordination with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC).

The bill allows local governments to adopt ordinances enabling their code enforcement officers to identify and address vessels that are at risk of becoming derelict. These officers may investigate vessel conditions, provide notice to owners, and initiate actions such as relocation, removal, storage, or disposal when appropriate. Such determinations are administrative and intended to support nuisance abatement and prevention efforts rather than criminal enforcement.

The legislation also permits counties and cities to administer enforcement of long-term anchoring permit requirements through local ordinances. Code enforcement officers may issue non-criminal citations for violations, subject to documentation and procedural requirements established by FWC.

In addition, the bill authorizes local governments to establish or extend certain boating-restricted areas under specific safety conditions and requires those areas to be clearly marked with uniform waterway markers.

Local ordinances created under the bill must be reviewed and approved by FWC before taking effect, and the commission is directed to adopt rules to implement the program.

HB 1217 – Prohibited Government Policies Regulating Greenhouse Gas Emissions (*signed into law by the Governor)***
The bill creates new state law prohibiting state and local governmental entities from adopting or implementing "net-zero" greenhouse gas emission policies. The bill establishes legislative findings that such policies, including carbon taxes, emissions caps, and carbon trading programs, may harm the state's energy security and economic interests.

The legislation defines "net-zero policies" broadly to include any requirement or initiative intended to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to zero or to meet climate targets associated with international agreements such as the Paris Agreement.

Under the bill, governmental entities, including the state, counties, municipalities, special districts, and their agencies, are prohibited from:

- Adopting or enforcing net-zero policies in plans, ordinances, programs, or procedures.
- Using public funds to support or advance net-zero policies, including procurement preferences based solely on fuel source or carbon intensity.
- Imposing taxes, fees, penalties, or assessments related to carbon emissions, carbon content of fuels, or other greenhouse-gas-related measures.
- Establishing or participating in emissions cap or trading programs.

The bill also requires each governmental entity to annually submit an affidavit to the Department of Revenue attesting that it is complying with the statutory prohibitions.

HB 1245 – Biosolids Management (Vetoed by the Governor)

The bill modifies Florida's biosolids management framework by establishing new requirements for the land application and distribution of bulk Class AA biosolids fertilizer and compost products. Biosolids are treated sewage sludge that may be reused as fertilizer or soil amendments.

The legislation prohibits applying these products to land at rates that exceed appropriate agronomic rates, meaning the amount necessary for crop or soil nutrient needs. Land application site operators must maintain records documenting application rates and related information.

The bill directs the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) to publish recommended agronomic rates for bulk Class AA biosolids fertilizer and compost products every two years and make the information publicly available.

The measure also establishes conditions for distributing or marketing biosolids as fertilizer or soil amendments. Products may be land-applied more broadly if transferred through a "bona fide sale," meaning a legitimate market transaction reflecting fair market value. Biosolids products not distributed through such a sale may only be applied at sites specifically approved by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

HB 1285 – Biosolids Management (***signed into law by the Governor)***

The bill addresses the land application of septage as Class B biosolids in Florida. The bill amends state law governing biosolids management to restrict when the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) may issue or renew permits for certain land application sites. Specifically, the legislation prohibits DEP from issuing or renewing a permit for a land application site that would allow the disposal or land application of septage as Class B biosolids if a qualifying wastewater treatment facility capable of providing a higher level of treatment is located nearby. The restriction applies when such a facility is within 30 miles of the proposed biosolids land application site. To trigger the prohibition, the nearby wastewater treatment facility must accept septage for higher levels of treatment, be owned or operated by the federal government, a federal agency, a state governmental entity, or a political subdivision of the state, and must not be defunct, repurposed, or operating beyond its capacity.

The bill's intent is to encourage the use of higher-level treatment facilities for septage when reasonably available rather than allowing disposal through land application as Class B biosolids.

HB 1417 – Department of Environmental Protection (***signed into law by the Governor)***

The bill makes broad statutory changes affecting the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and several environmental regulatory programs in Florida. The legislation restructures environmental governance, modifies wastewater and stormwater policies, and updates several environmental permitting and grant programs.

Key provisions include eliminating the Environmental Regulation Commission and shifting certain rulemaking and oversight responsibilities to other entities within the state environmental governance structure. The bill expands the membership of the Acquisition and Restoration Council

(ARC) and transfers administration of the Florida Communities Trust from DEP to ARC, with the intent of improving coordination of land conservation and community development programs.

The bill also revises provisions related to stormwater management systems and solar facilities, including design requirements for stormwater systems serving new solar projects in the Northwest Florida Water Management District. It modifies requirements governing central sewer system connections, onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems, aerobic treatment units, and wastewater services.

Additional changes affect basin management action plans, coastal resiliency programs, air pollution operating license fees, and various DEP grant programs related to small community sewer construction and environmental infrastructure.

