

April 13, 2021



The Florida Situation Report

Securing Florida's Future

Florida's Political Insights, Analysis, and Highlights

Welcome to the Florida Situation Report. The Florida Chamber political team constantly analyzes new voter registration trends, changes to House and Senate districts, and voter behavior as we work to recruit and elect pro-jobs candidates to Secure Florida's Future. Please share this report with your management team and send us a note if you have questions, perspectives, or recommendations. To be blunt, Florida is at a crossroads and we invite you to help us save it.

- **Mark Wilson, President and CEO of the Florida Chamber** wrote an op-ed in the *Sun Sentinel* for the estimated 800 net new people who are relocating to Florida everyday. "Welcome to Florida. We're glad you're here and we hope you'll help us keep Florida, Florida." You may read it [here](#).
- **Mark Wilson** also authored an op-ed in the *Orlando Sentinel* focused on how training the workforce with necessary skills is vital to COVID recovery. It can be found [here](#).
- **David Hart, EVP of the Florida Chamber** wrote an op-ed in the *News Press* titled Senator Rodrigues is championing Florida's fiscal future. Read it [here](#).
- The Florida Chamber Foundation launched the **Florida Equality of Opportunity Initiative**. This is America's first comprehensive, Chamber-led strategy to cut childhood poverty in half, ensure all third graders are at grade level, and champion diversity and inclusion in the workplace. You can learn more [here](#).
- Culture of Safety Scholarships are now available! The **Florida Chamber Safety Council's** inaugural *Southeastern Leadership Conference on Safety, Health + Sustainability* will take place in Orlando at Disney's Coronado Resort, May 10-12. The event will feature national keynotes, a CEO panel, professional development and the latest data/research, industry benchmarks, and best practices for the EHS industry. Please consider sharing with your Safety/EHS/HR colleagues. [Registration is still open!](#)
- **ChamberHub** is LIVE - jump in the driver's seat of the Florida Chamber's exclusive voter file. Learn how to get access by e-mailing [Nick Catroppo](#).
- The Florida Chamber is continuing to encourage job creators to flee high-cost, high regulation states and move to Florida through its **"Open for Business" Campaign**. You can read more [here](#).
- **Florida Free Enterprise Fund**, a newly launched Florida Chamber initiative aimed at recruiting and electing pro-jobs candidates and advancing pro-Florida issues, invites your company to participate to help Secure Florida's Future. E-mail [Nick Catroppo](#) to get involved today.
- As we move into the 2022 Election Cycle, the **Florida Institute for Political Leadership (FIPL)** is partnering with local chambers of commerce and hosting virtual candidate schools on how to run a winning local political campaign. With over 4,000 local elections in the coming years, we're working with local chambers to help educate local business leaders about local opportunities to serve. [Click here to register and learn more](#).
- Learn about legislative candidates and make decisions on how your company can strategically make political contributions by joining the **Florida Chamber Political Institute (FCPI)** which is led by Marian Johnson. [Learn more here](#).
- Keep up-to-date on COVID-19 and Florida's economy by checking out [The Florida Scorecard](#) and visiting the Florida Chamber [Resource Center](#).

Chamber Members can access exclusive political intel here:

Chamber Member's Only Access

Florida: Behind The Numbers

ANALYSIS BY CHAMBERHUB - The Florida Chamber's Exclusive Voter File
Special Legislative Session Edition

Every Friday afternoon during the legislative session, the Florida Chamber Government Affairs team

