

# NEWSLETTER

Session Recap-Week Five

February 9-13, 2026



**THE NEWS** met with representatives from Operation Lightshine to discuss their ongoing work supporting vulnerable youth and strengthening prevention efforts across Florida. We also connected with members of the National Association of Residential Property Managers to learn housing and property management priorities impacting communities statewide. We also had the opportunity to engage with wardens and circuit administrators from the Florida Department of Corrections. Additionally, we were pleased to welcome students from Bishop Verot Catholic High School during Catholic Days at the Capitol, where they could engage directly in the legislative process. In the Capitol, eleven bills were presented by Senator Martin in their respective committees, including two amendments to SB 290. Feedback and reactions from stakeholders and visitors were largely grateful and positive. As session work continues, we remain focused on advancing policy solutions and maintaining strong communication with community partners across the state.

## BILLS UP THIS WEEK

### **SB 1054 - Traffic Infractions Resulting in a Crash with Another Vehicle**

If you cause a crash because of certain traffic violations, you must attend a mandatory court hearing and could face added fines and a suspended license. Drivers must prove they can pay for damages if they're involved in certain accidents.

### **SB 1580 - Illegal Gaming**

Increases criminal penalties for people who run illegal gambling operations or bet on games they know are fixed. Updates ethics and employment rules for people who work for the state's gambling oversight commission.

### **SB 1378 - Traffic Enforcement**

Makes it illegal to knowingly drive a vehicle with a license plate that doesn't belong to that car. Allows police to seize a vehicle if it's used to flee from law enforcement.

### **SB 1724 - Utility Services**

Requires new or extended utility service agreements (like water or sewer) to be in writing and discussed at public meetings. Changes how cities can charge customers outside city limits and increases reporting requirements to the state.

### **SB 1380 - Unauthorized Aliens**

Bars certain state licenses and public financial benefits from being issued to people who are in the U.S. without legal status. Requires certain government procedures, instruction, and testing to be conducted in English.

### **SB 1298 - Public Records/Public Employees Relations Commission**

Makes certain records and communications of the Public Employees Relations Commission confidential. Keeps some employee union-related documents private, with the exemption subject to future legislative review.

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## Bills Continued

### **SB 888 - Professional Services Contracts**

Sets limits on when engineers, architects, and other design professionals must financially protect (indemnify) those who hire them. Requires contracts to hold professionals to industry-standard skill and care, not a higher standard.

### **SB 1370 - Habitual Traffic Offender Designation**

Changes the definition of who qualifies as a "habitual traffic offender." It could affect someone who loses their license for repeated traffic violations.

### **SB 1712 - Statewide Counterintelligence and Counterterrorism Unit**

Creates a new statewide unit within the Florida Department of Law Enforcement focused on counterterrorism and counterintelligence. Assigns teams from the unit to regional security task forces to coordinate efforts.

### **SB 1296 - Public Employees Relations Commission**

Changes rules for how public employee unions are certified and how they handle dues collection. Updates procedures for hearings and subpoenas involving public employee labor disputes.



## Credit Union Day in the Capital

This week, the Association of Florida Credit Unions honored Senator Martin as a Legislator of the Year for his leadership and commitment to protecting vulnerable Floridians. The recognition comes in part from his work last year sponsoring SB 1880, Human Trafficking. The legislation encouraged financial institutions to play an active role in identifying and preventing human trafficking. Because financial organizations often have a unique window into financial patterns and behaviors, they can help detect suspicious activity that may signal exploitation.

"Being named the 2025 State Lawmaker of the Year by Florida's credit unions is a meaningful honor," said Senator Jonathan Martin. "Credit unions strengthen our local communities and protect the financial well-being of their members. I am proud to work alongside them on policies that support consumers and contribute to a strong, resilient Florida economy".

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