



CROWN LINEN

YOUR PREFERRED
LAUNDRY SERVICE PARTNER

On-Premise Laundry Consulting | Laundry Outsourcing
Emergency Services | Linen Rental | Customized Solutions

407.489.9078 | rocheford@crownlinden.net | crownlinden.net

April 8, 2025

SPECIAL EDITION V

2025 Florida Legislative Session Update - Week 5

With week five of the nine-week Session now concluded, we are beyond the midway point of the 2025 Florida Legislative Session.

With many committees meeting for the final times this week, the Florida Legislature is beginning to shift their focus to floor sessions. During the 2025 Florida Legislative Session, more than 1,900 bills were filed. However, 800 have not been considered by a committee at this point. **Now that we are**

past the halfway point, it is very unlikely for many of them to be taken up. This includes each of the bills related to expanded uses of the Tourist Development Tax (TDT). Of course, nothing is ever final until the Session is adjourned, "sine die."

As of Friday, only 44 bills have passed one Chamber. By this time in 2024, 12 bills had passed both Chambers, and in 2023, 19 bills had passed both Chambers.

With the start of week six, we only have 24 days left, CFHLA and our leadership team will continue to educate and advocate for the desired outcome of our ten **2025 CFHLA Legislative Priorities**. Below is an update on each of the issues that are extremely important to the hospitality and tourism industry at both the state and local level.



Tourist Development Tax (TDT)

One of our primary focuses this session has been in strong opposition to legislation that would **require the periodic readoption of the TDT through local voter referendum.**

This includes [HB 1221 - Local Option Taxes by Representative Monique Miller](#) and [SB 1664 by Senator Jay Trumbull](#), which has now moved through its first committees in both the House and the Senate and has been placed on the House Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee Agenda for tomorrow.

If passed, **HB 1221/SB 1664** would:

- Require all counties to pass a referendum to renew any existing TDTs by 2033.
- Mandate a new voter referendum every eight years for continued use of TDTs, but allows for a 30-year renewal if the funds collected are used to pay down bonds or other debts.
- This would pull dedicated funds away from tourism marketing and the long-term impact could result in a significant reduction in tourism to our destination. The TDT's were established to ensure counties had a dedicated funding source (not paid by residents, but rather paid by visitors) for the tourism promotion efforts necessary to create jobs and generate local revenue for our local communities and small businesses including restaurants, retail, and more.
- Exempt any TDTs that are bonded from these sunset provisions.

[HB 1221](#) by Representative Miller – **No action was taken in the House last week. However, this bill was added to the House Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee agenda for tomorrow, Wednesday, April 9, 2025.**

[SB 1664](#) by Senator Trumbull – **No action was taken in the Senate last week.** The bill was approved by a vote of 5 - 3 during the Senate Community Affairs Committee meeting on March 25, 2025. This bill is now in the Senate Finance Tax Committee and this is the second of three committee stops.

Additionally, **CFHLA strongly opposes adding any additional approved used for Tourist Development Tax (TDT) revenues.** Adding additional approved uses will only serve to dilute the effectiveness of these dollars,

which are statutorily established for the promotion of marketing of tourism.
This includes our opposition to the following bills:

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.**

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.

Last week, the Florida Senate and Florida House budget proposals **included the full \$80 million in annual funding for VISIT FLORIDA (same from FY 2024-2025)**. This is great news as we 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

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.**

CFHLA supports the Senate bill, as the Florida House has amended the bill to include the following harmful provisions:

- Prohibits public food service establishments and hotels from including automatic gratuity or service charges in the price of food or beverages for parties of less than six (6) guests.
- The amended bill defines “gratuity” and “service charge” as any type of charge or required payment other than the price of the food or beverages.
- Public food service establishments may include automatic gratuity or service charges in the price of food or beverages for parties of six (6) or more guests. However, a public food service establishment that includes an automatic gratuity or service charge, must provide notice of the automatic charge on the face of every item provided to a guest and receipt required to be signed by a guest, in addition to being on the food menu which is required by current law. The notice must list the person or business entity receiving the gratuity or service charge and the percentage they are receiving.
- A public food service establishment and/or hotel may not require a guest to pay an automatic gratuity or service charge if the guest requests not to pay such gratuity or service charge.
- The amended bill also provides that if a public food establishment bases an automatic or suggested gratuity or service charge on the price of food or beverages, the gratuity or service charge must be based on the price of the food or beverages before taxes.

HB 535 by Representative Johnson – **The bill was approved by a vote of 11 - 6 in the House Criminal Justice Subcommittee on April 1, 2025.** This bill is now in the House Commerce Committee and this is the last of three committee stops.

