

Tab 1	SB 534 by Bernard (CO-INTRODUCERS) Osgood ; Hunger-Free Campus Pilot Program
Tab 2	SPB 7020 by AG ; OGSR/Aquaculture Records Held by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

The Florida Senate
COMMITTEE MEETING EXPANDED AGENDA

AGRICULTURE
Senator Truenow, Chair
Senator Grall, Vice Chair

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, January 13, 2026**TIME:** 1:30—3:30 p.m.**PLACE:** 301 Senate Building**MEMBERS:** Senator Truenow, Chair; Senator Grall, Vice Chair; Senators Bernard, Burton, and Rouson

TAB	BILL NO. and INTRODUCER	BILL DESCRIPTION and SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS	COMMITTEE ACTION
1	SB 534 Bernard	Hunger-Free Campus Pilot Program; Citing this act as the "Hunger-Free Campus Act"; establishing, subject to legislative appropriation, the pilot program within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services for a specified period; requiring the Commissioner of Agriculture to identify the three state universities or Florida College System institutions with the highest percentage of Pell Grant-eligible students for participation in the pilot program; providing requirements for participating universities and institutions, etc. AG 01/13/2026 Favorable AEG FP	Favorable Yeas 4 Nays 0

Consideration of proposed bill:

2	SPB 7020	OGSR/Aquaculture Records Held by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; Amending a provision which provides an exemption from public record requirements for certain aquaculture records held by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; removing the scheduled repeal of the exemption, etc.	Submitted and Reported Favorably as Committee Bill Yeas 5 Nays 0
3	Presentation by the St. Pete Youth Farm		Presented

TAB	OFFICE and APPOINTMENT (HOME CITY)	FOR TERM ENDING	COMMITTEE ACTION
Senate Confirmation Hearing: A public hearing will be held for consideration of the below-named executive appointment to the office indicated.			
Florida Citrus Commission			
4	Ressler, Melanie (Oakland)	05/31/2026	Recommend Confirm Yeas 5 Nays 0

TAB	BILL NO. and INTRODUCER	BILL DESCRIPTION and SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS	COMMITTEE ACTION
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Other Related Meeting Documents

COMMITTEE MEETING EXPANDED AGENDA

Agriculture

Tuesday, January 13, 2026, 1:30—3:30 p.m.

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Agriculture

BILL: SB 534

INTRODUCER: Senator Bernard

SUBJECT: Hunger-Free Campus Pilot Program

DATE: January 12, 2026

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Stokes-Ramos	Becker	AG	Favorable
2.	_____	_____	AEG	_____
3.	_____	_____	FP	_____

I. Summary:

SB 534, the “Hunger-Free Campus Act,” creates the Hunger-Free Campus Pilot Program within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (department). The program is meant to help fight hunger on the campuses of public postsecondary educational institutions. The program is established for one year beginning July 1, 2026.

The bill directs the Commissioner of Agriculture (commissioner) to identify the top three institutions with the highest percentage of Pell Grant-eligible students among all state universities and Florida College System institutions. Those three institutions shall participate in the program.

The commissioner shall develop a survey instrument requiring all participating institutions to meet certain requirements, including, but not limited to, establishing a hunger task force, designating a staff member responsible for assisting students in enrollment in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), providing options for students to use SNAP benefits on campus, providing at least one food pantry on campus, and conducting a student study on hunger.

The bill requires each participating institution to submit a report to the department describing how it implemented the pilot program. By December 1, 2028, the commissioner shall report on the program to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The report shall include, but is not limited to, the impact of the program on establishing hunger-free campuses at participating institutions; the impact of the program on reducing the number of students at such institutions who are experiencing food insecurity; and recommendations regarding future funding and implementation of the program on a long-term basis.

The bill directs the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) to conduct a study evaluating food insecurity on the campuses of state universities and Florida College System institutions. The study must include recommendations for any changes to general law, Board of Governors’ rules and regulations, or State Board of Education rules needed to address food insecurity on such campuses, by December 1, 2026.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

II. Present Situation:

Approximately one-third¹ of college students and 23 percent of undergraduate students² in the United States are food insecure, and more than half of the students enrolled in the Florida College System are low-income and first-generation.³ Food insecurity is associated with poor mental and physical health, as well as lower rates of academic success among students. Prior to the coronavirus crisis, the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers identified food insecurity as a top barrier to student non-completion, and as a result of the pandemic 5.8 out of every 10 students have experienced basic needs insecurity.⁴ Despite recent awareness of food insecurity on college campuses, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reports that 83.8 percent of students experiencing food insecurity still did not receive any emergency aid.⁵

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), under the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), administers the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).⁶ SNAP, formerly the Food Stamp Program, is the nation’s largest domestic food and nutrition assistance program for low-

¹ DeBate, R., Himmelgreen, D., Gupton, J., & Heuer, J. N. (2021, October 7). Food insecurity, well-being, and academic success among college students: Implications for post COVID-19 pandemic programming. *Ecology of Food and Nutrition*, 60(5), 564-579. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03670244.2021.1954511>

² Florida College Access Network. (2024). *The real cost of college in Florida*. <https://9a33652e.delivery.rocketcdn.me/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/24-FCAN-CostofAttendance-Brief-web.pdf> (last visited January 9, 2026).

³ Florida Department of Education. (2018, December). *Affordability in the Florida College System*.

<https://www.fdoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7724/urlt/FCS18-Affordability.pdf> (last visited January 9, 2026).

