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March 18, 2025

SPECIAL EDITION II

CFHLA and Seminole County Champion the Creation of a New Tourism Improvement District (TID)

Last week, the Seminole County Board of County Commissioners approved the establishment of the **Seminole County Tourism Improvement District (TID)**. This TID is a Public-Private Partnership that would create a dedicated funding mechanism that is designed to strengthen the County's position as a premier sports tourism destination. **The initiative, years in the making by**

the Office of Economic Development & Tourism, has the potential to generate an estimated \$3.2 million annually through a \$1.75 per room, per night assessment on qualifying hotel properties (60+ rooms). These funds would be used to enhance sports tourism infrastructure, attract high-profile events, and support economic development.

The Seminole County TID will be governed by a **seven-member advisory board**, with appointments made by each County Commissioner, the County Manager, and the Central Florida Hotel & Lodging Association. The advisory board will oversee the strategic investment of funds, ensuring maximum impact for the County's sports tourism efforts.



Thank you Seminole County, for working with the hospitality industry and our sports tourism partners, to create a transformational partnership that will drive economic growth, support tourism development, and strengthen our community for years to come.

To learn more about the Seminole County TID, please [CLICK HERE](#).

2025 Florida Legislative Session Update - Week 2

The **2025 Florida Legislative Session is now in full swing with two weeks down and seven weeks to go.**

This week begins week three, and it is a critical week for legislation that has not moved to start moving, so it can clear all of the committee references before the end of the 9-week Session.

Over the next 45 days, CFHLA and our leadership team will continue to educate and advocate for the desired outcome of our ten **2025 CFHLA Legislative Priorities**. Each of these issues (see below) are extremely important to the hospitality and tourism industry at both the state and local level.



Tourist Development Tax (TDT)

CFHLA is in strong opposition to several bills that would either **add a new or expanded use for Tourist Development Tax (TDT) revenues** or **require the periodic readoption of the TDT through local voter referendum**.

A significant bill related to the future collection of Tourist Development Taxes has not moved but should be on your radar, [HB 1221 - Local Option Taxes](#). The bill has been referred to three House committees and has the potential to be heard at any time.

Additionally, any new or expanded use of TDT will only serve to dilute the effectiveness of these dollars, which are statutorily established for the local promotion and marketing of tourism. Furthermore, requiring the periodic re-adoption of the TDT through voter referendum would eliminate the ability of local governments to pledge these funds for bonding for any project that would exceed the period of re-adoption (typically 30 years).

[HB 6031](#) by Representative Eskamani – **No action** was taken in the House last week.

[SB 1114](#) by Senator Guillermo Smith – **No action** was taken in the Senate last week.

[HB 1221](#) by Representative Miller – **No action** was taken in the House last week.

[SB 1116](#) by Senator Guillermo Smith – **No action** was taken in the Senate last week.

CFHLA OPPOSES

Visit Florida Funding

CFHLA supports the Governor's proposed budget, which includes **\$80 million in annual funding for VISIT FLORIDA (same from FY 2024-2025)**. Funding of VISIT FLORIDA ensures Florida continues to be top of mind as a leading vacation destination.

Late last week, the Florida Senate and Florida House budget chairs began their respective budget processes and hearings will begin as early as next week. CFHLA will remain steadfast in our support of Visit Florida and its full and continued funding.

CFHLA SUPPORTS



P A R T N E R

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).

Within the Governor's proposed budget, includes **\$13.8 billion for the Florida Department of Transportation Work Program**, which is used for the construction and maintenance of Florida's roads, bridges, rails, seaports and other public transportation systems that grow the state's economy and improve the quality of life for our citizens. This includes "The Moving Florida Forward Plan" which is designed to accelerate the development and completion of important transportation infrastructure projects, including the plan to resurface 80 lane miles and add 54 lanes in Fiscal Year 2025-26.

Late last week, the Florida Senate and Florida House budget chairs began their respective budget processes and hearings will begin as early as next week. As the Legislature begins to prepare its budget, CFHLA will remain steadfast in our support of the increased funding of essential transportation and infrastructure projects across the Central Florida region (excluding using TDT funds).

