

May 7, 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.

- The **Florida Chamber's** top priorities, common-sense COVID-19 Liability Protections and Remote Sales Tax Collection, were the first two bills passed and signed by Governor Ron DeSantis. You may read more [here](#).
- The **Florida Chamber Foundation** launched the Path to Prosperity Scholarship Program to help secure the future of today's learners who are living in Florida's most impoverished zip codes. If you're interested in becoming a donor for the Scholarship Program, contact [Kyle Baltuch](#).
- The **Florida Chamber Safety Council** is working to make Florida the safest state in the nation. The Safety Council tapped into Florida's leading companies and their safety leaders to create an Advisory Board that is an incubator of research, leadership and education, and provides resources, tools and best practices for small to mid-sized businesses. Learn more [here](#).
- **Last chance to register!** 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 closing soon!](#)
- **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: Special Legislative Session Edition

Florida's economy won this past Legislative Session with many Florida Chamber-Backed, Pro-Jobs Policies passing the House and Senate. This past weekend, *Florida Politics* named the Florida Chamber a legislative session winner and highlighted our top legislative priority which has already been signed by

“Remember the COVID-19 liability shield? Before the American Rescue Plan passed and before vaccines were available to anyone under 65, it happened so long ago that you might have forgotten. That’s because the Florida Chamber of Commerce’s team of Mark Wilson, David, Hart, Frank Walker, and Carolyn Johnson got to work early, sitting down with lawmakers and getting the Governor and legislative leadership on board. Would COVID-19 lawsuits have really bogged down the courts and killed the recovery? Thanks to the Chamber, we’ll never have to find out.”

Moreover, another Florida Chamber top priority, Remote Sales Tax Collection, was passed and signed by the Governor. While other states’ Legislative Sessions were focused on what taxes to raise, what services to cut, or what promises to break to mitigate the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, Florida’s fiscal responsibility, discipline, and smart investments made by previous leaders and continued today allowed Florida’s economy, jobs, and population to continue growing. To read more about the Florida Chamber’s successful Legislative Session, [click here](#).

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](#). If you are not a current member, please contact [Nick Catroppo](#) or [Frank Walker](#) to learn more about how your company can benefit with a Chamber membership.



Representative Chuck Clemons
R - District 21

Florida Chamber SUPPORTS


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.

SB 50: Sen. Joe Gruters
HB 15: Rep. Chuck Clemons



SB 50 Signed By Governor



Senator Jeff Brandes
R - District 24

Florida Chamber SUPPORTS

COVID-19 Liability Protections

Provides liability protections from claims that arise due to COVID-19 for businesses and other entities that are substantially complying with government health and safety guidelines to keep employees and customers safe.

SB 72: Sen. Jeff Brandes
HB 7: Rep. Lawrence McClure



SB 72 Signed By Governor

From the Campaign Trail

Florida Adds One Congressional Seat in U.S. Census Apportionment Data

ANALYSIS BY CHAMBERHUB - The Florida Chamber’s Exclusive Voter File

The Big Picture: The United States Census Bureau released its 2020 census apportionment data earlier today. Comprised of national and state-level data, this information is the basis upon which the 435 seats of the U.S. House of Representatives are divided among the states. Heading into today’s announcement many projections had expected that Florida would gain two additional seats in Congress, increasing Florida’s U.S. House delegation from 27 to 29 members.

However, the data released only saw Florida gaining one seat in the House, meaning our state will have 28 Congressional districts beginning in 2022 and continuing through the 2030 election cycle. Florida was not alone in seeing expectations not realized, as fewer House seats changed hands among the states than had widely been expected. Only five states other than Florida saw their House apportionment increase: Texas gained two seats and the following states gained one seat: Colorado, Montana, North Carolina, and Oregon. Seven states each lost one seat in the House: California, Illinois, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia.

While no data other than statewide population was released today, Florida’s new Congressional district will likely be to the benefit of Central Florida and the I-4 corridor region. Most other regions should see only minimal change, with North Florida likely to see some Congressional seats increase in geographical size. Most notably, Congressman Neal Dunn’s (FL-2) Congressional District will likely add an additional county or counties based upon unofficial estimates of population change in the Panhandle.

By the Numbers: Florida’s population per the 2020 Census stands at 21,538,187 people. This is an increase of nearly three million residents since the 2010 Census, a growth of 14.6%. Florida also

continues to comprise a larger share of the national population. According to the 2020 Census, 6.5% of all Americans live in Florida, up from 6% in the 2010 Census, as the national population now stands at 331,439,281.

What We're Doing: It is expected that the U.S. Census block data will be released by the end of September. The Florida Chamber will continue to provide data and analyses to our members through Florida's redistricting process. To access this data and analyses, please contact [Nick Catroppo](#).

[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 above.](#)

Spotlight

ICYMI: Florida Supreme Court kills Amendment to Legalize Recreational Marijuana

From the *Orlando Sentinel*: "The Florida Chamber of Commerce praised the court decision...The Florida Chamber will fight...to keep Florida Florida." Read more [here](#).

ALERT: POTUS Looks to Expand Union Membership

The White House recently announced a new labor union task force which will encourage union membership. It's chaired by VPOTUS who believes that "the decline of union membership is contributing to serious societal and economic problems in our country." Help us fight back against this radical union agenda by contacting [Nick Catroppo](#).

The Money Race

Anti-Business Interest Groups Stepping Up for 2022

The 2022 election may be 18 months away, but the money race for 2022 is full speed ahead. Political groups are raising money, knowing the high stakes of having the Governor and Cabinet, as well as all House and Senate districts on the ballot due to redistricting.

While the business community's political fundraising is performing well, we must be vigilant and acknowledge the special interest groups, such as out-of-state billionaires, radical environmentalists, public sector unions, and personal injury trial lawyers want very different outcomes for Florida than we do. These interests have ramped up their political giving knowing how high the stakes are in 2022. Looking specifically at personal injury trial lawyer political giving and their trade association, they are well ahead of their historic pace for 2022 when compared to the same time for the 2018 or 2020 election cycles. The fundraising numbers show they are \$222,000 ahead compared to this point in the 2020 cycle and almost \$330,000 ahead of where they were in the 2018 cycle.

These political dollars help make it possible to elect candidates who support issues such as our top legislative priority for this past Legislative Session - COVID liability protections for businesses. As former Speaker of the House Will Weatherford says, "If we don't get the politics right, we can't get the policies right." Now, more than ever, we need your support to help keep Florida, Florida.

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 to a Florida Chamber Political Committee, click the link below.

[Learn More and Contribute](#)

Social Media Toolkit

Tweet Suggestions:

Do you know someone looking to #Run4Office? Nominate them today at [FIPL.org/Nominations](#) #FlaPol

TY @GovRonDeSantis for signing into law two bills that will help increase student literacy and VPK accountability. Thank you to bill sponsors @Gayle_Harrell, @valoupis and @ErinGrall for helping contribute to the @FLChamberFDN 2030 Goals! #FlaPol

Registrations are still open for the @FLChamberFDN #LearnerstoEarners Solution Summit. Register here today - <https://bit.ly/3vH1a6M>



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

REGISTER NOW:

[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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Sign-Up for the Florida Situation Report