SB 606 by Senator Leek – **The bill was approved by a vote of 8 - 1 during the Senate Criminal Justice Committee on April 1, 2025. This bill was**

then placed on the Senate Rules Committee and was approved by a vote of 22 - 2 on April 8, 2025. It is now ready to be considered on the Senate Floor.

CFHLA SUPPORTS THE SENATE BILL WITHOUT THE SERVICE CHARGE LANGUAGE INCLUDED

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.

Last week, the Florida Senate and Florida House budget proposals **included \$12.98 billion and \$13.99 billion respectively, for the Florida Department of Transportation Work Program.**

CFHLA SUPPORTS

Adding or Upgrading EV Chargers?

Call Glen Lyons at: 407-247-5083

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.**

Currently, Valencia College and Seminole State College are **among the lowest per student funding institutions in the state.** This is why it is imperative that CFHLA supports the **Florida College System Council of Presidents allocation request of \$200 million (using their formula)** in new, recurring funds to help recruit and retain the best faculty and invest in rapid credentialing workforce development programs that increase capacity within our region (including new and existing advanced accelerated programs).

This also 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.

Last week, the Florida Senate budget proposal included \$100 million of the \$200 million allocation request from the Florida College System Council of Presidents and the House budget proposal included \$40 million.

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

CFHLA SUPPORTS

Workforce Housing

CFHLA supports the continued full funding of the Sadowski Fund, as the Central Florida community has a dire need for more reliable and affordable housing options. CFHLA remains steadfast in our support of fully funding our much needed workforce housing programs, along with seeking **modifications to the Live Local Act**.

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.

Last week, **the Florida Senate proposed budget includes a total funding of \$403.8 million for affordable and workforce housing programs**. Specifically, \$71.2 million for the State Apartment Incentive Loan (SAIL) Program, \$182.6 million for the State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program (SHIP), and \$150 million for the fourth year of the Hometown Heroes Housing Program.

In the Florida House, the proposed budget included \$285 million in total funding for affordable and workforce housing programs. This includes the State Apartment Incentive Loan (SAIL) Program, State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program (SHIP), and the Hometown Heroes Housing Program.

HB 247 by Representative Conerly – **No action was taken in the House last week. However, this bill was added to the House Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee agenda for tomorrow, Wednesday, April 9, 2025**. This is the second of three Committee stops.

SB 184 by Senator Gaetz – **The bill was approved by a vote of 25 - 0 during the Senate Rules Committee on April 1, 2025. This bill is now ready to be considered on the Senate Floor and has been placed on the special order calendar for tomorrow, Wednesday, April 9, 2025**.

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.** This bill was added to the Senate Community Affairs Committee agenda for Tuesday, March 25, 2025. However, the bill was not considered during the committee meeting.

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 SUPPORTS

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 – **The bill was approved by a vote of 15 - 0 during the House Housing, Agricultural & Tourism Subcommittee on April 1, 2025.** This bill is now in the House Civil Justice & Claims Subcommittee, and this is the second of three Committee stops.

SB 496 by Senator McClain – **The bill was approved by a vote of 7 - 0 during the Senate Regulated Industries Committee on April 1, 2025.** This bill is now in the Senate Appropriations Committee, and 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 6 (April 7 - April 11, 2025)

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

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

CFHLA PAC/PC Endorsed Candidate Debbie Mayfield wins Primary Special Election



The Central Florida Hotel and Lodging Association's PAC and PC Board of Directors would like to congratulate **Debbie Mayfield** on winning her **primary special election to the Florida Senate on April 1, 2025.**

Debbie will now advance to the June 10, 2025 Special General Election, after winning the primary election with nearly 61% of the vote in the four-candidate field.

Seeking Nominations to Serve on the CFHLA PAC/PC Board of Directors



The [CFHLA Political Action Committee and CFHLA Political Committee](#) 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 for state and local office who are pro-tourism and pro-hospitality.

Currently, there are seven (7) vacancies on the CFHLA PAC/PC Board of Directors and we are seeking qualified lodging and allied candidates to serve on the CFHLA PAC/PC Board of Directors beginning May 28, 2025.

If you are interested in learning more about these vacancies, please contact CFHLA President & CEO Robert Agrusa at robert.agrusa@cfhla.org.

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 from 12:00 noon - 1:30 PM.**

DONATE to the 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

[Debbie Mayfield takes a step closer to old Senate seat, winning GOP nomination in SD 19](#) - Florida Politics

[Bill to expand Live Local Act, increase affordable housing access teed up for Senate floor](#) - Florida Politics

[Tiffany Moore Russell is first candidate in high-profile Orange County Mayor race](#)- Florida Politics

[Christine Moore to leave Orange County Commission, run for Apopka Mayor](#)- Florida Politics

[David Siegel, founder of Westgate Resorts, has died at 89](#)- Wesh 2

CONNECT WITH CFHLA



WWW.CFHLA.ORG

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.