WELCOME
TO THE
Florida House of Representatives

JOSE R. OLIVA
SPEAKER
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA
2018-2020
Dear Floridian,

On behalf of the 120 members of the Florida House of Representatives, welcome and thank you for the honor of allowing us to represent you. We’ve said in the past that all of you, the citizens of Florida, are all of us. Your Florida House represents and embodies the people of our great state. You, the people of Florida, chose doctors, lawyers, farmers, teachers, first responders, ministers, marketers, parents, realtors, officers and enlisted members of the United States Armed Forces, and more to lead our state.

We are all here to serve the people and do what's right – not what's easy.

You will hear from some that being a legislator is a two-month job. While it is true we are in session for only two months, those two months are built upon a foundation of many more months of work before the gavel drops. House members spend significant time holding local legislative briefings, meeting with constituents, and working with Federal, State, and local officials on issues that impact your community.

For those of us who call Florida home, we know it is a dynamic and growing state. It is my hope that this booklet will help you navigate your government. It contains information on the history and development of the State of Florida and the House of Representatives, state symbols and interesting Florida facts, the structure of state government and the House, session and the budget process, how an idea becomes a law, member demographics, and a list of legislative terms. In addition to the information provided in this book, you can also find up-to-date information on members, bills, and the legislative process at our website: www.myfloridahouse.gov.

I thank you for your interest in the Florida House of Representatives – the people's House.

Sincerely,

Jose R. Oliva
Speaker
Welcome to the Capitol

House members welcome constituents to visit the Capitol to see the legislative process in action.

Members can be reached in Tallahassee through their Capitol offices during committee meeting weeks and legislative session. All other times, members can be reached by contacting their local district offices.

Contact information for members and committees, in addition to the committee meeting schedule, can be found on the www.myfloridahouse.gov website. If you are having trouble finding your district's Representative, our website allows you to search for your member based on your street address.

Sessions and Committee Meetings are open to the public. Sessions can be viewed from the House Gallery, located on the 5th floor of the Capitol building, sitting just above the House Chamber. Committee Meetings are noticed in the House Calendar and are most commonly held in Committee Rooms such as Sumner Hall, Morris Hall, Webster Hall, Reed Hall, and Mashburn Hall, which are located in the House Office Building.

For your convenience, meeting rooms and committee and member offices are listed on wall directories throughout the Capitol complex. These directories show an "H," "C," or "K" after each room number, which refers to the location: the House Office Building, the Capitol, or the Knott Building. The first number of each room indicates the floor. Example: Room 231 C means the room is located on the second floor of the Capitol building.

If you visit your member in Tallahassee, hard copies of the House Calendar and the House Directory are available by visiting the Print Services office located in Room 334 of the Capitol. A digital copy can be found on www.myfloridahouse.gov.
Changes in Florida's Capitol over the years have reflected the growth of the state. In the early 1820s, legislators transferred government business from St. Augustine to Pensacola for alternating sessions. Travel was hazardous and took almost sixty days — clearly an unsatisfactory arrangement. As a result, Tallahassee was chosen as the capital of American Florida in 1824, primarily because it was the midway point between the two principal cities.

Three log cabins served as Florida's first Capitol. In 1826, a two-story masonry building, 40' X 26', was built. It was to be the wing of a larger structure planned for the future. Although this larger portion was started, it was never completed due to financial problems.

As Florida moved toward statehood, the needs of the government grew. There arose a demand for a suitable state house or public building for the use of the Territorial Legislature. On March 3, 1839, Congress appropriated $20,000 for the erection of a new Capitol. The old structure was razed immediately, and Florida's government temporarily moved into rented quarters.

The brick Capitol was completed in 1845, just prior to the installation of the new State government and the same year Florida became a state. This structure remains the core of the Old Capitol to the present day.

The Capitol remained virtually unchanged during the Civil War years when Tallahassee was the only Confederate capital east of the Mississippi to avoid capture by Federal troops.
By the 1880s, Florida suffered growing pains caused by an economic boom and expanding population. By 1891, the Capitol needed thorough repair. The building was repainted, a small cupola was added, and plumbing was installed.

The first major alteration to the Capitol came in 1902 when the addition of two wings provided more room for the growing State government, and the familiar dome was added. This was the last time Florida's government operated under one roof. By 1911, State government was moving to other buildings. Further additions to the Capitol were made in 1923, 1936, and 1947.

Florida's population continued to grow as did its need for government services. In 1972, the Legislature authorized money for a new Capitol Complex to include House and Senate chambers and offices, along with a twenty-two story executive office building completed in 1977.

Restoration of the Old Capitol became an issue in 1978 with the then Governor Reubin O'D. Askew and House Speaker Donald Tucker favoring outright demolition. Luckily, the Old Capitol building was saved and refurbished, and reopened to the public in 1982.

Much of this article was taken from the Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources. All photos are from the Florida State Archives. See http://www.flheritage.com/ for more information on Florida's history.
The Constitution of Florida declares that "All political power is inherent in the people." With the passing of each election, those to be governed choose those who will lead their government.

Under its Constitution, the powers of the state government of Florida (like those of the United States and of the other American states) are divided among three branches. This division, known as the doctrine of separation of powers, is based on principles intended to protect the rights of every person.

The legislative branch is the lawmaking branch, setting the main policies of the government through the laws it enacts. The executive branch, headed by the Governor, sees that the laws are faithfully executed, commissions all officers of the State and counties, and transacts all necessary business with the officers of government. The judicial branch, composed of the courts, interprets the laws, makes their meaning clear when it is questioned, and, on the basis of their meaning, resolves disputes between individuals or between the State and an individual.

Although the Constitution provides for these three separate and distinct branches of government, it provides for checks and balances to prevent any one branch from becoming all-powerful. For instance, the Governor is given power to veto acts of the Legislature and the courts are given power to declare acts unconstitutional. Similarly, by amending a statute, the Legislature may revise a policy of one of the other branches. The three branches are, therefore, not wholly unconnected but are interlocked in order to give each a constitutional control over the others.
Governor Ron DeSantis is head of the executive branch of government and is commander-in-chief of all military forces of the state not in active service of the United States. The Constitution provides that the Governor shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed, commission all officers of the State and counties, and transact all necessary business with the officers of government. The Governor may also, by proclamation stating the purpose, call the Legislature into special session.

The Governor administers the executive function of state government along with the three elected Cabinet officers. The Attorney General is the chief state legal officer and is responsible for protecting Florida consumers from various types of fraud and enforcing the state's antitrust laws. The Chief Financial Officer oversees the state's accounting and auditing functions, investigates insurance fraud, verifies workers' compensation coverage, and licenses and oversees insurance agencies, funeral homes, and cemeteries. The Chief Financial Officer also serves as the State Fire Marshal. The Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services supports and promotes agriculture, protects the environment, safeguards consumers, and ensures the safety and wholesomeness of food.

The following agencies, commissions, departments and divisions are considered a part of the executive branch: Agencies for Health Care Administration, Persons with Disabilities; Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Florida Commission on Offender Review; Departments of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Business & Professional Regulation, Children & Families, Citrus, Corrections, Economic Opportunity, Education, Elder Affairs, Environmental Protection, Financial Services, Health, Highway Safety & Motor Vehicles, Juvenile Justice, Law Enforcement, Legal Affairs, the Lottery, Management Services, Military Affairs, Revenue, State, Transportation, Veterans' Affairs; Office of Executive Clemency, and State Board of Administration.
The Constitution describes the powers of the judicial branch as vested in "a supreme court, district courts of appeal, circuit courts and county courts."

The courts are empowered to try persons accused of a crime or to provide a legal ruling when someone seeks to recover damages for an injury caused by the wrongful act of another. The court system oversees enforcement of judicial decisions rendered.

