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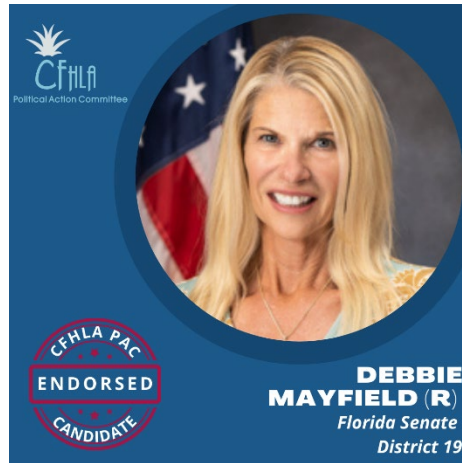
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March 11, 2025

SPECIAL EDITION I

 **CFHLA PAC/ PC Endorsements & Election Day** 



Our CFHLA Political Action Committee and Political Committee is proud to support two candidates who are running for an upcoming election, including today.

If you live in the City of Belle Isle, City of Maitland, City of Ocoee, Town of Windermere and the City of Winter Park, **today is Election Day!** The polls will be open until 7p.m. tonight and make sure to cast your ballot for **Justin Vermuth, who is running for the Winter Park Commission, District 3.**

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 the hospitality and tourism industry, and a tremendous partner with CFHLA for many years. You can learn more about Justin by [CLICKING HERE](#).

Then on **Tuesday, April 1, 2025**, there will be a primary special election for the open **Florida Senate, District 19 seat**. Our CFHLA PAC and PC has endorsed **Debbie Mayfield**, as she has been a long-time champion of hospitality and tourism industry. You can learn more about Debbie by [CLICKING HERE](#).

CFHLA is proud to stand with both of these pro-hospitality candidates and we strongly encourage each of our members to do the same. If you reside in the

City of Winter Park or Brevard County, remember one vote can make the difference and together, let's get out the vote and support these Hospitality Champions!

2025 Legislative Session Update - Week 1

The **2025 Florida Legislative Session officially commenced last Tuesday, March 4, 2025** with a joint Senate and House session for the Governor's annual State of the State speech.

Reflecting on the Opening Day speeches, both Senate President Ben Albritton and House Speaker Danny Perez highlighted several of their top priorities which included tackling property insurance, prioritizing the cost-of-living issues that all Floridians are experiencing and finding ways to improve governance to better serve Florida residents. Additionally, in alignment with legislature, Governor DeSantis urged legislators to support measures that will lower taxes including the elimination of the business rent tax, a review of the property tax system, and supporting relief efforts for affordable housing to further bolster Florida's economy.

Over the next 54 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.**

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. Additionally, requiring the periodic readoption 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 readoption (typically 30 years). Furthermore, to expend additional dollars to pay for these referendums, local governments will spend time and resources every few years to promote readoption rather than concentrating their efforts on the work of tourism promotion for communities across the state.

[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.

The Florida Senate and Florida House will begin to prepare their respective budgets in the next few weeks. CFHLA will remain steadfast in our support of Visit Florida and its full and continued funding.

CFHLA SUPPORTS

VISIT
FLORIDA[®]
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.

As the Florida Senate and Florida House begins to prepare their respective budgets, 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](#).**

The Florida Senate and Florida House will begin to prepare their respective budgets in the next few weeks. 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 – Added to the House Housing, Agriculture & Tourism Subcommittee agenda on Tuesday, March 11, 2025.

[SB 184](#) by Senator Gaetz – **Added to the Senate Appropriations Committee on Transportation, Tourism, and Economic Development agenda on Tuesday, March 11, 2025.** This is the second 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 – **No action** was taken in the House last week.

[SB 606](#) by Senator Leek – **No action** was taken in the Senate last week.

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 2 (March 10 - 14, 2025)

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

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

Moving I-4 Forward Program

As Central Florida continues to experience rapid growth, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is taking bold steps to address evolving infrastructure needs through the [Moving I-4 Forward program](#).

This initiative is one of the largest transportation improvement projects in the nation and aims to accelerate congestion relief along one of the region's most vital corridors. The **Moving Florida Forward Infrastructure Initiative**, will significantly enhance mobility, safety, and connectivity. The program will deliver major infrastructure advancements 10 to 20 years ahead of schedule, ensuring Central Florida remains a hub of economic growth and accessibility.

Key Enhancements to I-4

- Construction of two new **Express Lanes** in each direction from **west of U.S. 27 in Polk County to east of World Center Drive (S.R. 536) in Orange County**.
- Addition of two **congestion relief lanes**—one in each direction—between **U.S. 27 and east of World Drive**, providing immediate relief to commuters and visitors alike by the end of 2025.



Why This Matters

This transformative initiative will:

- Improve mobility** by reducing congestion and providing enhanced travel options.
- Increase safety** by alleviating bottlenecks and streamlining traffic flow.
- Enhance quality of life** for residents, businesses, and visitors who depend on I-4 daily.
- Strengthen resilient infrastructure** that supports long-term economic and population growth.

CFHLA recognizes the vital role that infrastructure plays in supporting our industry and community. With more efficient roadways, businesses and guests alike will benefit from improved transportation experiences, making Central Florida an even more attractive destination for economic investment and tourism.

Stay tuned for updates as the **Moving I-4 Forward** program progresses, ensuring that Florida's future is built on a foundation of innovation, efficiency, and connectivity. To learn more, please [CLICK HERE](#).

Upcoming CFHLA PAC/PC Meeting

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

Upcoming Governmental Affairs Meeting

The next 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

[In State of the State address, Governor DeSantis pushes to repeal gun control laws and property taxes](#) - Florida Politics

[Orlando job market shifts: Manufacturing, food services see losses amid overall growth](#) - Orlando Business Journal

[Seminole Hotels to charge fee to raise funds for \\$65M indoor sports venue](#) - Orlando Sentinel

[Attention Voters! These Orange County cities are holding elections Tuesday](#) - News 6

[Winter Park voters to decide on two candidates, fate of gas-powered leaf blowers](#) - Orlando Sentinel

[Jonathan Martin files bill to strengthen human trafficking penalties](#) - Florida Politics

[Senate plans to honor Geraldine Thompson in Tallahassee](#) - Florida Politics

[Despite suspension and ongoing investigation, Regina Hill files for re-election in Orlando](#)- Florida Politics

Florida Airport Leaders advocate for funding, safety ahead of Legislative Session - Florida Politics

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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.