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February 28, 2025

2025 CFHLA Legislative Priorities

As state lawmakers prepare to start the 2025 Legislative Session in Tallahassee next week, CFHLA is ready to advocate for the following ten priorities this year. The CFHLA Board of Directors recently approved these [2025 CFHLA Legislative Priorities](#), including:

Protecting the Tourist Development Tax (TDT)

The proper reinvestment and appropriate use of TDT will drive further visitation to our destination and continue to benefit our local economy and residents through increased jobs and wages, sales tax revenue, property tax, etc. CFHLA strongly opposes adding any new or expanded uses for Tourist Development Tax (TDT) revenues.

Supporting VISIT FLORIDA Funding

CFHLA **supports the continued annual recurring funding of VISIT FLORIDA**. Funding of [VISIT FLORIDA](#) ensures that our state continues to be top of mind as the leading vacation destination in the country.

Increased Funding for Transportation and Infrastructure Projects

CFHLA supports the increased funding of essential transportation and infrastructure projects across the Central Florida region (excluding using TDT funds).

Additional Education Funding for Hospitality/Culinary Programs at our local Schools, Colleges and Universities

CFHLA supports additional funding for our hospitality and culinary programs at our local high schools, as well as the increased per-student funding at [Valencia College](#), [Seminole State College](#), and the [University of Central Florida](#).



Workforce Housing

CFHLA supports the continued full funding for the Sadowski Fund, as the Central Florida community has a dire need for more reliable and affordable housing options.

Commercial Property Insurance Reform

CFHLA supports any legislative efforts that are aimed at **reducing the cost of commercial insurance in Florida**.

Statewide Regulation of Vacation Rentals and Advertising Platforms

CFHLA strongly supports requiring initiatives that ensure **vacation home rentals on advertising platforms also practice the same safety standards as traditional lodging to protect visitors and their experience**.

Timeshare Revisions

CFHLA supports both of [ARDA's](#) legislative proposals, including making timeshare-specific changes to the provisions passed in two condo/HOA bills passed during the 2024 Florida Legislative Session (HB 1021 and HB 1203).

Clarifying Transient Occupancy

CFHLA supports making the necessary changes to Florida Statutes, to **provide more clarity to guests, law enforcement, and lodging establishments regarding the removal of disruptive, violent, law-breaking, and non-paying guests from their property** (HB 535 and SB 606).

Interchange Fees on Sales Tax

CFHLA supports **prohibiting the collection of interchange on sales tax**, which will provide relief to businesses, which will in turn provide relief to consumers.

[CLICK HERE](#) to see the full Legislative Priorities Report.

The **2025 Florida Legislative Session** begins March 4, 2025 in Tallahassee. The CFHLA leadership team will continue to educate and work with lawmakers to effectively advocate for our hospitality and tourism industry at the state and local levels.

Highlights from the recent Florida Legislative Special Sessions

After multiple special sessions to start the year, **Florida Governor Ron DeSantis** recently signed into law a bill that is aimed at addressing illegal immigration in our state. The legislation was passed by a vote of 85 - 29; a near party line vote with all Republicans voting up on the bill, and all Democrats voting down on the bill.

In alignment with President Trump, Florida's Legislature and Governor approved a measure that would do the following:

- Creates mandatory death penalties for any unauthorized alien who commits murder or child rape
- Automatic maximum sentence for illegal alien gang members
- Toughens penalties to keep criminal illegal aliens behind bars
- Secures our elections with felony charges for illegals who vote and for those that help them

- Protects our borders with new state-level crimes for illegally entering or reentering Florida
- Intelligence sharing with ICE to target cartels
- Ends in-state tuition for illegal aliens
- Increases detention space for ICE deportations
- Creates new state board of immigration enforcement
- Partners with President Trump to enforce federal immigration law

The bill signed into law follows a disagreement between Governor DeSantis and state lawmakers over the best approach to addressing illegal immigration, but during a series of meetings and votes this month, they were able to reach a compromise to push the legislation through into law.

CFHLA PAC/ PC Board Elects 2025 Officers and Board Members

The [Central Florida Hotel & Lodging Association's Political Action Committee and Political Committee](#) is proud to announce its newly elected/appointed 2025 Board of Directors, which includes Central Florida Hospitality Executives from across the Central Florida region (including but not limited to Lake, Orange, Osceola, Polk, and Seminole Counties).