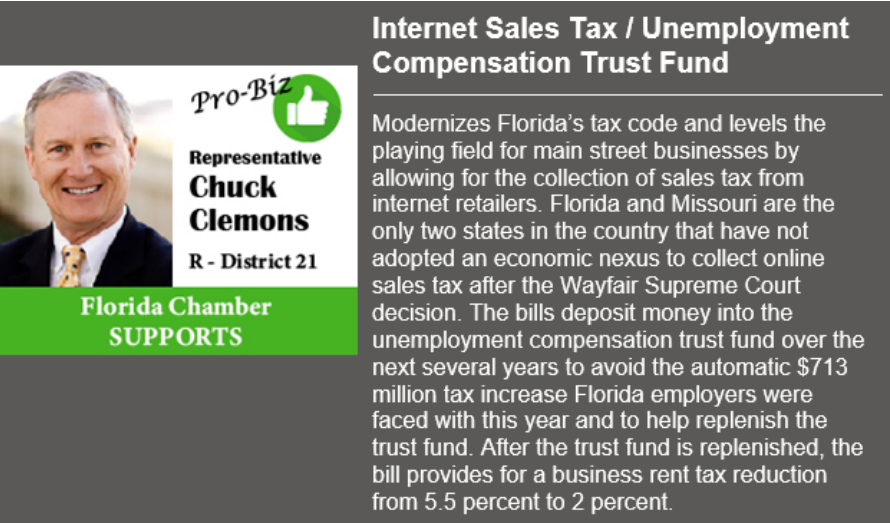
sends a legislative update to Chamber members. If you are a current Florida Chamber member and would like to receive this communication please e-mail [Anna Grace Lewis](mailto:Anna.Grace.Lewis@flchamber.com). If you are not a current member, please contact [Nick Catroppo](mailto:Nick.Catroppo@flchamber.com) or [Frank Walker](mailto:Frank.Walker@flchamber.com) to learn more about how your company can benefit with a Chamber membership.

Here is a preview of last week's legislative update:

Mainstreet Fairness, Unemployment Tax Relief and Business Rent Tax Reduction Headed to Governor

Thursday, the Florida House passed **SB 50** on a bipartisan vote of 93-24, before the Senate passed the bill 27-12, sending it to the Governor's desk. This bill is a huge win for Florida's business community and contains three significant priorities.

SB 50, as initially filed, created an economic nexus to collect sales taxes from internet retailers and marketplace providers. It has been a two-decade priority of the Florida Chamber to level the playing field between online retailers and out of state businesses doing business in the state and businesses located in the state that already collect and remit sales tax to the Department of Revenue. The US Supreme Court decision, *Wayfair v. South Dakota*, paved the way for states to set an economic nexus instead of just a physical presence nexus. Florida is only one of two states that collect a sales tax that has not adopted the *Wayfair* decision. This is not a new tax, but a tax that was already due, and simply shifts the collection point from the consumer to the business.



Internet Sales Tax / Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund

Modernizes Florida's tax code and levels the playing field for main street businesses by allowing for the collection of sales tax from internet retailers. Florida and Missouri are the only two states in the country that have not adopted an economic nexus to collect online sales tax after the *Wayfair* Supreme Court decision. The bills deposit money into the unemployment compensation trust fund over the next several years to avoid the automatic \$713 million tax increase Florida employers were faced with this year and to help replenish the trust fund. After the trust fund is replenished, the bill provides for a business rent tax reduction from 5.5 percent to 2 percent.

Representative Chuck Clemons
R - District 21

Florida Chamber SUPPORTS

SB 50: Sen. Joe Gruters
Passed the Senate Floor, 27-12.
Passed the House Floor, 93-24.
Ready to head to the Governor's desk.

HB 15: Rep. Chuck Clemons
Substituted for SB 50.

From the Campaign Trail

Florida Chamber Highlights Champions of Successful Legislative Priorities



The Big Picture: On March 29, 2021, Governor Ron DeSantis signed into law SB 72, Chamber-backed COVID Liability Protections legislation.

Why it Matters: The law will allow businesses and health care facilities who continue to do their best to keep employees, customers, and patients safe to no longer have to fear frivolous lawsuits as they continue to relaunch Florida's

economy.

What We're Doing: The Florida Chamber launched digital ads to support champions of Chamber-backed legislation. Since the beginning of session, the Chamber has launched ads focused on COVID liability protections, Mainstreet Fairness, Unemployment Tax Relief and Business Tax Reduction.

[Join the Florida Chamber's Free Enterprise Fund - a non-partisan fund that works to support campaigns who promote and believe in free enterprise and job creation. A membership in the Florida Chamber Free Enterprise Fund is reserved for political donors at the \\$10,000 level or](#)



Spotlight

Florida Chamber Foundation Launches Florida Equality of Opportunity Initiative

The Florida Chamber Political is seeking business leaders to help lead the charge in securing the future of every Floridian, one ZIP code at a time. Contact [Kyle Baltuch](#) to find out how you can get involved.