⁴ Florida College Access Network. (2020, July 1). *Nearly 3 in 5 college students struggle with food, housing insecurity due to Covid-19*. <https://floridacollegeaccess.org/research-and-data/nearly-3-in-5-college-students-struggle-with-food-housing-insecurity-due-to-covid-19/> (last visited January 9, 2026).

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ The Food Stamp Program (FSP) originated in 1939 as a pilot program for certain individuals to buy stamps equal to their normal food expenditures: for every \$1 of orange stamps purchased, people received 50 cents worth of blue stamps, which could be used to buy surplus food. The FSP expanded nationwide in 1974. Under the federal welfare reform legislation of 1996, Congress enacted major changes to the FSP, including limiting eligibility for certain adults who did not meet work requirements. The Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 renamed the FSP the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and implemented priorities to strengthen program integrity; simplify program administration; maintain states’ flexibility in how they administer their programs; and improve access to SNAP. See United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. *A short history of SNAP*. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/short-history-snap> (last visited January 9, 2026).

income Americans.⁷ For low-income households, increased spending on food is consistently and positively associated with diet quality and higher use and intake of both fruits and vegetables.⁸

To be eligible for SNAP, households must have a gross monthly income at or below 130 percent of the poverty line, have a net income at or below the poverty line, and have assets below certain limits based on whether or not the household has a member aged 60 or older who has a disability.⁹ The 2025 poverty line defined by the Health and Human Services was \$15,650 for a household of one and \$32,150 for a household of four.¹⁰ In the 2024 fiscal year, 2,969,000 Florida residents, or 13 percent of the state population, received SNAP benefits in Florida.¹¹

To qualify for SNAP benefits, students must meet additional criteria, such as working a paid job for a minimum of twenty hours a week. The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) estimates less than two-fifths of food insecure students meeting the additional requirements to meet SNAP eligibility.¹² The GAO reports that 59 percent of students potentially eligible for SNAP benefits did not report receiving benefits.¹³ Overall, while forms of assistance such as local food pantries and SNAP exist, many students do not take advantage of them due to the stigma associated, or because they do not qualify.

On July 4, 2025, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act of 2025¹⁴ was signed into law, with several provisions affecting the SNAP program.¹⁵ Among other changes, the law:

- Amends exceptions to the work requirement for able-bodied adults without dependents by increasing the upper age exception from 54 to 65 years, lowering the age of dependents from 18 to 14 years of age for exceptions based on responsibility to care for a dependent child, and removing exceptions for homeless individuals, veterans, and those 24 years and younger who aged out of foster care;

⁷ United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. (2025, July 24). *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)*. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap/> (last visited January 9, 2026).

⁸ United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2010, July). *Food expenditures and diet quality among low-income households and individuals (summary)*.

https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/FoodExpendDietQuality_Summary.pdf (last visited January 9, 2026).

⁹ Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. (2025, October 3). *A quick guide to SNAP eligibility and benefits*.

https://www.cbpp.org/research/food-assistance/a-quick-guide-to-snap-eligibility-and-benefits#_ftn5 (last visited January 9, 2026).

¹⁰ United States Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. *Poverty guidelines*. <https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines> (last visited January 9, 2026).

¹¹ Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. (2025, January 21). *Florida Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program*.

https://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/snap_factsheet_florida.pdf (last visited January 9, 2026).

¹² U.S. Government Accountability Office. (2024, June 24). *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: Estimated eligibility and receipt among food insecure college students*. <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-24-107074> (last visited January 9, 2026).

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ An Act to Provide for Reconciliation Pursuant to Title II of H. Con. Res. 14, Public Law No. 119-21, 50 Stat. 664 (2025). <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/PLAW-119publ21> (last visited January 9, 2026).

¹⁵ United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2025, September 4). *SNAP provisions of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act of 2025 – Information memorandum*. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/obbb-implementation> (last visited January 9, 2026).

- Changes the criterion that provides for states to request waivers to the time-limited work requirements when an area does not have a sufficient number of jobs to provide employment for the individuals residing there; and
- Removes SNAP eligibility for certain lawfully present non-citizens, including refugees and survivors of human trafficking.¹⁶¹⁷

SNAP Eligible Foods

The Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 defines eligible food under SNAP as any food or food product intended for human consumption except alcoholic beverages, tobacco, hot foods, and hot food products prepared for immediate consumption, with some exceptions.¹⁸ Nonfood items such as pet foods, soaps, paper products, medicines and vitamins, household supplies, grooming items, and cosmetics are ineligible for purchase with SNAP benefits.¹⁹

Campus Food Pantries

Nearly one third (29 percent) of college students have missed a meal at least once a week since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, and more than half of all students have used off-campus food banks.²⁰

Campus food pantries are often run by campus student support services, student government, or the administrative department, and are for enrolled students facing food insecurity. Pantries may partner with organizations in the community to keep the shelves and freezers stocked and raise donations. Mobile pantries may also directly serve students in high need of hunger relief.²¹

Hunger-Free Campuses

The first Hunger-Free Campus bill was originally introduced in California in 2017 by then Assemblywoman Monique Limón. The Hunger-Free Campus policy provided funding to public colleges addressing student hunger on campus. Since its passage in California,²² additional states have formally passed Hunger-Free Campus legislation, including New Jersey,²³ Maryland,²⁴ Minnesota,²⁵ and Massachusetts.²⁶

¹⁶ United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2025, September 4). *SNAP provisions of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act of 2025 – Information memorandum*. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/obbb-implementation> (last visited January 9, 2026).