Florida's highest court is the Supreme Court, based in Tallahassee. It does not try cases, as such, but reviews important cases which have been tried in the lower courts and appealed. Similarly, less important cases are appealed to the District Courts of Appeal. There is a Chief Justice, selected by the six other justices of the Supreme Court. These justices are initially appointed by the Governor from a list of qualified persons submitted by the Judicial Nominating Commission. For subsequent terms, they must stand for retention at general elections. Each appellate district is represented by at least one justice.

Charles T. Canady is the Chief Justice. Other justices, in order of seniority, are Ricky Polston, Jorge Labarga, Alan Lawson, Barbara Lagoa, Robert J. Luck, and Carlos G. Muñiz.

### District Courts of Appeal

**1st District**
- (Tallahassee)
- 15 judges

**2nd District**
- (Lakeland)
- 16 judges

**3rd District**
- (Miami)
- 10 judges

**4th District**
- (West Palm Beach)
- 12 judges

**5th District**
- (Daytona Beach)
- 11 judges
- 2 senior judges
The Legislature is composed of two chambers: a House of Representatives and a Senate. Each house biennially chooses its officers and adopts its own rules of procedure. All sessions of the House of Representatives and the Senate are open to the public. Either house of the Legislature may initiate legislation on any subject. For a bill to become a law, it must be passed by both houses in identical form.

Article III, Section 1 of the State Constitution states, "The legislative power of the state shall be vested in a legislature of the State of Florida, consisting of a senate composed of one senator elected from each senatorial district and a house of representatives composed of one member elected from each representative district." The House has 120 members and the Senate has 40.

The Legislature meets in regular session each year as set in the Florida Constitution or established by law. In 2019, the first day of session was Tuesday, March 5. In 2020, the first day of session is Tuesday, January 14.
The Speaker

The Speaker is a constitutional officer who leads the House for a two-year term, manages its operations, and presides over its sessions. The Speaker is elected by his or her fellow Representatives. Among the most important duties are the appointment of committee members and selection of their chairs. Chairs are key figures in the legislative process and play an important role in determining content of legislation considered by the House.

Speaker Jose R. Oliva
District 110

The Speaker pro tempore

The Speaker pro tempore is also elected by his or her fellow Representatives. In the event of an interim vacancy of the Speaker through death, resignation, or disability, the Speaker pro tempore may exercise the authority of the Speaker. The Speaker pro tempore often presides in the House Chamber when the Speaker leaves the Chair.

Speaker pro tempore MaryLynn "ML" Magar, District 82
The Leadership Offices

Both the Republican and Democratic members of the House elect their own leaders. The Republicans and Democrats have a formalized leadership structure. The Speaker appoints a Majority Leader who, along with the leader of the minority party, is expected to actively articulate his or her party’s viewpoint on the House floor during sessions.

Majority Leader

The Republican officers, in addition to the Speaker and Speaker pro tempore, include the Majority Leader, Deputy Majority Leader, Majority Whip, and Deputy Whips.

Minority Leader

The Democratic officers include the Democratic Leader, Democratic Leader pro tempore, Floor Leader, Policy Chairs, Policy Advisor, Democratic Whip, and Deputy Whips.
Other Officers

The House has two non-member officers: the Clerk and the Sergeant at Arms. The Clerk is a constitutional officer appointed by the Speaker and by House Rule, and the Sergeant at Arms is also appointed by the Speaker.

The Clerk of the House

The Clerk is a constitutional officer responsible for keeping and publishing a correct *Journal* of House proceedings, publishing other House documents, attesting to official records, and supervising the custody of all legislation and documents of the Florida House of Representatives.

Jeff Takacs, Clerk

513 The Capitol, 402 S. Monroe St., Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300 • Main (850) 717-5400

The Sergeant at Arms

The Sergeant at Arms is the officer responsible for security of the House and its members when engaged in their constitutional duties, property management, facilities operations and support services for the House, and other duties under the command and supervision of the Speaker of the House.

Russell Hosford, Sergeant at Arms

512 The Capitol, 402 S. Monroe St., Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300 • Main (850) 717-5700 • Fax (850) 487-6415
The Florida Constitution requires the Legislature to redraw the geographic areas from which members of the House are elected in the second year following each 10-year census. It also requires there be no fewer than 80 nor more than 120 members of the House of Representatives. In addition, the United States Supreme Court has ruled that state legislative districts be as nearly equal in population as possible, adhering to the principle of one person, one vote.

For the 2012 reapportionment, the Legislature retained the number of House members at 120 and continued the single-member-district policy first adopted in 1982. To arrive at the ideal membership apportionment, the total population of Florida, 18,801,310 (2010 Census), was divided by 120, resulting in an ideal of 156,678 persons per district. The next reapportionment session will be held in 2022.
# Florida House Member Index

*Republicans in roman (73); Democrats in italics (47)*

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2018-2020 Representatives

Mike Hill
Republican
District 1
Part of Escambia
Elected in 2018

Robert Alexander "Alex" Andrade
Republican
District 2
Parts of Escambia, Santa Rosa
Elected in 2018

Jayer Williamson
Republican
District 3
Parts of Okaloosa, Santa Rosa
Elected in 2016

Mel Ponder
Republican
District 4
Part of Okaloosa
Elected in 2016
2018-2020 Representatives

Brad Drake
Republican
District 5
Holmes, Jackson, Walton, Washington and part of Bay
Elected in 2014

Jay Trumbull
Republican
District 6
Part of Bay
Elected in 2014
2018-2020 Representatives

Jason S. Shoaf  
Republican  
District 7  
Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf, Jefferson, Lafayette, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, Wakulla and part of Leon  
Elected June 18, 2019

Ramon Alexander  
Democrat  
District 8  
Gadsden and part of Leon  
Elected in 2016

Loranne Ausley  
Democrat  
District 9  
Part of Leon  
Elected in 2016

Robert Charles "Chuck" Brannan III  
Republican  
District 10  
Baker, Columbia, Hamilton, Suwannee and part of Alachua  
Elected in 2018
2018-2020 Representatives

**Cord Byrd**  
Republican  
District 11  
Nassau and part of Duval  
Elected in 2016

**Clay Yarborough**  
Republican  
District 12  
Part of Duval  
Elected in 2016

---

**Tracie Davis**  
Democrat  
District 13  
Part of Duval  
Elected in 2016

**Kimberly Daniels**  
Democrat  
District 14  
Part of Duval  
Elected in 2016
2018-2020 Representatives

Wyman Duggan
Republican
District 15
Part of Duval
Elected in 2018

Jason Fischer
Republican
District 16
Part of Duval
Elected in 2016

Cyndi Stevenson
Republican
District 17
Part of St. Johns
Elected April 7, 2015

W. Travis Cummings
Republican
District 18
Part of Clay
Elected in 2012
2018-2020 Representatives

Bobby Payne
Republican
District 19
Bradford, Putnam, Union and part of Clay
Elected in 2016

Clovis Watson, Jr.
Democrat
District 20
Parts of Alachua, Marion
Elected in 2012

Charles Wesley "Chuck" Clemons, Sr.
Republican
District 21
Dixie, Gilchrist and part of Alachua
Elected in 2016

Charlie Stone
Republican
District 22
 Levy and part of Marion
Elected in 2012
2018-2020 Representatives

Stan McClain
Republican
District 23
Part of Marion
Elected in 2016

Paul Renner
Republican
District 24
Flagler and parts of St. Johns, Volusia
Elected April 7, 2015