The CFHLA PAC and CFHLA PC are bi-partisan committees that protect the interests of the hospitality and tourism industry, by educating and mobilizing our members to become more politically active, as well as supporting candidates who are pro-tourism and pro-hospitality.

The following Board members were elected to serve on the 2025 CFHLA PAC and PC Executive Committee, beginning February 19, 2025:

Chair, Jay Leonard, General Manager of the Wyndham Lake Buena Vista Resort Disney Springs Resort Area/Wyndham Garden Lake Buena Vista Disney Springs Resort Area

Vice Chair, Brad Boland, Vice President of Development, Vacation Villas at Fantasy World

Treasurer, Marc Reicher, Senior Vice President, RIDA Development Corporation

Secretary, Jacqueline Bozzuto, Shareholder and Co-Chair, Hospitality & Leisure at Lowndes.



Additionally, the CFHLA PAC and PC Board of Directors is made up of leaders from all sectors of the hospitality and tourism industry. This includes brand and independent hotels, hotel owners, vacation ownership resorts, management companies, and allied members who do business with the hospitality industry. Please join us in congratulating the thirteen members who were recently elected/appointed (**denotes *newly elected/appointed**) and/or re-elected/re-appointed to serve on the 2025 CFHLA PAC and PC Board of Directors.

Leticia Adams, Walt Disney World Company

Cindy Andrews, Sunbrite Outdoor Furniture, Inc.

Melanie Becker, Universal Orlando Resorts

***Brad Boland**, Vacation Villas at Fantasy World

Barb Bowden, Loews Hotels at Universal Orlando

***Frank Dolley**, Coco Key Hotel & Water Resort- Orlando

Matt Grier, Greenery Productions, Inc.

***Maureen Haggerty**, Spinout Guest Laundries, Inc.

Chadwick Hardee, APDC Cleaning Services

Jason Lopez, DoubleTree by Hilton Orlando at SeaWorld

Sarah Nemes, SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment

Marc Reicher, RIDA Associates, LP

Chris Stewart, American Resort Development Association (ARDA)

[CLICK HERE](#) to view the entire 2025 CFHLA PAC and PC Board of Directors.

CFHLA PAC/ PC Board Endorses Justin Vermuth for Winter Park Commission



JUSTIN VERMUTH
*Winter Park City Commission,
District 3*

Our CFHLA Political Action Committee and Political Committee is proud to support **Justin Vermuth for Winter Park Commission, District 3** in this

nonpartisan, **municipal election to be held March 11, 2025**. Justin currently serves as the Senior Vice President, State Government Affairs with [American Resort Development Association \(ARDA\)](#) and leads the timeshare organization's state legislative and regulatory lobbying efforts across America.

Justin Vermuth has been a long-time champion of hospitality and tourism industry, and a tremendous partner with CFHLA for many years. You can learn more about Justin at: <https://justinvermuth.com>.

CFHLA is proud to stand with Justin as a pro-hospitality candidate, and we strongly encourage each of our members to do the same. If you reside in the City of Winter Park, remember one vote can make the difference and together, let's get out the vote and support this Hospitality Champion!



Seminole County Commissioners Vote to Establish Tourism Improvement District (TID)

After nearly **three years of collaborative discussions, meetings, and presentations** between Seminole County Government, our sports tourism partners, and our local Seminole County hoteliers, the Seminole County Commission voted unanimously Tuesday to approve a first-of-its-kind, **Tourism Improvement District (TID)**.

This public-private partnership will create a **long-term, stable revenue source, and an advisory board made up of hospitality professionals**, that will enhance our regional sports tourism infrastructure and competitiveness.



The goal is to generate additional revenue on hotel stays to help pay for a new indoor sports complex in Seminole County. The estimated \$100 million indoor sports complex could generate significant sports tourism revenue for Seminole County and could host new sporting events such as basketball tournaments, volleyball tournaments, gymnastics, and cheerleading competitions, among many others.

A final vote on March 11, 2025 will officially begin the assesment and this transformational project will truly benefit our economy, our local businesses, and our community.

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CFHLA Holds Two Governmental Affairs Committee Meetings to Start 2025



First, our [CFHLA Governmental Affairs Committee](#) was honored to have [City of Orlando Commissioner Shan Rose, District 5](#), join us as our meeting guest on January 15th at the Committee's first meeting of 2025. Thank you again to [Lowndes](#) and **Allied Relations Council Vice Chair and CFHLA PAC/PC Secretary Jacqueline Bozzuto** for hosting us.