¹⁷ United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2025, September 4). *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) implementation of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act of 2025 – Alien SNAP eligibility*. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/obbb-alien-eligibility> (last visited January 9, 2026).

¹⁸ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, 7 U.S.C. § 2012(k) (2026); see also 7 C.F.R. § 271.2 (2025).

¹⁹ *Id.*

²⁰ Swipe Out Hunger. (2021, October 21). *Swipe Out Hunger acquires the College and University Food Bank Alliance*. <https://www.swipehunger.org/cufba/> (last visited January 9, 2026).

²¹ Feeding Florida. *Mobile pantries*. <https://www.feedingflorida.org/food-access/mobile-pantries> (last visited January 9, 2026). Note: Feeding Florida consists of 12-member food banks within its mobile pantry program.

²² Cal. Educ. Code § 66027.8 (2017)

²³ N.J. Stat. Ann. § 18A:62-60 (2019)

²⁴ Md. Code Ann., Educ. § 11-1703 (2021)

²⁵ Minn. Stat. Ann. § 135A.137 (2021)

²⁶ Mass. Gen. Laws ch. 15A, § 2 (2021)

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 534, the “Hunger-Free Campus Act,” creates the Hunger-Free Campus Pilot Program within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (department).

The program is meant to help fight hunger on the campuses of public postsecondary educational institutions. The program is established for one year beginning July 1, 2026.

The bill directs the Commissioner of Agriculture (commissioner) to identify the top three institutions with the highest percentage of Pell Grant-eligible students among all state universities and Florida College System institutions. Those three institutions shall participate in the program.

The commissioner shall develop a survey instrument requiring all participating institutions to:

- Establish a hunger task force, which must include representatives from the student body and meet at least three times during the life of the pilot program. The task force shall set at least two goals to address hunger on campus, each accompanied by an action plan.
- Designate a staff member responsible for assisting students with enrollment in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
- Provide options that enable students to use SNAP benefits on campus or provide students with information on authorized SNAP retailers in the area surrounding the campus where they may use SNAP electronic benefit transfer cards.
- Host an activity or event during Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week to promote awareness of hunger on the nation’s campuses.
- Provide at least one physical food pantry on campus or enable students to receive food at no cost through a stigma-free process. The campus may partner with a local food bank or food pantry to comply with this requirement.
- Develop a student meal credit donation program or designate funds that might be raised through such a program for free food vouchers.
- Conduct a student survey on hunger, using a survey instrument developed by the commissioner, and submit the results of the survey and a best practices campus profile to the department by a date prescribed by the department for inclusion in a comparative profile of each campus designated as a hunger-free campus.

The bill requires each participating institution to submit a report to the department describing how it implemented the pilot program and the program results. By January 1, 2028, the commissioner shall report on the program to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The report shall include, but is not limited to, the impact of the program on establishing hunger-free campuses at participating institutions; the impact of the program on reducing the number of students at such institutions who are experiencing food insecurity; and recommendations regarding future funding and implementation of the program on a long-term basis.

The department is granted rulemaking authority to implement the program.

The bill directs OPPAGA to conduct a study evaluating food insecurity on the campuses of state universities and Florida College System institutions. The study must include recommendations

for any changes to general law, regulations of the Board of Governors of the State University System, or State Board of Education rules needed to address food insecurity on such campuses.

OPPAGA must consult with the Board of Governors, the board of trustees of the Florida College System, the Department of Education, and any other relevant stakeholders to conduct the study. OPPAGA shall submit a report on its findings to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by December 1, 2026.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

IV. Constitutional Issues:**A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The bill has no impact on state revenues or expenditures. The pilot program is contingent upon legislative appropriation.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill creates an unnumbered section of the Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:
(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

By Senator Bernard

24-00965-26

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1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to the Hunger-Free Campus Pilot
 3 Program; providing a short title; establishing,
 4 subject to legislative appropriation, the pilot
 5 program within the Department of Agriculture and
 6 Consumer Services for a specified period; providing
 7 the purpose of the pilot program; defining the terms
 8 "commissioner" and "department"; requiring the
 9 Commissioner of Agriculture to identify the three
 10 state universities or Florida College System
 11 institutions with the highest percentage of Pell
 12 Grant-eligible students for participation in the pilot
 13 program; requiring the commissioner to develop a
 14 specified survey instrument; providing requirements
 15 for participating universities and institutions;
 16 requiring participating universities and institutions
 17 to submit a report to the department; requiring the
 18 commissioner to submit a report to the Governor and
 19 the Legislature by a specified date; specifying
 20 requirements for the report; authorizing the
 21 department to adopt rules; requiring the Office of
 22 Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability
 23 to conduct a study to evaluate food insecurity on the
 24 campuses of state universities and Florida College
 25 System institutions; providing requirements for the
 26 office and the study; requiring the office to submit a
 27 report to the Legislature by a specified date;
 28 providing an effective date.
 29

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CODING: Words ~~stricken~~ are deletions; words underlined are additions.