Thomas J. "Tom" Leek
Republican
District 25
Part of Volusia
Elected in 2016

Elizabeth Anne Fetterhoff
Republican
District 26
Part of Volusia
Elected in 2018
2018-2020 Representatives

David Santiago
Republican
District 27
Part of Volusia
Elected in 2012

David Smith
Republican
District 28
Part of Seminole
Elected in 2018

Scott Plakon
Republican
District 29
Part of Seminole
Elected in 2014

Joy Goff-Marcil
Democrat
District 30
Parts of Orange, Seminole
Elected in 2018
Jennifer Mae Sullivan
Republican
District 31
Parts of Lake, Orange
Elected in 2014

Anthony Sabatini
Republican
District 32
Part of Lake
Elected in 2018

Brett Thomas Hage
Republican
District 33
Sumter and parts of Lake, Marion
Elected in 2018

Ralph E. Massullo, MD
Republican
District 34
Citrus and part of Hernando
Elected in 2016
2018-2020 Representatives

Blaise Ingoglia
Republican
District 35
Part of Hernando
Elected in 2014

Amber Mariano
Republican
District 36
Part of Pasco
Elected in 2016

Ardian Zika
Republican
District 37
Part of Pasco
Elected in 2018

Randall Scott "Randy" Maggard
Republican
District 38
Part of Pasco
Elected June 18, 2019

A map showing districts 35, 36, and 37 in Hernando and Pasco counties.
2018-2020 Representatives

Josie Tomkow
Republican
District 39
Parts of Osceola, Polk
Elected May 1, 2018

Colleen Burton
Republican
District 40
Part of Polk
Elected in 2014

Sam H. Killebrew
Republican
District 41
Part of Polk
Elected in 2016
2018-2020 Representatives

Mike La Rosa  
Republican  
District 42  
Parts of Osceola, Polk  
Elected in 2012

John Cortes  
Democrat  
District 43  
Part of Osceola  
Elected in 2014

Geraldine F. "Geri" Thompson  
Democrat  
District 44  
Part of Orange  
Elected in 2018

Kamia L. Brown  
Democrat  
District 45  
Part of Orange  
Elected in 2016
2018-2020 Representatives

Bruce Antone
Democrat
District 46
Part of Orange
Elected in 2012

Anna V. Eskamani
Democrat
District 47
Part of Orange
Elected in 2018

Amy Mercado
Democrat
District 48
Part of Orange
Elected in 2016

Carlos Guillermo Smith
Democrat
District 49
Part of Orange
Elected in 2016
2018-2020 Representatives

Rene "Coach P" Plasencia
Republican
District 50
Parts of Brevard, Orange
Elected in 2014

Tyler I. Sirois
Republican
District 51
Part of Brevard
Elected in 2018

Thad Altman
Republican
District 52
Part of Brevard
Elected in 2016

Randy Fine
Republican
District 53
Part of Brevard
Elected in 2016
2018-2020 Representatives

Erin Grall
Republican
District 54
Indian River and part of St. Lucie
Elected in 2016

Cary Pigman
Republican
District 55
Glades, Highlands, Okeechobee and part of St. Lucie
Elected in 2012

Melony M. Bell
Republican
District 56
DeSoto, Hardee and part of Polk
Elected in 2018
2018-2020 Representatives

Mike Beltran
Republican
District 57
Part of Hillsborough
Elected in 2018

Lawrence McClure
Republican
District 58
Part of Hillsborough
Elected December 19, 2017

Adam Roger Hattersley
Democrat
District 59
Part of Hillsborough
Elected in 2018

Jackie Toledo
Republican
District 60
Part of Hillsborough
Elected in 2016
2018-2020 Representatives

Dianne “Ms Dee” Hart  
Democrat  
District 61  
Part of Hillsborough  
Elected in 2018

Susan L. Valdes  
Democrat  
District 62  
Part of Hillsborough  
Elected in 2018

Fentrice Driskell  
Democrat  
District 63  
Part of Hillsborough  
Elected in 2018

James "J.W." Grant  
Republican  
District 64  
Parts of Hillsborough, Pinellas  
Elected April 21, 2015

[Map of Florida with district boundaries]
2018-2020 Representatives

Chris Sprowls
Republican
District 65
Part of Pinellas
Elected in 2014

Nick DiCeglie
Republican
District 66
Part of Pinellas
Elected in 2018

Chris Latvala
Republican
District 67
Part of Pinellas
Elected in 2014

Ben Diamond
Democrat
District 68
Part of Pinellas
Elected in 2016
Jennifer Necole Webb  
Democrat  
District 69  
Part of Pinellas  
Elected in 2018

Wengay "Newt" Newton  
Democrat  
District 70  
Parts of Hillsborough, Manatee, Pinellas, Sarasota  
Elected in 2016

William Cloud "Will" Robinson, Jr.  
Republican  
District 71  
Parts of Manatee, Sarasota  
Elected in 2018

Margaret Good  
Democrat  
District 72  
Part of Sarasota  
Elected February 13, 2018
2018-2020 Representatives

Tommy Gregory
Republican
District 73
Parts of Manatee, Sarasota
Elected in 2018

James Buchanan
Republican
District 74
Part of Sarasota
Elected in 2018

Michael Grant
Republican
District 75
Charlotte
Elected in 2016
2018-2020 Representatives

Ray Wesley Rodrigues
Republican
District 76
Part of Lee
Elected in 2012

Dane Eagle
Majority Leader
Republican
District 77
Part of Lee
Elected in 2012

Heather Fitzenhagen
Republican
District 78
Part of Lee
Elected in 2012

Spencer Roach
Republican
District 79
Part of Lee
Elected in 2018

[Map of Lee County with district boundaries]
2018-2020 Representatives

Byron
Donalds
Republican
District 80
Hendry and part of Collier
Elected in 2016

Tina Scott
Polsky
Democrat
District 81
Part of Palm Beach
Elected in 2018
MaryLynn "ML" Magar  
Speaker pro tempore  
Republican  
District 82  
Parts of Martin, Palm Beach  
Elected in 2012

Tobin Rogers "Toby" Overdorf  
Republican  
District 83  
Parts of Martin, St. Lucie  
Elected in 2018

Delores D. "D" Hogan Johnson  
Democrat  
District 84  
Part of St. Lucie  
Elected in 2018

Rick Roth  
Republican  
District 85  
Part of Palm Beach  
Elected in 2016
2018-2020 Representatives

Matt Willhite
Democrat
District 86
Part of Palm Beach
Elected in 2016

David Silvers
Democrat
District 87
Part of Palm Beach
Elected in 2016

Al Jacquet
Democrat
District 88
Part of Palm Beach
Elected in 2016

Michael A. "Mike" Caruso
Republican
District 89
Part of Palm Beach
Elected in 2018
2018-2020 Representatives

Joseph A. "Joe" Casello  
Democrat  
District 90  
Part of Palm Beach  
Elected in 2018

Emily Slosberg  
Democrat  
District 91  
Part of Palm Beach  
Elected in 2016

Patricia H. Williams  
Democrat  
District 92  
Part of Broward  
Elected in 2016

Chip LaMarca  
Republican  
District 93  
Part of Broward  
Elected in 2018
2018-2020 Representatives

Bobby B. DuBose
Democrat
District 94
Part of Broward
Elected in 2014

Anika Tene Omphroy
Democrat
District 95
Part of Broward
Elected in 2018

Kristin Diane Jacobs
Democrat
District 96
Part of Broward
Elected in 2014

Dan Daley
Democrat
District 97
Part of Broward
Elected June 18, 2019
2018-2020 Representatives

Michael "Mike" Gottlieb  
Democrat  
District 98  
Part of Broward  
Elected in 2018