CFHLA SUPPORTS

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.**

This includes our support of the following proposed bill that would **create a new funding formula for the state college system and establishes a floor of funding per student in Florida.**

[HB 1307](#) by Representative Temple – No action was taken in the House last week.

Late last week, the Florida Senate and Florida House budget chairs also began their respective budget processes and hearings will begin as early as next week. CFHLA will remain steadfast in our support of the **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.**

CFHLA SUPPORTS



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.

CFHLA supports the Governor's proposed budget, **which fully funds affordable and workforce housing programs at \$506.2 million**. This includes \$227.7 million for the State Apartment Incentive Loan (SAIL) Program and \$178.5 million for the State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program (SHIP), and \$100 million for the fourth year of the Hometown Heroes Housing Program, which helps make homeownership more affordable for eligible frontline community workers and other Florida families.

As the Florida Senate and Florida House begin to prepare their respective budgets, CFHLA will remain steadfast in our support of fully funding these much needed workforce housing programs, along with seeking **modifications to the Live Local Act**.

[HB 247](#) by Representative Conerly – **The bill was approved by a vote of 15-2 (with amendments) during the Housing, Agriculture & Tourism Subcommittee last Tuesday, March 11th. This bill is now in the House Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee.** This is the second of three committee stops.

[SB 184](#) by Senator Gaetz – **The bill was approved by a vote of 15-0 (with an amendment) during the Senate Appropriations Committee on Transportation, Tourism and Economic Development last Monday, March 10th. This bill is now in the Rules Committee** and this is the last of three committee stops.

[HB 923](#) by Representative Lopez – **No action** was taken in the House last week.

[SB 1594](#) by Senator McClain – **No action** was taken in the Senate last week.

[HB 685](#) by Representative Alvarez – **No action** was taken in the House last week.

[SB 1036](#) by Senator Rodriguez – **No action** was taken in the Senate last week.

CFHLA SUPPORTS

Commercial Property Insurance Reform

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

CFHLA MONITORING

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.**

CFHLA SUPPORTS

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).

[HB 897](#) by Representative Berfield – **No action** was taken in the House last week.

[SB 496](#) by Senator McClain – **No action** was taken in the Senate last week.

CFHLA SUPPORTS

Clarifying Transient Occupancy (No Pay, No Stay)

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](#) by Representative Johnson – **The bill was approved by a vote of 14-3 (with amendments) during the Industries & Professional Activities Subcommittee last Monday, March 10th. This bill is now in the House Criminal Justice Committee.** This is the second of three Committee stops.

[SB 606](#) by Senator Leek – **The bill was approved by a vote of 8-0 during the Regulated Industries Committee Agenda last Wednesday, March 12th. This bill is now in the Senate Criminal Justice Committee.** This is the second of three Committee stops.

CFHLA SUPPORTS

Interchange Fees on Sales Tax (Eliminate Swipe Fees)

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

CFHLA SUPPORTS

Schedule for Session Week 4 (March 24 - 28, 2025)

To view the Senate's schedule, **[CLICK HERE](#)**.

To view the House's schedule, **[CLICK HERE](#)**.

Upcoming CFHLA PAC/PC Meeting

The next CFHLA PAC/PC Board of Directors Meeting will take place on **Wednesday, May 7, 2025 from 8:15 a.m. - 9:15 a.m. at the CFHLA office.**

Upcoming Governmental Affairs Meeting

The next CFHLA Governmental Affairs meeting will be held on **Wednesday, June 18, 2025 at the Holiday Inn Orlando - International Airport (thank you, R.P. Rama) from 12:00 noon - 1:30 PM.**

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

[Seminole County hotels to charge nightly fee for sports complex funds](#) - WUSF

[Chad Johnson's private property owners' rights bill advances](#) - Florida Politics

[Hospitality and Culinary competition results in more than \\$1M in scholarships for Florida students](#) - Florida Politics

[How the FIFA Club World Cup is shaping Florida's Future](#) - Insider Sport

[Voters elect new Belle Isle Mayor, repeal gas-powered leaf blower ban in Winter Park in city elections](#) - 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.