24-00965-26

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30 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
 31
 32 Section 1. This act may be cited as the "Hunger-Free Campus
 33 Act."
 34 Section 2. (1) Subject to legislative appropriation, the
 35 Hunger-Free Campus Pilot Program is established within the
 36 Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to support
 37 efforts to fight hunger on the campuses of public postsecondary
 38 educational institutions. The pilot program is established for a
 39 period of 1 year, beginning July 1, 2026.
 40 (2) For purposes of this section, the term:
 41 (a) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Agriculture.
 42 (b) "Department" means the Department of Agriculture and
 43 Consumer Services.
 44 (3) (a) The commissioner shall identify from among all state
 45 universities and Florida College System institutions the three
 46 that have the highest percentage of Pell Grant-eligible
 47 students, which universities or institutions shall participate
 48 in the pilot program.
 49 (b) The commissioner shall also develop the survey
 50 instrument described in subsection (4).
 51 (4) A participating state university or Florida College
 52 System institution shall:
 53 (a) Establish a hunger task force, which must include
 54 representatives from the student body and meet at least three
 55 times during the life of the pilot program. The task force shall
 56 set at least two goals to address hunger on campus, each
 57 accompanied by an action plan.
 58 (b) Designate a staff member responsible for assisting

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students with enrollment in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as defined in s. 414.456(1), Florida Statutes.

(c) Provide options that enable students to use SNAP benefits on campus or provide students with information on authorized SNAP retailers in the area surrounding the campus where they may use SNAP electronic benefit transfer cards.

(d) Host an activity or event during Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week to promote awareness of hunger on the nation's campuses.

(e) Provide at least one physical food pantry on campus or enable students to receive food at no cost through a stigma-free process. The campus may partner with a local food bank or food pantry to comply with this paragraph.

(f) Develop a student meal credit donation program or designate funds that might be raised through such a program for free food vouchers.

(g) Conduct a student survey on hunger, using a survey instrument developed by the commissioner, and submit the results of the survey and a best practices campus profile to the department by a date prescribed by the department for inclusion in a comparative profile of each campus designated as a hunger-free campus.

(5)(a) Each participating state university or Florida College System institution shall submit a report to the department, in a manner prescribed by the department, which describes how it implemented the pilot program and the program results.

(b) The commissioner shall submit a report on the pilot

24-00965-26

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program to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by January 1, 2028. The report must include, but need not be limited to, the impact of the program on establishing hunger-free campuses at participating state universities or Florida College System institutions; the impact of the program on reducing the number of students at such universities and institutions who are experiencing food insecurity; and recommendations regarding future funding and implementation of the program on a long-term basis.

(6) The department may adopt rules to implement the program.

Section 3. (1) The Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) shall conduct a study to evaluate food insecurity on the campuses of state universities and Florida College System institutions.

(2) The study must include recommendations for any changes to general law, Board of Governors' regulations, or State Board of Education rules needed to address food insecurity on the campuses of state universities and Florida College System institutions.

(3) In conducting the study, OPPAGA shall consult with the Board of Governors of the State University System, the board of trustees of the Florida College System, the Department of Education, and any other relevant stakeholders.

(4) OPPAGA shall submit a report on its findings to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by December 1, 2026.

Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

The Florida Senate
APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

1/13/2026

Meeting Date

Agriculture

Committee

SB 534

Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name

Charmain Postel

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Street

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State

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Speaking:

☐

For

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Against

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Information

OR

Waive Speaking:

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In Support

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Against

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This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Agriculture

BILL: SPB 7020

INTRODUCER: For consideration by the Agriculture Committee

SUBJECT: OGSR/Aquaculture Records Held by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

DATE: January 12, 2026 REVISED: _____

ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1. Becker	Becker	AG	Favorable

I. Summary:

SPB 7020 saves from repeal the current public record exemption for certain aquaculture records held by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (department). The confidential and exempt records include shellfish receiving and production records generated by shellfish processing facilities, audit records and supporting documentation required for submerged land leases, and aquaculture production records and receipts generated by aquaculture facilities. A record may be disclosed to another governmental entity in the performance of its duties and responsibilities. This exemption applies to aquaculture records held before, on, or after July 1, 2021.

The bill takes effect upon becoming a law.

II. Present Situation:

Public Records Law

The State Constitution provides that the public has the right to inspect or copy records made or received in connection with official governmental business.¹ This applies to the official business of any public body, officer, or employee of the state, including all three branches of state government, local governmental entities, and any person acting on behalf of the government.²

Chapter 119, F.S., known as the Public Records Act, constitutes the main body of public records laws.³ The Public Records Act states that:

¹ FLA. CONST. art. I, s. 24(a).

² *Id.* See also, *Sarasota Citizens for Responsible Gov't v. City of Sarasota*, 48 So. 3d 755, 762-763 (Fla. 2010).

³ Public records laws are found throughout the Florida Statutes.

[i]t is the policy of this state that all state, county, and municipal records are open for personal inspection and copying by any person. Providing access to public records is a duty of each agency.⁴

The Public Records Act typically contains general exemptions that apply across agencies. Agency- or program-specific exemptions often are placed in the substantive statutes relating to that particular agency or program.

The Public Records Act does not apply to legislative or judicial records.⁵ Legislative records are public pursuant to s. 11.0431, F.S. Public records exemptions for the Legislature are codified primarily in s. 11.0431(2)-(3), F.S., and adopted in the rules of each house of the legislature.

Section 119.011(12), F.S., defines “public records” to include:

[a]ll documents, papers, letters, maps, books, tapes, photographs, films, sound recordings, data processing software, or other material, regardless of the physical form, characteristics, or means of transmission, made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business by any agency.