Evan Jenne  
Democrat  
District 99  
Part of Broward  
Elected in 2014

Joseph Geller  
Democrat  
District 100  
Parts of Broward, Miami-Dade  
Elected in 2014

Shevrin D. "Shev" Jones  
Democrat  
District 101  
Part of Broward  
Elected in 2012
2018-2020 Representatives

Sharon Pritchett
Democrat
District 102
Parts of Broward, Miami-Dade
Elected in 2012

Cindy Polo
Democrat
District 103
Parts of Broward, Miami-Dade
Elected in 2018

Richard Stark
Democrat
District 104
Part of Broward
Elected in 2012
2018-2020 Representatives

Ana Maria Rodriguez  
Republican  
District 105  
Parts of Broward, Collier, Miami-Dade  
Elected in 2018

Bob Rommel  
Republican  
District 106  
Part of Collier  
Elected in 2016
2018-2020 Representatives

Barbara Watson
Democrat
District 107
Part of Miami-Dade
Elected March 1, 2011

Dotie Joseph
Democrat
District 108
Part of Miami-Dade
Elected in 2018

Dr. James Bush III
Democrat
District 109
Part of Miami-Dade
Elected in 2018

Jose R. Oliva
Speaker
Republican
District 110
Part of Miami-Dade
Elected June 28, 2011
Bryan Avila  
Republican  
District 111  
Part of Miami-Dade  
Elected in 2014  

Nicholas X. Duran  
Democrat  
District 112  
Part of Miami-Dade  
Elected in 2016  

Michael "Mike" Grieco  
Democrat  
District 113  
Part of Miami-Dade  
Elected in 2018
2018-2020 Representatives

Javier E. Fernández
Democrat
District 114
Part of Miami-Dade
Elected May 1, 2018

Vance Arthur Aloupis, Jr.
Republican
District 115
Part of Miami-Dade
Elected in 2018

Daniel Perez
Republican
District 116
Part of Miami-Dade
Elected September 26, 2017
2018-2020 Representatives

Kionne L. McGhee  
Democratic Leader  
Democrat  
District 117  
Part of Miami-Dade  
Elected in 2012

Anthony Rodriguez  
Republican  
District 118  
Part of Miami-Dade  
Elected in 2018

Juan Alfonso Fernandez-Barquin  
Republican  
District 119  
Part of Miami-Dade  
Elected in 2018
Holly Raschein
Republican
District 120
Monroe and part of Miami-Dade
Elected in 2012
About Your Representative

The Life of a Representative

During legislative sessions, House members may work as much as an 18-hour day. In addition to legislative meetings, each member frequently meets with constituents from his or her home district as well as with groups that are interested in pending legislation. There are scheduled interim committee meetings that occur in the weeks leading up to Regular Session. As a visitor, keep in mind that the activity you see on the floor of the House is but a fraction of the time and effort a member of the House devotes to representing his or her constituency.

Qualifications of Representatives

The Constitution requires a Representative to be at least 21 years of age, an elector and resident of the district from which elected, and a resident of Florida for two years prior to election.

Unlike many other state and county officers, members of the Legislature take office upon election; that is, they take office at midnight on the day of the General Election.

Representatives serve two-year terms and are limited to four terms. Vacancies in legislative offices may be filled only by election.

Writing Your Legislators

If you write or email your Representative, remember to include contact information so the legislator can respond to you. Most matters coming before the Legislature are publicized in advance. To help your Representatives, write them about issues prior to the Legislature taking action. Keep in mind that committees meet to consider pending legislation in the months before the convening of the Regular Session.

Contact information for writing or emailing your Representative may be found at www.myfloridahouse.gov.
The Different Sessions

Organization Session

The Legislature meets to elect officers and adopt its rules two weeks after the general election. This is called the Organization Session. The Constitution of the State of Florida states "On the fourteenth day following each general election the legislature shall convene for the exclusive purpose of organization and selection of officers." The Senate President and House Speaker often appoint committee and subcommittee chairs and members at this time, thereby allowing work to begin in preparation for the regular session.

Regular Session

The Legislature meets in regular session each year as set in the Florida Constitution or established by law. In 2019, the first day of session was Tuesday, March 5. In 2020, the first day of session is Tuesday, January 14.

A regular session may not exceed 60 consecutive days, and a special session may not exceed 20 consecutive days, unless extended beyond such limit by a three-fifths vote of the Florida House of Representatives and the Florida Senate.

Special Session

The Governor, by proclamation, may convene the Legislature in special session for a specific purpose. The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, acting jointly, may also convene the Legislature in special session.

The proclamation (known as the "call") limits the Legislature to specific items of business. The scope of the items specified in a call is known as its "purview." A bill must be within the purview of the call or receive an extraordinary vote (80 votes–2/3 of the membership) to be considered in a special session.
From the House gallery, the visitor views the House Chamber. Seating of members in the Chamber is determined by the Speaker. It is tradition for the Minority Party Leader to be seated on the last row and on the aisle. Only legislators, essential staff, and a few other dignitaries are allowed in the Chamber during sessions.

**Speaker's Rostrum**

The Speaker's rostrum occupies the highest point on the floor. During Joint Sessions, the Speaker *pro tempore* and the Speaker sit to the right of the rostrum; the Senate President, Governor, and Senate President Pro Tempore sit to the left of the rostrum.

**Clerk's Desk**

Directly below the Speaker's rostrum is the Clerk's desk. There, bills and amendments are read to the House, actions are recorded, operation of the vote board, and notes are taken from which the *Journal* is compiled.

The  **Well**

The lectern in front of the Clerk's desk is known as the well. Before microphones were installed at each Representative's desk, there was the spot on the Chamber floor from which a member could easily be heard when addressing the House. The acoustics of this spot were said to be highly resonant, as if the member were speaking down a well. Members may ask to approach the well to address the House on a matter of particular importance.
The House Chamber

Members' Desks

Each member's desk has a panel of voting buttons, a microphone, computer network connections, and a telephone wired directly to the member's Capitol office. Laptop computers allow members to view amendments, bills, and Chamber activity. The numbers on the nameplates next to the members' names refer to their district.

Pages

Toward the rear of the Chamber on either side of the doors are seating areas for Pages who, at the invitation of a member, work for one week during regular sessions. Their job is to carry messages to the members and distribute documents. To apply to be a House Page or Messenger, visit www.myfloridahouse.gov, select the Student Resources tab partway down the page, and then click on the button that says Page & Messenger Program.
In a letter prefacing the book *Our Florida Legacy: Land, Legend & Leadership*, John Thrasher (Speaker 1998-2000) explained his vision behind the renovation of the Chamber and installation of Christopher Still's historical murals.

"As I began planning for my term as Speaker, I was struck by a historical change taking place – the departure, due to term limits, of dozens of members whose decades of knowledge, experience, institutional insight and wisdom would no longer guide us in our daily business. I thought about what we could do to help members consider the past and facilitate their ability to make decisions about the future. I also thought about how we might better welcome the public to our legislative process. I set out to accomplish these things by physically changing the Chamber in which members of the Florida House of Representatives conduct their public business.

We began with a vision of being surrounded by our state's great history. We would encircle the members gathered to publicly debate, deliberate and make decisions shaping Florida's future with visual reminders of Florida's past and present.

We selected the gifted Tarpon Springs-based artist Christopher Still to complete a pictorial narrative, from the discovery of our shores and the first New World settlement to our journey to the stars from Florida's Gateway to Space. He succeeded in creating a richly symbolic account of the struggles and pioneering spirit of those who helped form this great state. The backgrounds of these remarkable paintings feature the incredible beauty of our diverse water- and landscapes, and the details provide extraordinary links across time and place."

