

NEWSLETTER

Session Recap-Week Seven

February 23-27, 2026



THE NEWS

While there is still no official word on the state budget, session continues moving forward. This week included several committee meetings across key policy areas, along with several floor sessions where legislation was debated and voted on.

In addition to work at the Capitol, the Senator met with Lee County Commissioner Kevin Ruane, a disaster relief organization regarding preparedness and recovery efforts, and spoke at a Florida Retail Federation event on issues impacting Florida's business community. Faith leaders also met with faith leaders, where they prayed over the Senator.

Next week is expected to be the final week of regular committee meetings before the Legislature transitions primarily to floor sessions for final debate and votes as session enters its final phase.

BILLS UP THIS WEEK

SB 698 – Onsite Sewage Treatment and Disposal System Permits

This bill prevents local governments from requiring certain additional state environmental permits before issuing building or plumbing permits. It streamlines the process by allowing proof of compliance instead of separate permit approval.

SB 928 – Mandatory Remand to Custody Upon Conviction of Dangerous Crimes

This bill requires individuals convicted of certain dangerous crimes to be taken into custody immediately after a guilty verdict. They must remain in custody while awaiting sentencing without the option of bond.

SB 1370 – Habitual Traffic Offender Designation

This bill updates the definition of a habitual traffic offender. The changes aim to strengthen penalties for repeat serious traffic violations and improve roadway safety.

SB 536 – Criminal Gang Members

This bill clarifies what qualifies as gang-related language and updates the definition of a criminal gang member. The goal is to strengthen the enforcement and prosecution of gang-related crimes.

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Bills Continued

SB 762 – Offices of Criminal Conflict and Civil Regional Counsel

This bill updates procedures for conflict counsel offices that handle cases when public defenders cannot, and allows courts to appoint counsel from another region.

SB 1750 – Criminal Sexual Conduct

This bill increases penalties and mandatory minimum sentences for certain sexual offenses, especially repeat crimes and those involving children.

SB 1580 – Illegal Gaming

This bill strengthens penalties for illegal gambling and betting on rigged events. It also updates oversight standards for gaming regulators to protect public integrity.

SB 1742 – Indecent Exposure of Sexual Organs to Minors

This bill makes it a crime to intentionally expose sexual organs in a lewd manner while viewing a child under 16.



Children's Week

This week was Children's Week, and child advocacy groups from across the state gathered to discuss important issues such as early education, literacy, and childcare. More than 4,000 children were registered to participate in the various activities held in the courtyard, filling the Capitol with energy and excitement. State agencies also came together for a press conference highlighting the importance of supporting children and strengthening families across Florida. It was truly inspiring to see so many individuals and organizations who are deeply passionate about supporting children and strengthening families. Events like this serve as a powerful reminder that children are not only our future, but our present, and investing in their well-being is one of the most important responsibilities we share.

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