The Florida Supreme Court has interpreted this definition to encompass all materials made or received by an agency in connection with official business which are used to “perpetuate, communicate, or formalize knowledge of some type.”⁶

The Florida Statutes specify conditions under which public access to governmental records must be provided. The Public Records Act guarantees every person’s right to inspect and copy any state or local government public record at any reasonable time, under reasonable conditions, and under supervision by the custodian of the public record.⁷ A violation of the Public Records Act may result in civil or criminal liability.⁸

Only the Legislature may create an exemption to public records requirements.⁹ An exemption must be created by general law and must specifically state the public necessity justifying the exemption.¹⁰ Further, the exemption must be no broader than necessary to accomplish the stated purpose of the law. A bill enacting an exemption may not contain other substantive provisions¹¹ and must pass by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting in each house of the Legislature.¹²

When creating a public records exemption, the Legislature may provide that a record is “exempt” or “confidential and exempt.” There is a difference between records the Legislature has

⁴ Section 119.01(1), F.S.

⁵ *Locke v. Hawkes*, 595 So. 2d 32, 34 (Fla. 1992); see also *Times Pub. Co. v. Ake*, 660 So. 2d 255 (Fla. 1995).

⁶ *Shevin v. Byron, Harless, Schaffer, Reid and Assoc. Inc.*, 379 So. 2d 633, 640 (Fla. 1980).

⁷ Section 119.07(1)(a), F.S.

⁸ Section 119.10, F.S. Public records laws are found throughout the Florida Statutes, as are the penalties for violating those laws.

⁹ FLA. CONST. art. I, s. 24(c).

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ The bill may, however, contain multiple exemptions that relate to one subject.

¹² FLA. CONST. art. I, s. 24(c).

determined to be exempt from the Public Records Act and those which the Legislature has determined to be exempt from the Public Records Act *and confidential*.¹³ Records designated as “confidential and exempt” are not subject to inspection by the public and may only be released under the circumstances defined by statute.¹⁴ Records designated as “exempt” may be released at the discretion of the records custodian under certain circumstances.¹⁵

Open Government Sunset Review Act

The provisions of s. 119.15, F.S., known as the Open Government Sunset Review Act (the Act), prescribe a legislative review process for newly created or substantially amended public records or open meetings exemptions,¹⁶ with specified exceptions.¹⁷ The Act requires the repeal of such exemption on October 2nd of the fifth year after creation or substantial amendment; in order to save an exemption from repeal, the Legislature must reenact the exemption or repeal the sunset date.¹⁸ In practice, many exemptions are continued by repealing the sunset date, rather than reenacting the exemption.

The Act provides that a public records or open meetings exemption may be created or maintained only if it serves an identifiable public purpose and is no broader than is necessary.¹⁹ An exemption serves an identifiable purpose if the Legislature finds that the purpose of the exemption outweighs open government policy and cannot be accomplished without the exemption and it meets one of the following purposes:

- It allows the state or its political subdivision to effectively and efficiently administer a program, and administration would be significantly impaired without the exemption;²⁰
- It protects sensitive, personal information, the release of which would be defamatory or would jeopardize an individual’s safety. If this public purpose is cited as the basis of an exemption, however, only personal identifying information is exempt;²¹ or
- It protects information of a confidential nature concerning entities, such as trade or business secrets.²²

The Act also requires specified questions to be considered during the review process.²³ In examining an exemption, the Act directs the Legislature to question the purpose and necessity of reenacting the exemption.

¹³ *WFTV, Inc. v. The Sch. Bd. of Seminole County*, 874 So. 2d 48, 53 (Fla. 5th DCA 2004).

¹⁴ *Id.*

¹⁵ *Williams v. City of Minneola*, 575 So. 2d 683 (Fla. 5th DCA 1991).

¹⁶ Section 119.15, F.S. Section 119.15(4)(b), F.S., provides that an exemption is considered to be substantially amended if it is expanded to include more records or information or to include meetings.

¹⁷ Section 119.15(2)(a) and (b), F.S., provides that exemptions required by federal law or applicable solely to the Legislature or the State Court System are not subject to the Open Government Sunset Review Act.

¹⁸ Section 119.15(3), F.S.

¹⁹ Section 119.15(6)(b), F.S.

²⁰ Section 119.15(6)(b)1., F.S.

²¹ Section 119.15(6)(b)2., F.S.

²² Section 119.15(6)(b)3., F.S.

²³ Section 119.15(6)(a), F.S. The specified questions are:

- What specific records or meetings are affected by the exemption?
- Whom does the exemption uniquely affect, as opposed to the general public?
- What is the identifiable public purpose or goal of the exemption?

If, in reenacting an exemption or repealing the sunset date, the exemption is expanded, then a public necessity statement and a two-thirds vote for passage are again required.²⁴ If the exemption is reenacted or saved from repeal without substantive changes or if the exemption is narrowed, then a public necessity statement and a two-thirds vote for passage are *not* required. If the Legislature allows an exemption to expire, the previously exempt records will remain exempt unless otherwise provided by law.²⁵

Aquaculture Records Held by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (department) is Florida’s lead aquaculture agency. The department coordinates and assists in the development of aquaculture and regulates aquafarms to protect and conserve Florida’s natural resources. There are an estimated 1,500 species or varieties of fish, plants, mollusks, crustaceans, and reptiles grown in the state.²⁶

Aquaculture producers are required to provide the department with receiving logs, production volume records, inventories, and receipts and invoices related to their aquaculture facilities to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of sovereign submerged land lease agreements and aquaculture best management practices. These records include information, such as quantity and price of seed stock purchased and harvest times which, if released, could be detrimental to their businesses. Information regarding products, harvest times, and locations make aquaculture businesses susceptible to theft, particularly with respect to sovereign submerged land leases in remote locations.