The mural titled *To Have and Have Not* reflects the time period of the late 1800s through 1930s.
The House in Session

A daily order of business is followed each legislative day. The Regular Session order corresponds to the following list, which is set by the Rules of the House.

The Regular Session Daily Order of Business


The House Journal

The House Journal is the official record of actions taken by the House and its committees and subcommittees. It includes the titles of bills introduced, the full text of amendments considered, and a breakdown of how each Representative voted on matters taken up during floor sessions.

The Journal of each day’s proceedings is available on the following day from the Duplicating & Print Services office (334 The Capitol) and the My Florida House website. Libraries, schools, and other interested parties may review the Journal through the My Florida House website at www.myfloridahouse.gov.

House Calendars

Interim Meeting Calendar

When the Legislature is not in session, the Clerk publishes an Interim Calendar to inform the members and the public of legislation that will be taken up by committees and subcommittees during committee weeks.

Daily Calendars

During regular sessions, the Clerk publishes a Daily Calendar. This calendar contains a schedule of committee and subcommittee meetings and a listing of bills that will be heard by the House during floor sessions.

Libraries, schools, and other interested parties may review the Calendar through the My Florida House website at www.myfloridahouse.gov.
The Bill Process

The working draft of a legislative proposal is called a bill. This is the way by which laws are created or changed. The following step-by-step description shows the path of a bill through the House (see pages 58-59 for illustration):

- Citizens meet with their Representative and request help with a problem that requires a change in the law or creation of a new law. The Representative may then consult with House committee staff on the subject and ask the House Bill Drafting Service to draft a bill for introduction to the House.

- The next step is filing the bill. This is the act of presenting the bill to the House. At this point, it becomes a public document. After careful review for form and checks for constitutional requirements by the House Bill Drafting Service, the bill is given a number and posted on the Legislature's website.

- The Florida Constitution requires each bill to be read three times by title. The first reading is generally executed by publication in the House Journal.

- The Speaker refers the bill to one or more committees or subcommittees for review. Committees and subcommittees are composed of members appointed by the Speaker. The committees and subcommittees meet to consider the bill and afford the public a forum to express their opinions on it.

- After being reported favorably by all committees of reference, a bill is available for consideration by the Florida House of Representatives during a
The Legislative Process

floor session. The Rules Committee suggests an agenda, approved by the full House, of bills to be considered. At this stage, the bill is read a second time, explained by its sponsor, and amendments may be offered. If amendments are adopted, they are incorporated into a new version known as the engrossed bill.

- The bill will be read a third time by title the next day the House is in session. This is the time for debate and a final vote. If the bill passes, it is sent to the Senate by a messenger from the Office of the Clerk.
- The bill must then go through a similar procedure in the Senate. If the Senate bill has already been through the committee process, the bills can be paired and placed on the Senate Calendar for consideration on the Senate floor. If there is no similar Senate bill, a House bill is referred to a Senate committee and must go through the Senate committee and floor process. The bill can be further amended in the Senate. If this happens, the House must agree to these changes.
- Two things can happen at this point. Should the House refuse to agree to the Senate amendments and the Senate refuse to remove them, a conference committee may be appointed. A conference committee is composed of members of both houses appointed by the presiding officers to work out a compromise.
If the House agrees to the Senate amendments, the House bill is passed as amended.

- The bill is then signed by the officers of both houses and presented to the Governor, who can sign it into law, let it become law without his or her signature, or veto it.

The Budget Process

It is a principal responsibility of the Legislature each year to pass an appropriations bill. The executive branch then carries out the spending plans outlined in the budget.

The fiscal year runs from July 1 through June 30. By July 15, the Governor and the Legislature send agencies instructions for developing their budget requests for the coming budget year. These are due October 15. The Governor is required by law to submit recommendations to the Legislature at least 30 days before the scheduled annual legislative session.

Following submission of budget requests from state agencies and the Governor’s recommendations, the House and Senate each begin drafting an appropriations bill.

Each house then passes its budget bill. The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House appoint conference committees to resolve the differences between the two houses.

After the budget is agreed to by both houses, the General Appropriations Act is presented to the Governor for approval.

The Governor can delete any specific appropriation the Legislature has chosen to fund by what is called a "line-item veto." If the Legislature objects to the Governor’s action, it may override the veto by a two-thirds vote in each house.

House Appropriations Chair W. Travis Cummings, District 18.
### Comparing the Numbers

Comparison of the Number of General and Local Bills Introduced and Passed over the Last 10 Years

- Regular Session -

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session Years</th>
<th>Filed</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>4,178</td>
<td>3,599</td>
<td>3,136</td>
<td>3,078</td>
<td>3,260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>4,364</td>
<td>3,806</td>
<td>3,280</td>
<td>3,212</td>
<td>3,395</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Acts passed</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>67</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>554</td>
<td>557</td>
<td>538</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>436</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acts vetoed by Governor*</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acts becoming law</th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>424</td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>64</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>527</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>423</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Does not include specific appropriation veto

Note: Does not include memorials, concurrent resolutions, joint resolutions, House resolutions, or Senate resolutions
How an Idea Becomes a Law

**CONCERNED CITIZEN**
A citizen, group, or legislator may have concerns, issues, or ideas that prompt the suggestion of legislation.

**REPRESENTATIVE**
A Representative decides to introduce the idea as a bill.

**BILL DRAFTING**
Representatives use the House Bill Drafting Service to write and review bills.

**SECOND READING**
Not all bills reach the Chamber for consideration. Bills on the Special Order Calendar may be read a second time and amended in the Chamber.

**THIRD READING**
After a bill has been read a third time, it is debated and a vote is taken in the Chamber.

**SENATE SECRETARY**
Upon passage, a bill is sent with a message to the Senate. The Senate may vote to pass the bill with or without amendments.

**RETURN TO THE HOUSE**
Upon passage by the Senate, a bill is sent with a message back to the House.

**WITHOUT AMENDMENTS**
Once a bill has passed both houses of the Legislature, signed by the presiding officers and presented to the Governor.

**WITH AMENDMENTS**
The House concurs with the Senate amendment(s).

The House refuses to concur with the Senate amendment(s).

**CONFERENCE COMMITTEE**
If the House and the Senate do not agree on a bill as amended, they may appoint a conference committee charged with the task of reaching a compromise. The committee is made up of both Representatives and Senators.

**CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT**
Both House and Senate adopt the Conference Committee Report in its entirety and pass the bill.
How an Idea Becomes a Law

BILL NUMBERED AND FILED
Each filed bill is given an identification number. House bills are odd-numbered while Senate bills are even.

FIRST READING
Before a bill can be voted on, it must be read three times by title. Usually, a bill receives its first reading by publication in the Journal.

COMMITTEE OR SUBCOMMITTEE
Bills are agendared and noticed by committees, the membership of which is made up of Representatives. All committee meetings are open to the public.
The committee reports the bill with one of the following actions to the Clerk:
- House Bill:
  1. Favorably
  2. Favorably with committee substitute
  3. Unfavorably
- Senate Bill:
  1. Favorably
  2. Favorably with amendment(s)
  3. Unfavorably

BILL REFERRED BY SPEAKER
Bills are sent to committees for review or added to the Calendar of the House.

EFFECTIVE DATE
A bill becomes effective on the 60th day after sine die or on a specified date contained in the bill.

SPECIAL ORDER CALENDAR
The Rules Committee may place a bill on the Special Order Calendar for consideration in the Chamber.

HOUSE CALENDAR
The bill is placed on the House Calendar.

VETO OVERRIDE
It takes a two-thirds vote of each house in order to override a veto.

BILL REFERRED BY SPEAKER
The bill is placed on the House Calendar.