We were proud to share an update with Commissioner Rose on the strong economic impacts that the hospitality and tourism industry provides to residents who are living in Commissioner Rose's district. We also look forward to continuing to work with Commissioner Rose for the betterment of our local community.

Then on Wednesday, February 26th, the CFHLA Governmental Affairs Committee held its next meeting at [Visit Orlando](#). Thank you to President and CEO **Casandra Matej** for hosting us. Committee members received updates from [Orange County Commissioner Michael Scott, District 6](#) and [City of Orlando Commissioner Bakari Burns, District 6](#) regarding a variety of issues that are important to the hospitality industry in the I-Drive area.

CFHLA is looking forward to working with each of these pro-hospitality Commissioners, as we continue to create additional jobs within our community and collaborate on other issues that are important to our Central Florida residents.



Governor Ron DeSantis Appoints Dan Giordano of Rosen Hotels & Resorts to Greater Orlando Aviation Authority

Congratulations to CFHLA **PAC/PC Board Member Dan Giordano** of [Rosen Hotels & Resorts](#), on his recent appointment to serve on the [Greater Orlando Aviation Authority](#).

Dan Giordano is the Vice President of Corporate Planning and Development for [Rosen Hotels & Resorts](#) and he brings an impressive track record of leadership into this new role. With over 40 years in the hospitality industry, Dan also serves on the [Visit Orlando](#) Board of Directors, the **Universal Boulevard Property Owners Association**, the **International Drive Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Board**, and the **Orange County Sports Incentive Commission**.

We thank Dan for his leadership and willingness to collaborate with the industry, as we continue to find ways to serve our guests from the moment they land at MCO to the moment they take off to head home. Congratulations again Dan!

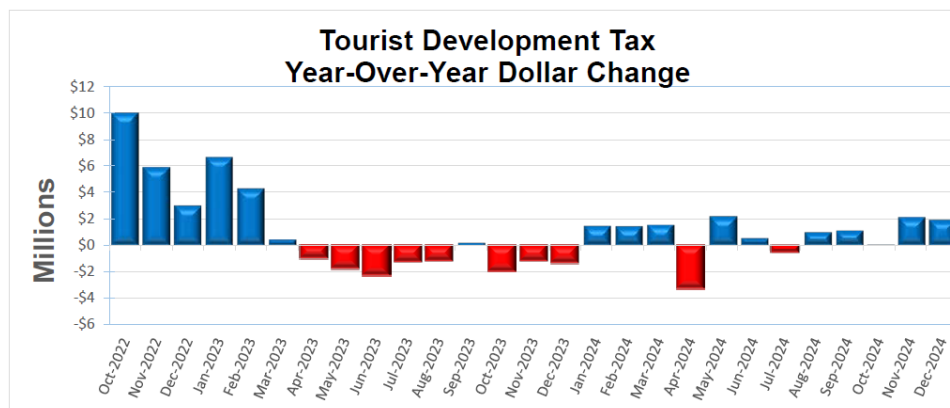


Regional Tourist Development Tax Update

Orange County

The Tourist Development Tax (TDT) collections received by **Orange County** for the month of **December** were **\$31,761,400**, the highest December collections on record. This represents a **6.4% increase** from the previous year.

The chart below shows the monthly year-over-year dollar amount change in TDT collections since October 2021.