In 2021, the Legislature created a public records exemption for certain aquaculture records held by the department.²⁷ The public necessity statement provided legislative intent that it is a public necessity that certain production records related to aquaculture and shellfish facilities held by the department are exempt from Florida’s public records laws. Without this exemption, the department may be hindered from obtaining valuable and accurate information. With this exemption, the department can protect the aquaculture industry and its facilities while maintaining compliance with federal partners and documenting the compliance of aquaculture producers with statutory requirements.

Since 2021 the department has received three public records requests for information deemed confidential and exempt under s. 597.0042, F.S.²⁸ Senate and House staff met with department staff in 2025 to discuss the public record exemption and department staff indicated no knowledge of litigation regarding the exemption or any concerns with applying the exemption. Department staff recommended the exemption be reenacted.

- Can the information contained in the records or discussed in the meeting be readily obtained by alternative means? If so, how?
- Is the record or meeting protected by another exemption?
- Are there multiple exemptions for the same type of record or meeting that it would be appropriate to merge?

²⁴ FLA. CONST. art. I, s. 24(c).

²⁵ Section 119.15(7), F.S.

²⁶ See <https://www.fdacs.gov/Divisions-Offices/Aquaculture> (Last visited January 12, 2026).

²⁷ Ch. 2021-59, L.O.F.

²⁸ Email on file with Senate Agriculture Committee

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The bill removes the scheduled repeal of the current public record exemption for certain aquaculture records held by the department. The confidential and exempt records include:

- Shellfish receiving and production records generated by shellfish processing facilities,
- Audit records and supporting documentation required for submerged land leases, and
- Aquaculture production records and receipts generated by aquaculture facilities.

A record may be disclosed to another governmental entity in the performance of its duties and responsibilities. This exemption applies to aquaculture records held before, on, or after July 1, 2021.

The bill takes effect upon becoming law.

IV. Constitutional Issues:**A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:**Vote Requirement**

Article I, s. 24(c) of the State Constitution requires a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting for final passage of a bill creating or expanding an exemption to the public records disclosure requirements. This bill does not create or expand an exemption, and thus, the bill does not require a two-thirds vote to be enacted.

Public Necessity Statement

Article I, s. 24(c) of the State Constitution requires a bill creating or expanding an exemption to the public records disclosure requirements to state with specificity the public necessity justifying the exemption. This bill does not create or expand an exemption and thus, a statement of public necessity is not required.

Breadth of Exemption

Article I, s. 24(c) of the State Constitution requires an exemption to the public records disclosure requirements to be no broader than necessary to accomplish the stated purpose of the law. The exemptions in the bill do not appear to be broader than necessary to accomplish the purposes of the laws.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

The private sector will be subject to the cost associated with an agency making redactions in response to a public records request.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The department will incur minor costs relating to the redaction of exempt records.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends section 597.0042 of the Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:**A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

FOR CONSIDERATION By the Committee on Agriculture

575-01809-26

20267020pb

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to a review under the Open Government Sunset Review Act; amending s. 597.0042, F.S., which provides an exemption from public record requirements for certain aquaculture records held by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; removing the scheduled repeal of the exemption; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Subsection (4) of section 597.0042, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

597.0042 Public records exemptions; aquaculture records.-

~~(4) This section is subject to the Open Government Sunset Review Act in accordance with s. 119.15 and shall stand repealed on October 2, 2026, unless reviewed and saved from repeal through reenactment by the Legislature.~~

Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.

The Florida Senate
APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

1-13-26
Meeting Date

Agriculture
Committee

7020
Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Alex Haley Phone 850 617-7700

Address 400 S Monroe St Email /
Street

Tallahassee FL 32399
City State Zip

Speaking: ☐ For ☐ Against ☐ Information **OR** Waive Speaking: ☒ In Support ☐ Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

☐ I am appearing without
compensation or sponsorship.

☒ I am a registered lobbyist,
representing:

FL Department of Agriculture
& Consumer Services

☐ I am not a lobbyist, but received
something of value for my appearance
(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),
sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf \(flsenate.gov\)](#)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)

Denny, Evan

From: Becker, Katherine
Sent: Friday, January 9, 2026 11:40 AM
To: Denny, Evan
Subject: FW: PRR follow-up

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

I will list this as "on file with the committee" in the 7020 analysis so I wanted you to have it.

From: Becker, Katherine <becker.katherine@flsenate.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, August 12, 2025 3:00 PM
To: 'Haley, Alex' <Alex.Haley@fdacs.gov>; Toliver, Lance <Lance.Toliver@FLHouse.gov>; Toliver, Lance <Lance.Toliver@FLHouse.gov>
Subject: RE: PRR follow-up

Thank you so much!



Katherine Becker
Staff Director
Senate Committee on Agriculture
Office: (850) 487-5133

From: Haley, Alex <Alex.Haley@fdacs.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, August 12, 2025 12:54 PM
To: Toliver, Lance <lance.toliver@flhouse.gov>; Toliver, Lance <lance.toliver@myfloridahouse.gov>; Becker, Katherine <becker.katherine@flsenate.gov>
Subject: FW: PRR follow-up

Katherine and Lance,

As we work to get you stats on the number of aquaculture facilities we have, please see some stats on the usage of our PRE.