Governor
The Governor may either sign the bill, now referred to as an act, into law, allow it to become a law without his or her signature, or veto it.

- Governor vetoes the bill.
- Governor signs the bill.
- Governor does not sign the bill.

GOVERNOR
The Governor may either sign the bill, now referred to as an act, into law, allow it to become a law without his or her signature, or veto it.

- Governor vetoes the bill.
- Governor signs the bill.
- Governor does not sign the bill.

Governor signs the bill.

Governor does not sign the bill.

EFFECTIVE DATE
A bill becomes effective on the 60th day after sine die or on a specified date contained in the bill.

LAW
After three centuries of turbulent rule by Spain, France, and Britain, the colonies of East and West Florida were finally unified into a United States territory on July 17, 1821.

Within months, President James Monroe signed into law a bill creating a government for the newly acquired "Territory of Florida." Under this act, the lawmaking power was vested in a Legislative Council made up of "the Governor, and thirteen of the most fit and discreet persons of the territory."

The Council was to have held its first meeting in Pensacola on June 10, 1822, but it was not until July 22, 42 days later, that enough members appeared to allow the Council to organize and fulfill its responsibilities.

The long delay had been caused by the squalls, calms, and the capsizing of a sloop bringing three of St. Augustine's members to Pensacola. A fourth member perished when the ship on which he was sailing was lost at sea. With the lack of even simple roads in the territory, many opted to travel by ship from St. Augustine around the southernmost tip of Florida and then on to Pensacola.

Traveling by land may have been less hazardous, but was virtually as time-consuming. By horseback, the 400-mile trip between the two territorial capitals, St. Augustine and Pensacola, required two weeks at best.

Reaching Pensacola was not the end of the perils for the members of the new government. A yellow fever epidemic raged in August of 1822, claiming the lives of the Council President and the Chief Clerk before the surviving members decided to move the sessions to a residence some 15 miles out of Pensacola.

The early members of the Legislative Council were true pioneers who braved the wilderness to serve. Even after the distance was halved when the capital was moved to Tallahassee, travel to meetings of the Council remained a punishing ordeal.

Members of the Legislative Council were appointed by the President of the United States until 1826 when Congress passed a bill to make them elected by the people. The Governorship became an elective office only after statehood was achieved.

Agitation for a two-house Legislative Council reached a milestone in 1838
when the U.S. House of Representatives adopted a resolution by Florida's delegate, calling upon the Committee on Territories to inquire "...into the expediency of reorganizing the Legislative Council of Florida Territory, so as to give another branch to said Council, to be called a Senate." The unicameral Council became a bicameral body with President Van Buren's signature on a congressional act on July 7, 1838. The next step needed for statehood was approval of a constitution.

A Constitutional Convention was held in December of 1838 in the town of St. Joseph. The convention expedited its work by drawing language from the constitutions of several other southern states. A final proposal was completed within 37 days. The only copy of the 1838 Constitution known to exist is in the collection of the State Archives in the Robert Andrew Gray Building.

On March 3, 1845, President John Tyler signed legislation conferring statehood upon Florida (and Iowa). The first meeting of the new state assembly was held on June 23, 1845, in the Historic Capitol, which is now across the plaza from the new Capitol.

Today's House of Representatives is the direct descendant of the Legislative Council that first assembled in Pensacola in 1822. It is a larger and more complex institution, but echoes of the customs and traditions of Florida's early territorial and state lawmaking bodies may still be observed in its proceedings.

1822—The first Territorial Legislative Council made up of 13 Presidential appointees is convened on July 22 near Pensacola.

1826—Congress orders the Territory divided into 13 districts, with Floridians to elect 13 members to the existing Territorial Council.

1838—The Constitution of 1838 of the Territory of Florida provides for a Senate and a House of Representatives. The two houses together are known as the General Assembly.

Congress provides for a Senate of 11 members and a House of Representatives of 29 members to form an elective General Assembly.

1845—The first General Assembly under statehood convenes in Tallahassee on June 23, with 17 Senators and 41 Representatives from 20 counties.

1868—The 1868 State Constitution first refers to the lawmaking body consisting of a Senate and an Assembly as the "Legislature," marking the first use of this term.

Republicans were elected to 37 of 53 Assembly seats and 16 of 24 Senatorial districts. There were 3 black Senators and 17 black Assemblymen.

1874—This year marks the last Republican majority until the year 1996.

1884—Fernando Figueredo becomes the first Cuban-American elected.

1885—The 1885 State Constitution replaces "Assembly" with "House of Representatives."

1928—Edna Giles Fuller becomes the first female elected to the House. Representative Fuller is also the first female to preside over a House session.

1938—The first party caucus for designation of a Speaker is held at Moon Lake in Pasco County.
George Pierce Wood wins the nomination over LeRoy Collins, 55 to 40.

1939—The first time an electronic voting system is used in Florida during a session. It was calculated to have saved 12 days of the 60-day session for oral roll calls.

1957—Doyle E. Conner becomes the youngest person elected Speaker of the House, at age 28.

1963—Mary R. Grizzle becomes the first Republican woman elected to the House and, in 1974, the first woman to serve as the Minority Leader pro tempore. In 1978, she becomes the first Republican woman elected to the Senate.

1967—After years of sparse representation in the House, Republicans gain a substantial number of seats, with 39 of the 119.

1968—Joe Lang Kershaw becomes the first black member elected to the House of Representatives since 1891.

1970—Gwendolyn Sawyer "Gwen" Cherry is elected as the first black female to serve in the House of Representatives.

1977—December 13 is the last day the House of Representatives meets in the House Chamber in the Historic Capitol. This has been the Chamber where the House has met since 1939.

1978—April 4 is the first day the House of Representatives meets in the House Chamber of the new Capitol.

1982—The 1980 Federal Census is used to establish single-member districts of the Legislature.
The first elections of single-member districts result in the election of an additional five black Representatives and two black Senators.

Ileana Ros is the first Cuban-American female elected to the House of Representatives.

1984—Rodolfo "Rudy" Garcia Jr. is the youngest person elected to the House since 1950, at age 21.

Elaine Gordon is the first woman elected as Speaker pro tempore of the House of Representatives.

Representatives Dexter W. Lehtinen and Ileana Ros are the first two members to marry. Their engagement is announced in the House Chamber.

1986—James C. "Jim" Burke is the first black person elected to a leadership position in recent years; he serves as Speaker pro tempore for the 1986-1988 legislative term.

1991—Computers are installed at the members’ desks to provide text of amendments before the House, the first such system used by any state legislature.

Representative Anne Mackenzie becomes the first woman to serve as leader of a party caucus.

1992—Florida Term Limits are adopted by the voters. The Constitutional Amendment limits terms to eight years.

Sandra Barringer Mortham becomes the first woman to serve as leader of the Republican Conference.

1995—President William Jefferson "Bill" Clinton becomes the first U.S. president in the 20th century to address the Florida Legislature.

1996—Representative Daniel Webster becomes the first Republican Speaker of the House since 1874.

1998—Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, addresses a Joint Session of the House and Senate.

2000—The House Chamber is renovated and murals by artist Christopher Still depicting Florida's history are installed.

Lois J. Frankel becomes the first woman to serve as the Democratic Minority Leader.

A special session following the General Election helps resolve the disputed presidential election between George W. Bush and Al Gore; ultimately Al Gore concedes the election.

2003—Jennifer S. Carroll becomes the first black Republican female elected to the Florida Legislature. In 2010 she becomes the first black person and the first woman to be elected Lieutenant Governor.

2006—Marco Rubio becomes the first Cuban-American Speaker of the House. He was also the first Cuban-American to serve as a Majority Leader.
Memorable Years in the House

2007—Sandra Day O’Connor, retired United States Supreme Court Justice, addresses a Joint Session of the House and Senate.