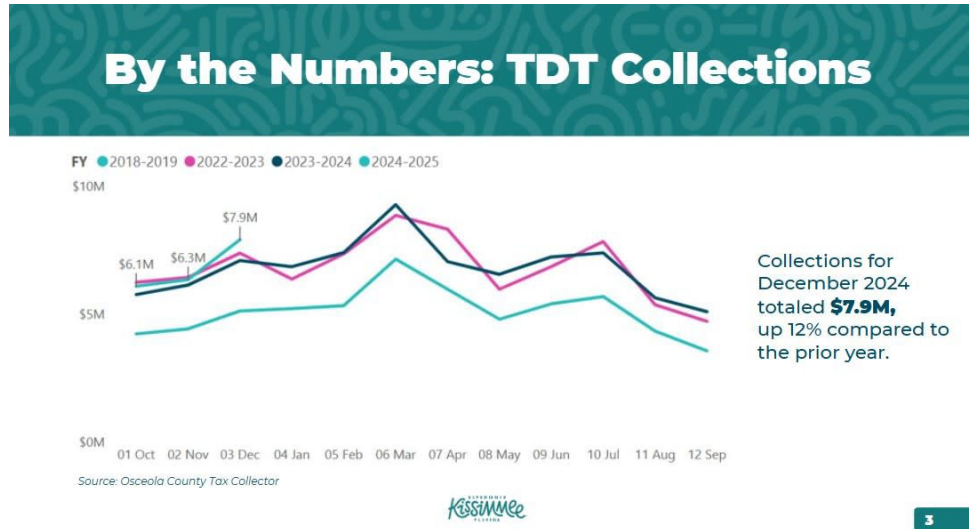


Source: Phil Diamond, CPA – Orange County Comptroller

Osceola County

Osceola County collected **\$7.9 million in TDT** for the month of **December 2024**, representing a **12% increase** compared to December 2023.

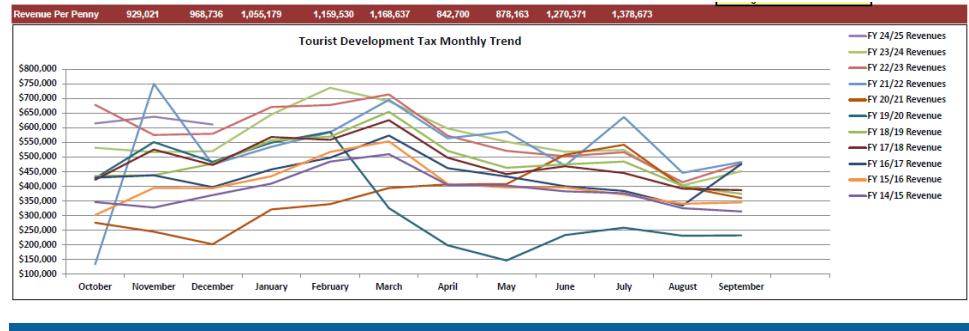
Year to date TDT collections for 2025 will be available during March.



Seminole County

Seminole County has reported its **Tourist Development Tax (TDT)** collection for **December 2024** at **\$610,571** compared to **\$637,046** during November. The December 2024 numbers represent a **17.5%** increase from one year ago.

Seminole County has so far collected almost **\$1,862,000 in TDT revenue** for FY 2024 - 2025, which began October 1st.



DONATE to CFHLA PAC

CFHLA MEMBERS - Please **consider making a small donation of \$50** via the link below to the CFHLA PAC/PC. All contributions help CFHLA expand its efforts to support Hospitality-Friendly candidates who are running for local and state offices in the future. **Throughout the 2024 Election Cycle, 27 of 31 or 87% of the PAC endorsed candidates were elected into office.**

[DONATE](#)

IN THE NEWS

[Gov. DeSantis Announces \\$70 Billion Interstate 75 Expansion](#) - Fox 35

[Florida Lawmakers Consider Bill to End Property Taxes](#) - Spectrum News 13

[Protecting Tourism Development, Cleaning Lake Toho top Kristen Arrington's 2025](#) - Florida Politics

[Carlos Guillermo Smith wants to shake up Orange County's lucrative hotel tax](#) - Florida Politics

[Governor DeSantis Lobbies for NASA Headquarters in Florida](#) - Florida Politics

[Every Election for Central Florida Voters in 2025](#) - ClickOrlando.com

[Gov. DeSantis appoints 3 new members to Disney World's governing board](#) - Florida Politics

[State Rep. Byron Donald is First Republican to Officially Enter 2026 Governor's Race](#) - Spectrum News 13

[New Poll Finds Property Insurance is Voters' Top Concern](#) - Florida Politics

[Leesburg Joins Trend of Local Cities Removing Fluoride from Water](#) -
Daily Commercial

[Seminole County's New Elections Supervisor Discusses Plans](#) - News 6

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About CFHLA

6675 Westwood Blvd #210, Orlando, FL 32821

The mission of the Central Florida Hotel and Lodging Association is to represent the Central Florida Hospitality Industry, by setting the standard of excellence through advocacy, collaboration, education, recognition, and service.