Always happy to help, and it was a pleasure to meet yesterday!

Respectfully,
Alex Haley

Alex Haley
Legislative Affairs Director
Florida Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Office: (850) 617-7700

Cell: (850) 257-1345

Alex.Haley@fdacs.gov

Plaza Level | 10 | The Capitol
400 S. Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399



Please note that Florida has a broad public records law (Chapter 119, Florida Statutes). Most written communications to or from state employees are public records obtainable by the public upon request. E-mails sent to me at this e-mail address may be considered public and will only be withheld from disclosure if deemed confidential pursuant to the laws of the State of Florida.

From: Sapp, Portia <Portia.Sapp@fdacs.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, August 12, 2025 10:27 AM

To: Haley, Alex <Alex.Haley@fdacs.gov>

Subject: PRR follow-up

Since 2021, we have had 2 PRR redactions for 597.0042(1)(b) and 1 redaction for 597.0042(1)(c).

2 - (b) Audit records and supporting documentation required for submerged land leases issued in accordance with chapter 253 or former chapter 370.

1 - (c) Aquaculture production records and receipts generated by aquaculture facilities certified pursuant to s. 597.004.

Portia Sapp
Director
Division of Aquaculture
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
850-617-7600
850-617-7601 (Fax)
Portia.Sapp@FDACS.gov

600 South Calhoun Street, Suite 217
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1300
www.FDACS.gov

Note: New domain name and email address above. Please update your records.

Please note that Florida has a broad public records law (Chapter 119, Florida Statutes). Most written communication to or from state employees are public records obtainable by the public upon request. Emails sent to me at this email address may be considered public and will only be withheld from disclosure if deemed confidential pursuant to the laws of the State of Florida.



St. Pete Youth Farm
 Est. 2019
 St. Petersburg, FL
 Tuesday, January 13th, 2026

“Together We Grow”



Presenters

- Carla Bristol
 - Director
- Krista Jenkins
 - Current Youth Ambassador – Fall 2023
- Jade Keomek
 - Current Youth Ambassador – Fall 2023
- Elias Ross
 - Current Youth Ambassador – Summer 2023
 - Volunteered Summer 2021 & 2022
- Aiymere Sanchez
 - Former Youth Ambassador – Fall 2021-2023



Identifying Need

- No access to fresh produce
 - 2 grocery stores closed within 4 years
 - No grocery store since 2017
- Community Engagement
 - Discussions held with community
 - Youth-led Farm came to the forefront
- St. Pete Youth Farm was est. in 2019
 - City allocated land & funding
 - Operational & Capital Improvement funds
 - FHSP provided initial operating dollars
 - Jan 2023 moved under City of St. Petersburg Parks & Recreation Dept



Program Overview

Youth Development

- Leadership/Character Development
- Financial Literacy
- Career Readiness
- Civic Engagement

Agriculture

- Soil Building
- Aquaponics (fertilizer)
- Produce Growth & Distribution

Health & Wellness

- Mental Health
- Nutrition
- Mindful Movement
- Environmental Health



Community Benefits

- Workforce Development
 - Job Keeping Skills
 - Job Creation of 18 Net Jobs
 - Person of Influence
- Education
 - Trainings & Workshops
 - Health & Wellness Programming
 - School/University Partnerships
- Environmental
 - Waste diversion
 - Green Space
 - Air Quality
- Neighborhood Impact
 - Reduction in crime by 30%
 - Increase in property value by 9.4%
 - Municipality realize + tax rev by 10%
 - Reduction of public utility by \$4,200 per year/per acre



Achievements To Date



Youth Cultivation

- 160+ Youth hired to date
 - Including through Career Source and Boley
- 6 years of 1 hour per week mental health
- 1,300 Juvenile Arbitration hours
- 1,200+ edible plants and trees
- 100% of Soil Creation
- 3.5 years of aquaponic tilapia farming

Community Expansion

- 300+ Farm Events (80+ Annually)
 - 100+ Community Mental Health since 9/11/2023
 - 700 mini Gardens (2,800 plants)
- 400+ tons of food waste diverted
 - 200+ members of our Community Compost Initiative
- Over 500 fruit trees distributed 2025
- 10,000+ seeds distributed



Teen Testimonial

“I genuinely thought I was gonna continue my life of crime, I came to you very broken and lost. To be honest, I don’t think I WOULD be here if it wasn’t for you and the community you have built. More positions are needed as I know there are people in far deeper than I was.”

- Joseph Gaudette (Former Juvenile Arbitration Program Participant and Youth Farm Volunteer)



What's Next?

Seeking Funding to Expand

- Expanding Youth Employment Opportunities
- Addition of Apiary
- Addition of Chickens
- Youth Farm Cafe (food trailer)
- Food Pharmacy
- Community Bread Project
- Cook Book & Live Stream Cooking Demos
- Celebrating 7th Anniversary in June 2026





Thank you for your time!