ICYMI: Florida Chamber's Matthew Choy Testified on HB 1507

Matthew Choy testified in support of HB 1507. This legislation, sponsored by Rep. Clay Yarborough, creates a state-wide system approach to improve the equity and access for all Floridians to have the opportunity to achieve economic self-sufficiency. The creation of the *Office of Reimagining Education and Career Help* will support the Florida Chamber Foundation's goal that at least 80% of Florida's workforce will have essential employability skills by 2030. Watch it [here](#).

The Money Race

Legislature Considers More Constitutional Reforms to Limit Billionaire's Influence on Citizen Initiative Process

The Florida Legislature took action on two Florida Chamber-backed measures that will help protect our state's constitution. As you know, the Florida Constitution is one of the key reasons that Florida continues to spend within its means, protect the environment, and foster an excellent climate to live, work, and play.

The Florida Constitution also is known as one of the easiest state constitutions to amend, with 160 changes since adoption in 1968. Many of these changes could have been handled by statute which can more easily adjust to changing circumstances as knowledge improves, demographics change, or policy preferences shift. Some successful amendments were proposed and funded by a single wealthy individual – creating a worrying trend where one billionaire can buy their way onto a ballot through a process that was designed to be used by a ground swelling of broad support from the citizenry. The Florida Chamber of Commerce believes that reforms are needed to protect the Florida Constitution and bring further transparency to a process that currently lacks it. Fortunately, two measures are making their way through the process.

Senate Bill 1890, sponsored by Senator Ray Rodriguez, would cap donations to constitutional amendments in a similar way to candidates, ensuring that the citizen's initiative process reflects the will of the citizens plural, rather than just one individual. Recently, that bill was heard in Senate Ethics and Elections. Policy Director Christopher Emmanuel spoke in committee ([watch the video here at 33:15](#)) and the bill passed on party lines. The House companion is House Bill 699 by Representative Payne, which passed and [was covered by statewide news](#).

The second measure is a joint resolution which would increase the threshold for constitutional passage from 60% to 66.6%. Those bills, House Joint Resolution 61 and Senate Joint Resolution 1238, each have one remaining committee stop. Because these measures are changing the Florida Constitution itself, they require supermajorities in both chambers and ultimately citizen approval, which would take place on the 2022 ballot.

If you are interested in hearing more, please contact Policy Director [Christopher Emmanuel](#).

The stakes are high in the 2022 Election. With it being a redistricting year, the Governor, Cabinet, and all 160 legislative seats will be on the ballot. With the clock ticking, we invite you to get involved now. To learn more and make a contribution with a Florida Chamber Political Committee, click the link below.

[Learn More and Contribute](#)

Social Media Toolkit

Tweet Suggestions:

@FLChamber CEO Mark Wilson: "Welcome, newcomers! Please help us keep Florida, Florida! Read Mark's op-ed here: <https://bit.ly/3dZUvNK> #KeepFloridaFL

Register NOW to join the movement in making Florida the safest state in America! Join us May 10-12 at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort for the Southeastern Leadership Conference on Safety, Health, and Sustainability! <https://t.co/IBtdIRNBEM?amp=1>

TY @AGAshleyMoody for standing w/ FL biz for FL's continued competitiveness as a Right-to-Work state. Your letter to US Senate leaders is spot on: REJECT the PRO Act. Paying for membership in a union should not be a prerequisite to getting or keeping a job. #FlaPol



What's Next: Upcoming Calls, Webinars, and Events

REGISTER NOW:

[Work Care: Harnessing Mental Wellness in the Workplace - April 15](#)

[Florida Chamber Safety Council's Southeastern Leadership Conference - May 10-12](#)

[Florida Chamber Business Leaders Solution Summit on Prosperity and Economic Opportunity - May 26](#)

[Florida Chamber Learners to Earners Workforce Solution Summit - June 15](#)

[Florida Chamber 35th Annual Environmental Permitting Summer School - July 20-23](#)

[Florida Chamber Innovation, Technology, and Economic Diversification Solution Summit - August 5](#)

[Florida Chamber Future of Florida Forum and Annual Meeting - October 27-28](#)

To learn more, run for office, or help the Florida Chamber, please contact:

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