2009—Sandra "Sandy" Adams becomes the first female member to preside over the House on the opening day of a regular session, calling the House to order on March 3, 2009.

2012—Will W. Weatherford is elected Speaker of the House, making him the youngest presiding officer of any state at this time, at age 33.

2014—Former Majority Leader Carlos Lopez-Cantera becomes the first Cuban-American Lieutenant Governor.

The Legislature votes to start the 2016 annual legislative session in January for the first time since 1991, without being in a reapportionment session.

2016—Representative Amber Mariano, District 36, becomes the youngest woman elected to the House, at age 21.

Representative Jeanette M. Nuñez, District 119, becomes the first female Hispanic Speaker pro tempore.

Representative Janet Cruz, District 62, becomes the first female Hispanic Democratic Leader.

The House adopts rules for the first time that require lobbyists to file an electronic notice of appearance that identifies the specific matter and each principal represented before lobbying the House on any issue.

The House adopts rules that require budget projects to be filed as individual bills in order to be included in the House budget. The bill must be filed as a standalone bill, favorably considered in committee, and offered with nonrecurring appropriation.
Indigenous peoples occupied what is now known as Florida for more than 13,000 years before European encounter.

Florida was the first region of the United States to be visited and settled by Europeans.

In 1824, Tallahassee became the capital of the state because it was approximately midway between Pensacola and St. Augustine, the provincial capitals then existing for West and East Florida.

The word "Tallahassee" is of Creek derivation and is frequently translated as "old town" or "old fields."

Jai alai was first played professionally in the U.S. in Miami in 1935.

The first game of billiards played in the U.S. took place in St. Augustine in 1565.

Wakulla Springs is the deepest freshwater spring in the world, with tunnels running to depths of 300 feet.

Florida has 33 first magnitude springs (water flow of more than 100 cubic feet per second), more than any other state.

There are at least 700 freshwater springs in Florida, more than can be found anywhere else in the world.

The first regularly scheduled commercial airline flight between two U.S. cities was from St. Petersburg to Tampa in 1914.

The first artificial ice was made in Apalachicola by Dr. John Gorrie in 1845; he is considered the father of air conditioning and refrigeration.

The first NASA moon flight was launched from Cape Canaveral in 1969.

Florida includes six reservations for two federally recognized Native American tribes: the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida and the Seminole Tribe Florida.

The oldest trees in eastern North America are the bald cypress in the Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary.

Over 425 species, approximately half of all bird species in the U.S., can be found in Florida.
Did You Know?

- Florida has more than 300 species of native trees, more than 150 species of reptiles and amphibians, approximately 80 native mammal species, and more than 200 species of freshwater fish.
- Ochopee, on the Tamiami Trail, is said to have the smallest post office in the U.S.
- Florida's first newspaper, the East Florida Gazette, was begun in St. Augustine in 1783.
- The Columbia, in Tampa's Ybor City, is one of the world's largest restaurants.
- Florida has 4,510 islands of 10 acres or larger.
- Florida experiences more hurricanes than any other state in the U.S., most during the month of September.
- Florida has 3 nicknames: The Sunshine State, The Peninsula State, and The Everglades State.
- 42 bridges connect the Florida Keys.
- The highest point of elevation in Florida can be found in Walton County at 345 feet (105m) above sea level.
- Florida is one of 13 states that has more than one time zone; Florida, Michigan, Indiana, Kentucky, and Tennessee are all split between Eastern and Central time zones.
- The Labor Day hurricane of 1935 destroyed 38 miles of overseas railroad in the Florida Keys.
- The first public school in Florida was established in Tallahassee in 1852.
- The commander of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) during World War II was a Pensacola-born woman named Jacqueline Cochran.
- St. Johns River is one of few North American rivers that flow from South to North.
- No matter where you are in Florida, you are never more than 60 miles from the Atlantic Ocean or the Gulf of Mexico.
- Florida is the only state whose Constitution is reviewed every 20 years.
- The legislature authorized the Florida Turnpike in 1955.
Did You Know?

- The Everglades ranks third in size among United States National Parks.
- Jacksonville has the largest land area of any city in Florida (841 square miles).
- Juan Ponce de León first named Florida "The Isle of Flowers."
- In 1828, banks and insurance companies were first chartered in Florida.
- Following the panic of 1837, the Florida Constitution was amended to make it unlawful for the state to go into debt and for bankers to hold public office.
- The biggest Civil War battle that took place in Florida was the Battle of Olustee on February 20, 1864.
- The Florida Everglades is the only place on the planet where crocodiles and alligators live together.
- According to the Florida Division of Water Resources, there are approximately 30,000 lakes scattered throughout Florida.
- Walt Disney World first opened its doors to the public on October 1, 1971.
- The Three Kings Parade in Miami (started in 1972) is a Cuban-American festival that was brought about by Fidel Castro's ban on Christmas celebrations in Cuba.
- In 1949, the legislature passed laws banning livestock from highways.
- Poet James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938) was the first black Floridian admitted to The Florida Bar in 1898.
- The Pensacola Naval Air Station was established in Pensacola in 1914 with 6 airplanes, 9 officers, and 23 enlisted men.
- Less than 100 students were enrolled in the University of Florida at Gainesville for its opening semester in 1906.
Total Area—58,560 square miles
Total Land Area—54,136 square miles
Total Water Area—4,424 square miles
Rank Among States in Total Area—22nd
Coastline—1,197 statute miles
Beaches—663 miles
Longest River—St. Johns, 273 miles
Largest Lake—Lake Okeechobee, 700 square miles
Length North to South (St. Marys River to Key West)—447 miles
Width East to West (Atlantic Ocean to Perdido River)—361 miles
Highest Natural Point—Britton Hill (345 feet) near Lakewood in northern Walton County
Geographic Center—12 miles northwest of Brooksville in Hernando County
Population—20,984,400 according to a 2017 U.S. Census Bureau estimate
Number of Counties—67
First Colonization—In 1513, Ponce de León made landfall. In 1521, he returned to establish a colony.
Oldest Permanent Settlement—St. Augustine, established by Spain in 1565. It is the oldest continuous city in the continental United States.
Acquired by the United States—From Spain, approved by treaty in 1821.
Statehood—Became the 27th state on March 3, 1845.
Official State Designations

**State Animal**—Florida Panther

**State Anthem**—"Florida, Where the Sawgrass Meets the Sky" by Jan Hinton

**State Beverage**—Orange Juice

**State Bird**—Mockingbird

**State Butterfly**—Zebra Longwing

**State Flower**—Orange Blossom

**State Freshwater Fish**—Florida Largemouth Bass

**State Fruit**—Orange

**State Gem**—Moonstone

**State Horse**—Florida Cracker Horse

**State Marine Mammal**—Manatee

**State Motto**—In God We Trust

**State Nickname**—The Sunshine State

**State Pie**—Key Lime Pie

**State Play**—"Cross and Sword"

**State Reptile**—American Alligator

**State Saltwater Fish**—Atlantic Sailfish

**State Saltwater Mammal**—Porpoise

**State Saltwater Reptile**—Loggerhead Turtle

**State Shell**—Horse Conch

**State Soil**—Myakka Fine Sand

**State Song**—"Old Folks at Home" by Stephen C. Foster

**State Stone**—Agatized Coral

**State Tortoise**—Gopher Tortoise

**State Tree**—Sabal Palmetto Palm

**State Wildflower**—Coreopsis
Bill Number: Senate bills have even numbers; House bills have odd numbers.

Title: Required by the State Constitution; briefly expresses subject of bill.

