

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 Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment, and General Government

BILL: CS/CS/SB 1566

INTRODUCER: Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment, and General Government and Community Affairs Committee and Senator DiCeglie

SUBJECT: Local Government Spending

DATE: February 27, 2026 REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Shuler</u>	<u>Fleming</u>	<u>CA</u>	<u>Fav/CS</u>
2.	<u>Sanders</u>	<u>Betta</u>	<u>AEG</u>	<u>Fav/CS</u>
3.	_____	_____	<u>RC</u>	_____

Please see Section IX. for Additional Information:

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE - Substantial Changes

I. Summary:

CS/CS/SB 1566 provides that the act may be cited as the “Local Government Financial Transparency and Accountability Act.”

The bill requires county and municipal tentative, adopted tentative, and final budgets, as well as budget amendments, be posted on their official websites to allow the public to search, review, filter, download, and compare data and view graphs. The bill revises timeframes for posting budget information and noticing public budget hearings.

The bill has an indeterminate effect on state revenues and expenditures. *See Section V., Fiscal Statement.*

The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

II. Present Situation:

County Budget Systems and Information

Chapter 129, F.S., establishes a budget system that controls the finances of the boards of county commissioners of Florida counties. Pursuant to s. 129.01, F.S., each county is required to prepare, approve, adopt, and execute an annual budget each fiscal year. The budget must show

for each fund, as required by law and sound financial practices, budgeted revenues and expenditures by organizational unit.¹ The level of detail for the budget must meet the level of detail requirements for annual financial reports submitted to the Department of Financial Services under s. 218.32, F.S.² The budget is approved by the Board of County Commissioners (Board) and must be balanced so that the total of the estimated receipts, including balances brought forward, equals the total of the appropriations and reserves.³ Notwithstanding other provisions of law, the budgets of all county officers must be in sufficient detail and contain such information as the board of county commissioners may require in furtherance of their powers and responsibilities.⁴

Preparation, Adoption, and Amendment of County Budgets

On or before June 1 of each year, the Sheriff, the Clerk of the Circuit Court and County Comptroller, the Tax Collector, and the Supervisor of Elections each submit to the Board a tentative budget for their respective offices for the ensuing fiscal year.⁵ Upon receipt of the tentative budgets and any revisions, the board prepares a summary of the adopted tentative budgets.⁶ Public hearings are held to explain tentative and final budgets and to entertain community requests and complaints prior to budget adoption.⁷ The tentative budget must be posted on the county's official website at least two days before a public hearing and remain on the website for at least 45 days.⁸ The final budget must be posted on the website within 30 days after adoption, and remain on the website for at least two years.⁹ The tentative budgets, adopted tentative budgets, and final budgets are filed in the Office of the County Auditor as a public record.¹⁰

A board of county commissioners may amend a budget at any time within a fiscal year for that year's budget or within the first 60 days of a fiscal year for the budget for the prior fiscal year.¹¹ Except for certain amendments for specifically authorized purposes, the Board may adopt an amendment by resolution or ordinance following a public hearing.¹² The Board must provide notice at least two days, but not more than five days before the hearing and include each budgetary fund to be amended, the source of the funds, the use of the funds, and the total amount of each fund's appropriations.¹³ If adopted, the amendment must be posted on the website within five days after adoption and remain on the website for at least two years.¹⁴

¹ Section 129.01(1), F.S.

² *Id.*

³ Section 129.01(2), F.S.

⁴ Section 129.021, F.S.

⁵ Section 129.03(2), F.S. Section 195.087(1) F.S., outlines the budget process for property appraisers in the state.

⁶ Section 129.03(3)(b), F.S.

⁷ Section 129.03(3)(c), F.S., also outlines public hearing practices and subsequent budget website posting and public record requirements.

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ Section 129.06(2), F.S.

¹² Section 129.06(2)(f), F.S.

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ *Id.*

Municipal Budget Requirements

The preparation, adoption, and website posting of municipal budgets follows a similar process to that of counties. Section 166.241(2), F.S., provides that each municipality must annually adopt a budget by ordinance or resolution unless the municipality has a charter that specifies another method for adoption. The funds available from taxation and other sources, including balances brought forward, must equal the total appropriations for expenditures and reserves.¹⁵ The tentative budget must be posted on the municipality's official website at least two days before a public hearing and remain on the website for at least 45 days.¹⁶ The final budget must be posted on the website within 30 days after adoption and remain on the website for at least two years.¹⁷

If the governing body of a municipality amends the budget, the adopted amendment must be posted on the official website of the municipality within five days after adoption and must remain on the website for at least two years.¹⁸

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Local Government Budget Procedures

The bill provides that the act may be cited as the "Local Government Financial Transparency and Accountability Act."