Technology & Utilities

SB 484- **Data Centers (***signed into law by the Governor)***
The legislation addresses the development and operation of large-scale data centers and other large electricity-demand facilities ("large load customers") in Florida. The bill establishes several new statutory provisions focused on transparency, utility regulation, and land-use authority.

First, the bill prohibits any state or local government agency from entering into a nondisclosure agreement that restricts the agency from disclosing information about a potential data center development. Any such agreement is declared void and unenforceable, and violations may result in a civil fine of up to $1,000.

Second, the bill clarifies that local governments retain authority over comprehensive planning and land development regulations related to large load customers, including data centers. It also specifies that such facilities may not be classified as electric substations for land-use purposes.

Third, the legislation requires the Florida Public Service Commission (PSC) to establish minimum tariff and service requirements for large load customers to ensure that these facilities pay the full cost of the electricity infrastructure needed to serve them and that those costs are not shifted to other utility ratepayers.

Finally, the bill creates additional regulatory provisions related to economic development disclosures and water use permitting for large-scale data centers.

HB 1085 – Local Government Cyber Security (*signed into law by the Governor)***
The bill creates s. 282.31855, F.S., establishing the Local Government Cybersecurity Protection Program within the Florida Digital Service. The program is designed to help eligible local governments mitigate and defend against cybersecurity threats, including ransomware. The Florida Digital Service is directed to administer the program, enter data-sharing agreements with local governments, procure cybersecurity commodities and services, and award those services using objective eligibility and evaluation criteria.

The bill gives preference to fiscally constrained counties, requires annual awards by December 1, allows local governments to buy from program contracts even without receiving a grant, and requires an annual implementation report beginning December 15, 2027.

HB 1093 – Vertiports (*signed into law by the Governor)***
The bill adds vertiports and charging systems to the list of "qualifying projects" under Florida's public-private partnership statute. It also revises the aviation financing statute so vertiport pads, safety zones, charging systems, grid upgrades, and resilience energy systems are included within "airport infrastructure."

Most significantly, the bill authorizes the Florida Department of Transportation to fund up to 100 percent of the cost of a public vertiport project when federal funds are unavailable, or up to 80 percent of the nonfederal share when federal funds are available.

Public Safety, Health & Justice

HB 168 – Public Nuisances (*signed into law by the Governor)***
The bill revises Florida's public nuisance statute to expand the types of criminal activity that can trigger local nuisance abatement proceedings. The bill amends s. 893.138, F.S., allowing a property to be declared a public nuisance if it is used more than two times within a 12-month period as the site of a gambling house.

Current law authorizes local governments to initiate administrative nuisance abatement proceedings when certain illegal activities repeatedly occur at a property, including drug sales, prostitution, dealing in stolen property, gang activity, and other enumerated offenses. SB 168 adds repeated illegal gambling activity to this list of qualifying nuisance activities.

The bill also revises penalty provisions applied by nuisance abatement boards. It removes the current $15,000 cap on the total fines that may be imposed for maintaining a public nuisance. When determining penalties, nuisance abatement boards may consider factors such as the severity of the violation and whether the property owner has taken corrective actions to address the activity.

Additionally, the bill clarifies provisions related to attorney's fees and legal support services associated with nuisance abatement proceedings.

SB 504 – Code Inspector Body Cameras (*signed into law by the Governor)***
The bill creates s. 162.41, F.S., establishing statewide requirements for governmental entities that allow code inspectors to wear body cameras while performing official duties. The bill does not require local governments to implement body camera programs but provides a statutory framework governing their use if adopted.

Under the bill, a governmental entity that permits code inspectors to use body cameras must adopt written policies and procedures addressing the use, maintenance, and storage of body camera equipment and recorded data. The policies must specify when cameras may be activated, how recordings are retained, and how the recordings are managed consistent with Florida's public records requirements.

The bill authorizes code inspectors to record audio and video during interactions with the public while conducting official inspections or enforcement activities. It also clarifies that such recordings made by code inspectors using body cameras are not considered unlawful interceptions under the state's wiretapping law in chapter 934, F.S.

Governmental entities that authorize body camera use must also provide training for personnel who operate the cameras or manage the data, and they must conduct periodic reviews of their policies and practices to ensure compliance with adopted procedures and applicable law.

SB 506 – Public Records Exemption for Code Enforcement Boby Camera Recordings (*signed into law by the Governor)***

The bill creates a public records exemption for body camera recordings captured by local government code inspectors. The bill makes certain portions of these recordings confidential and exempt from Florida's public records laws when the footage depicts private property or other sensitive situations. The exemption is designed to protect privacy when code inspectors enter residential or otherwise private areas during enforcement activities.

The bill also includes specified exceptions allowing access to the recordings by certain parties, such as the property owner, a person depicted in the recording, or entities with legal authorization to obtain the footage. The legislation requires local governments to retain code inspector body camera recordings for at least 90 days, and the Department of State must incorporate this retention period into the statewide records schedule for such recordings.