Carla Bristol, Director

Phone: 727-565-3930

Email: carla.bristol@stpete.org

www.stpeteyouthfarm.org





Questions - Comments



January '26

Upcoming Events:

CMHW: Curated Conversations

Mon, Jan 5th | 6pm - 7pm

An intentional space for dialogue with a licensed clinician

CMHW: Tai Chi

Mon, Jan 12th | 6pm - 7pm

Tai Chi with Shihan! Sign up at stpeteyouthfarm.org/cmhw

6th Annual MLK Day of Service

Mon, Jan 19th | 9am - 12pm

Our biggest volunteer day of the year in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King

Moringa Tea Tasting Workshop

Wed, Jan 21st | 6pm - 7pm

Learn about the benefits of moringa and moringa tea

CMHW: Healing through Words

Mon, Jan 26th | 6pm - 7pm

Writing workshop led by local writer/poet

Community Open Mic

Thur, Jan 29th | 6pm - 7:30pm

Come experience a showcase of local talent on our stage

Register to perform at stpeteyouthfarm.org/openmic

Jan Community Workday

Sat, Jan 31st | 9am - 11am

Volunteer day open to all ages and groups!



st.petersburg
www.stpete.org



ST. PETE
PARKS & REC

All events held at
St. Pete Youth Farm
unless stated otherwise
1664 12th St South
stpeteyouthfarm.org

180

**STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

Division of Elections

I, Cord Byrd, Secretary of State,
do hereby certify that

Melanie Ressler

is duly appointed a member of the
Florida Citrus Commission

for a term beginning on the Eleventh day of April, A.D., 2025,
until the Thirty-First day of May, A.D., 2026 and is subject to
be confirmed by the Senate during the next regular session of
the Legislature.

*Given under my hand and the Great Seal of the
State of Florida, at Tallahassee, the Capital, this
the First day of December, A.D., 2025.*



Secretary of State

DSDE 99 (3/03)

The original document has a reflective line mark in paper. Hold at an angle to view when checking.



RON DeSANTIS
GOVERNOR

RECEIVED
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

2025 APR 21 AM 11:54

DIVISION OF ELECTIONS
TALLAHASSEE, FL

April 11, 2025

Secretary Cord Byrd
Department of State
R.A. Gray Building, Room 316
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

Dear Secretary Byrd:

Please be advised I have made the following appointment under the provisions of Section 601.04, Florida Statutes:

Ms. Melanie Ressler
7836 Cherry Lake Road
Groveland, Florida 34736

as a member of the Florida Citrus Commission, subject to confirmation by the Senate.
This appointment is effective April 11, 2025, for a term ending May 31, 2026.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron DeSantis", written over a horizontal line.

Ron DeSantis
Governor

RD/kf

41038

RECEIVED

OATH OF OFFICE

(Art. II, § 5(b), Fla. Const.)

2025 MAY 28 AM 8:28

DIVISION OF ELECTIONS
TALLAHASSEE, FL

STATE OF FLORIDA

County of Polk

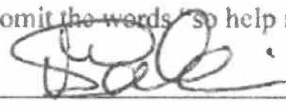
I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support, protect, and defend the Constitution and Government of the United States and of the State of Florida; that I am duly qualified to hold office under the Constitution of the State, and that I will well and faithfully perform the duties of

Florida Citrus Commission

(Full Name of Office – Abbreviations Not Accepted)

on which I am now about to enter, so help me God.

[NOTE: If you affirm, you may omit the words "so help me God." See § 92.52, Fla. Stat.]



Signature

(Affix Seal Below)

Sworn to and subscribed before me by means of ☒ physical presence
Or ☐ online notarization this 21 day of MAY, 2025.



Signature of Officer Administering Oath or of Notary Public

Print, Type, or Stamp Commissioned Name of Notary Public

Personally Known ☒ or Produced Identification ☐

Type of Identification Produced _____

ACCEPTANCE

COPY

I accept the office listed in the above Oath of Office.

Mailing Address: Home ☐ Office ☒

7836 Cherry Lake Road

Melanie Ressler

Street or Post Office Box

Print Name

Groveland, FL 34736



City, State, Zip Code

Signature

CourtSmart Tag Report

Room: SB 301

Case No.:

Type:

Caption: Senate Agriculture Committee **Judge:**

Started: 1/13/2026 1:30:05 PM

Ends: 1/13/2026 2:03:52 PM

Length: 00:33:47

1:30:12 PM Chair Truenow calls the meeting to order
1:30:15 PM Roll Call
1:30:49 PM Pledge of Allegiance
1:30:59 PM Chair Truenow makes opening remarks
1:31:29 PM Tab 4, Appointment to the Florida Citrus Committee
1:31:53 PM Senator Grall motions to recommend confirmation
1:32:10 PM Roll Call
1:32:23 PM Chair Truenow passes the gavel
1:32:35 PM Tab 2, SB 7020 by AG; OGSR/Aquaculture Records Held by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
1:32:42 PM Senator Truenow explains the bill
1:33:32 PM Chair Grall recognizes public testimony
1:33:49 PM Roll Call
1:34:10 PM Tab 1, SB 534 by Senator Bernard; Hunger Free Campus Pilot Committee
1:34:18 PM Senator Bernard explains the bill
1:36:24 PM Chair Grall recognizes public testimony
1:36:26 PM Senator Bernard waives close on the bill
1:36:29 PM Roll Call
1:37:09 PM Tab 3, Presentation by the St. Pete Youth Farm
1:54:27 PM Questions:
1:54:31 PM Senator Bernard
1:56:52 PM Carla Bristol
1:56:56 PM Senator Bernard
1:57:00 PM Carla Bristol
1:57:48 PM Senator Burton
1:58:41 PM Carla Bristol
2:03:12 PM Aiymere Sanchez
2:03:35 PM Chair Rouson recognizes senators wishing to record votes and makes closing remarks
2:03:42 PM Senator Burton moves to adjourn the meeting
2:03:45 PM Meeting adjourned