The bill requires any tentative, adopted tentative or final budget, as well as any budget amendments, posted to a county or municipality's official website to allow members of the public to:

- View budget data in a searchable format.
- View and filter data according to categories in the local government's chart of accounts, including, but not limited to, fund, department, division, program, or activity.
- Review revenue and expense trends in the county's chart of accounts, and view and compare such data on a comparison chart.
- View data submitted to the Office of Economic and Demographic Research (EDR) related to government spending and debt per resident for the previous five fiscal years.
- Download budget data.
- View data in different graphical formats.
- View information for multiple departments, divisions, funds, or financial categories at the same time.
- View the average employee salary, the percentage of the budget spent on salaries and benefits for employees, and all employee salaries in a searchable format.

¹⁵ Section 166.241(2), F.S.

¹⁶ Section 166.241(3), F.S.

¹⁷ *Id.* If the municipality does not operate an official website, the municipality must, within a reasonable period of time as established by the county or counties in which the municipality is located, transmit the tentative budget and final budget to the manager or administrator of such county or counties who shall post the budgets on the county's website. *Id.*

¹⁸ Section 166.241(9). Just as with the tentative and final budgets, a municipality without its own website must transmit amendments to the county or counties which posted the budget within a reasonable time. *Id.*

The bill revises the length of time for which each county and municipality must post certain budget information on its official website. Specifically, the bill would require:

- Tentative budgets to be posted seven days (rather than two days under current law) before the public hearing to adopt the budget;
- Proposed budget amendments to be posted seven days (rather than two days) before the public hearing to adopt the amendment; and
- Final budgets and adopted budget amendments to be posted for five years (rather than two years under current law) following adoption.

The bill requires counties and municipalities to provide public notice of a hearing on a proposed budget amendment at least seven days (rather than two days under current law) before the hearing.

The effective date of the bill is July 1, 2026.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

Article VII, section 18(a) of the Florida Constitution provides in part that a county or municipality may not be bound by a general law requiring a county or municipality to spend funds or take an action that requires the expenditure of funds unless certain specified exemptions or exceptions are met. The mandate requirement does not apply to laws having an insignificant impact,¹⁹ which for Fiscal Year 2026-2027²⁰ is forecast at approximately \$2.4 million or less.

The fiscal impact of the bill has not been determined; however, the bill may require municipalities and counties to incur additional costs related to posting budget information. If the impact exceeds the threshold for insignificant impact, the mandate requirements may apply. If the bill does qualify as a mandate, in order to be binding upon cities and counties, the bill must contain a finding of important state interest and be approved by a two-thirds vote of the membership of each house.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

¹⁹ An insignificant fiscal impact is the amount not greater than the average statewide population for the applicable fiscal year multiplied by \$0.10. See FLA. SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY AFFAIRS, *Interim Report 2012-115: Insignificant Impact*, (Sept. 2011), <http://www.flsenate.gov/PublishedContent/Session/2012/InterimReports/2012-115ca.pdf> (last visited Feb. 18, 2026).

²⁰ Based on the Demographic Estimating Conference's estimated population adopted on June 30, 2025, <https://edr.state.fl.us/Content/conferences/population/archives/250630demographic.pdf> (last visited Feb. 18, 2026).

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 an indeterminate impact on state revenues and expenditures. Counties and municipalities may incur costs related to the budget data posting and formatting requirements.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends sections 129.03, 129.06, and 166.241 of the Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:

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

CS by Appropriations on Agriculture, Environment, and General Government on February 25, 2026:

The committee substitute:

- Removes all provisions from the bill related to the use of county- or municipal-owned utility revenues; and
- Makes a technical revision to clarify that the proposed budget amendments must be posted on the county's or municipal's website within seven days before adoption.

CS by Community Affairs on February 10, 2026:

The committee substitute:

- Adds provisions regulating the use and budgeting of revenues by county and municipal utilities, including:
 - Specifying Legislative intent that counties and municipalities provide services affordably, transparently, and reliably while protecting public health and natural resources.
 - Requiring counties and municipalities to reinvest utility service revenues into the utility for operational integrity
 - Requiring the utility to budget forecast and strategize every five years for continuous maintenance and strategic improvements. The forecast must anticipate increased demand, technology costs, and disaster costs.
- Revises provisions related to county and municipal tentative and final budget procedures, including:
 - Reducing the advance posting requirement for tentative budgets to seven days before the hearing (rather than 14 days under the bill).
 - Revising the items and manner of display for website budget data posting requirements.
 - Deleting a requirement for a budget-cutting exercise.
 - Deleting an obsolete and redundant requirement for submission of budget data to the Office of Economic and Demographic Research (EDR).
- Removes the section of the bill that would have prohibited local government expenditures on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

B. Amendments:

None.