Because the bill creates a public records exemption, it includes a statement of public necessity and is subject to the Open Government Sunset Review Act, meaning the exemption will automatically be repealed on October 2, 2031, unless reenacted by the Legislature.

SB 984 – Firefighter Cancer Benefits (*signed into law by the Governor)***

The bill revises Florida's firefighter cancer benefits law to expand eligibility for certain benefits and clarify employer responsibilities when a firefighter is diagnosed with cancer. The bill modifies provisions in Florida's existing presumption law for firefighter cancer, which recognizes certain cancers as occupational diseases tied to firefighting service.

The legislation updates conditions under which a firefighter's former employer must provide a one-time cancer benefit payment if the firefighter receives a qualifying diagnosis after leaving employment. It also requires a former employer to continue providing death benefits to eligible beneficiaries for a specified period when a firefighter dies from a qualifying cancer that is presumed to be work-related.

Additionally, the bill removes the requirement that the Division of State Fire Marshal adopt rules establishing employer cancer-prevention best practices for fire departments. Instead, prevention guidance is no longer tied to formal rulemaking.

HB 559 – Animal Welfare (_signed into law by the Governor)_**

The bill creates new criminal penalties for acts of animal cruelty and additional reporting requirements on the FDLE statewide animal abuse registry. Importantly from a local government perspective, it increases the maximum civil penalties for certain local animal control or cruelty ordinance violations up to $2,500, $5,000, or $7,500 depending on the violation's frequency (**_this provision was specifically requested by Collier County_).

PROPERTY TAX SPECIAL SESSION

Memorandum

To: Brevard County Board of County Commissioners
From: Steve Crisafulli
Date: July 1, 2026
Subject: Overview of the Proposed Florida Property Tax Constitutional Amendment – November 2026 General Election

Purpose

This memorandum provides an overview of the proposed Florida Property Tax Constitutional Amendment that will appear on the November 2026 General Election ballot. The purpose is to summarize the amendment's principal provisions and identify areas that may affect Brevard County government if approved by voters.

Background

During a special session in June 2026, the Florida Legislature approved a proposed constitutional amendment relating to property taxation. Because the proposal amends the Florida Constitution, it must receive at least **60 percent approval** from voters statewide to become effective.

If approved, most provisions of the amendment would take effect beginning **January 1, 2027**, with certain provisions becoming effective in subsequent years.

Major Provisions

Expansion of the Homestead Exemption

The amendment would increase Florida's homestead exemption for non-school property taxes.

Under the proposal:

- The current $50,000 homestead exemption would increase to **$150,000** beginning January 1, 2027.

- The exemption would increase to **$250,000** beginning January 1, 2028.
- Future exemption amounts would be adjusted periodically based on inflation.

The amendment does not change the treatment of school district property taxes.

Assessment Limitation for Non-Homestead Property

The amendment would reduce the maximum annual increase in assessed value for non-homestead property from **10 percent to 5 percent**.

This provision would apply to properties such as:

- Commercial property
- Rental property
- Second homes
- Other non-homestead real property

The purpose of this change is to limit the annual growth in taxable value for qualifying non-homestead properties.

Future Property Tax Reform

The amendment establishes a constitutional framework directing the Florida Legislature to continue evaluating additional property tax relief for homesteaded property.

The amendment itself does not eliminate property taxes or automatically implement additional reductions beyond those specifically contained in the proposal. Any future changes would require legislative action consistent with constitutional requirements.

Use of Property Tax Revenues

The amendment includes provisions regarding the use of county and municipal ad valorem tax revenues by identifying categories of governmental purposes for which such revenues may be expended. These provisions are intended to establish constitutional parameters regarding the expenditure of locally generated property tax revenues.

Implementation of these provisions will require additional statutory guidance from the Legislature.

Potential Fiscal Considerations

Because counties rely on ad valorem taxes as a significant source of revenue for governmental operations, the amendment could affect future property tax collections depending on local tax bases, millage rates, and the number of qualifying homestead properties within each jurisdiction.

Potential areas that could be affected include:

- General government operations
- Public safety
- Emergency medical services
- Transportation and infrastructure
- Parks and recreation
- Libraries
- Constitutional officers
- Other county-funded programs and services

The specific fiscal impact will vary among counties based on local property values, tax roll composition, and future legislative implementation.

Implementation

If approved by voters, implementation of the amendment will require action by the Florida Legislature, the Florida Department of Revenue, county property appraisers, tax collectors, and local governments. Additional legislation and administrative guidance are expected to address implementation procedures, fiscal calculations, and administrative requirements.

Conclusion

The proposed constitutional amendment would make significant changes to Florida's property tax system by expanding the homestead exemption, modifying assessment limitations for non-homestead property, and establishing a constitutional framework for future property tax policy. If approved by at least 60 percent of voters in the November 2026 General Election, counties will need to evaluate the amendment's fiscal and administrative effects as implementing legislation and guidance are adopted.

County officials should continue to monitor legislative and administrative developments following the election to understand implementation timelines, fiscal impacts, and any required local actions.