Enacting Clause: Required by the State Constitution.

Numbered Lines: Aid for writing amendments to the bill (e.g., Remove Line 17 and insert: (e) A hospital shall initiate or intervene in an administrative proceeding involving the issuance or denial of a certificate of need for an organ transplantation program; providing an effective date.

Body of Bill: Revises or amends existing law; sets out in full the revised or amended act, section, subsection, or paragraph of a subsection.

Effective Date: The date on which a law takes effect.
Act—A bill passed by the Legislature.

Adjournment—Ends a session day's business and sets a future date and time to reconvene the next session day.

Adoption—A favorable action by a chamber on an amendment, motion, resolution, or memorial.

Amendment—A proposal to change a bill or other proposed legislation. A committee or individual representative may propose amendments.

Apportionment and Redistricting—Legislative action taken after each 10-year, or decennial, census to establish the membership size of the House and Senate and draw legislative districts to reflect population shifts as recorded by the census.

Bill—All legislation, including resolutions, memorials, or other measures, upon which a committee may be required to report. See House Rule 5.1.

Bill Number—The identifying number given each bill filed for introduction. House bills receive odd numbers, while Senate bills receive even numbers.

Body—One house of a bicameral legislature.

Budget—The totality of appropriations measures passed by the Legislature. The detailed spending plan submitted by the Governor to the Legislature which recommends monetary allocations for each of the departments of the state for the next fiscal year is also known as a "budget." Using recommendations from the Governor and individual departments, each house prepares its own version of the budget. After the budgets go through the legislative process, one final version is then presented to the Governor. See Appropriations, Implementing, and Conforming Bills.

Calendars—Provide official notification of bills to be considered, sessions, and committee meetings and hearings. Types and versions of calendars include the claim bill calendar, consent calendar, daily calendar, interim calendar, local bill calendar, special order calendar, and trust fund bill calendar.

Caucus—Members of a political party, members from a geographical area, or members allied for some temporary purpose. Legislative officers and leaders are designated and nominated within the political parties at caucus. A party's position on pending legislation is often discussed at caucus.

Chair—The presiding officer for a floor session or committee meeting.

Chamber—The large meeting rooms in which the House and the Senate hold their floor sessions. The House and Senate chambers are located on the fourth floor of the Capitol.
Glossary

Chapter Law—A bill becomes chapter law once it has been enacted and assigned an identifying number by the Secretary of State. The number indicates the year passed and the printing sequence number. For example, chapter 2000-541 represents the 541st law printed in the year 2000. Chapter laws are compiled and published annually in the Laws of Florida.

Claim Bill—A bill that presents a claim for compensation for a particular individual or entity for injuries or losses caused by negligence or error on the part of a public office or agency.

Clerk of the House—The constitutional officer who serves at the pleasure of the Speaker. The Clerk shall perform the ministerial duties assigned by the Speaker. The duties include keeping and publishing a correct journal of House proceedings; publishing other House documents; attesting to all necessary documents; and supervising the custody of all legislation, records, and documents of the House. The Office of the Clerk is a nonpartisan, nonpolitical office.

Committee—A panel of legislators appointed by the respective presiding officers to perform specific duties, such as consider legislation and conduct investigations or hearings. Types of committees include: conference committee, joint committee, select committee, standing committee, and subcommittee.

Committee Substitute—A bill offered by a committee in lieu of another bill that was originally referred to the committee for consideration; technically, it is an amendment to the original bill.

Companion Bill—Bills introduced in the House and Senate that are identical or substantially similar in wording. The use of companion bills allows bills in both bodies to move through the committee process at the same time.

Concurrent Resolution—Resolutions used to extend legislative sessions and to address legislative organization and procedures. They are also used to express the opinion of both houses.

Daily Order of Business—The items of business and the order in which they are to be considered when a Chamber convenes a floor session.

Debate—Arguments made by legislators, during a committee meeting or session, supporting or opposing an issue.

District—The area from which a state senator, representative, or member of Congress is elected. The boundaries of state legislative and congressional districts are drawn in the decennial process known as apportionment and redistricting.

Effective Date—The date on which a law takes effect.
Glossary

**Enabling Legislation**—A bill designed specifically to implement an adopted constitutional amendment.

**Enacting Clause**—The phrase, "Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida." The State Constitution requires that it preface each bill.

**Engrossed Bill**—The version of a bill that incorporates adopted floor amendments. The revision is done in the house of origin and engrossed under the supervision of the Clerk of the House or the Secretary of the Senate.

**Engrossing**—The process of incorporating amendments adopted by a Chamber into a new version of the bill.

**Enrolled**—A measure approved by both houses and signed by the legislative officers which is sent to the Governor for action and transmittal to the Secretary of State or filed directly with the Secretary of State.

**Floor**—Synonymous with Chamber. Floor action suggests consideration by the entire Senate or House rather than committee action.

**Florida Statutes**—Compilation of general laws of the state.

**Gallery**—The seating area on the floor above the Senate or House Chamber where the public may observe a house in session.

**General Bill (HB, SB)**—A bill of general statewide interest or whose provisions apply to the entire state.

**House**—Either body of the Legislature, unless capitalized. When capitalized, it refers to the House of Representatives.

**House Resolution**—A one-house document used for matters not involving the other house. It is often ceremonial or congratulatory in nature. Resolutions do not require the signature of the Governor and they do not become law.

**Interim**—The period between the adjournment *sine die* of a regular session and the convening of the next regular session.

**Introduction**—The first reading of a bill which may be accomplished by publication of the title in the daily *Journal*.

**Joint Resolution (HJR, SJR)**—A resolution used to propose amendments to the State Constitution; they are also the form of legislation used for redistricting state legislative seats.

**Journal**—The official legal record of the proceedings of the House of Representatives or the Senate.
**Glossary**

**Law**—An act becomes a law when approved by the Governor or allowed by the Governor to become law without his signature by the passage of time or when the Legislature overrides the Governor’s veto.

**Line-Item Veto**—A partial veto, is the power of an executive authority to nullify or cancel specific provisions of a bill, usually a budget appropriations bill, without vetoing the entire legislative package.

**Local Bill (or Special Act)**—A bill that applies to an area or group that is less than the total area or population of the state.

**Majority Party**—The political party having the most members in a house.

**Memorial (HM, SM)**—A measure addressed to an executive agency or another legislative body, usually Congress, which expresses the consensus of the Florida Legislature or urges that certain action be taken on a matter within the jurisdiction of the agency or body to which it is addressed. When both houses adopt the measure, the memorial is signed by the legislative officers and transmitted to the Secretary of State for presentation to the addressee. A memorial is not subject to the approval or veto powers of the Governor, is not subject to constitutional title requirements, and does not have the effect of law.

**Message**—A formal communication by one house to the other house concerning action taken on a bill.

**Minority Party**—The political party that has less than a majority of members in a house.

**Partisan**—Associated or affiliated with a single political party or caucus.

**Passage**—Favorable floor action on a bill.

**President of the Senate**—The presiding officer of the Senate, elected by the body at the organization session for a term of two years.

**Proclamation**—The formal pronouncement issued by the Governor, or jointly by the Senate President and House Speaker, calling the Florida Legislature into a special session. It describes the subject matter and the length of the session. Also referred to as "the Call."

**Proposed Committee Bill (PCB)**—A draft legislative measure taken up by a committee for the purpose of considering whether to introduce it in the name of the committee.

**Quorum**—A majority. The Constitution requires a majority of the members elected to a house to be present before a session may convene or transact legislative business. The rules of each chamber impose the same requirement
upon their committees. A simple majority (half of the membership, plus one) constitutes a quorum.

**Reading**—Each bill or proposed constitutional amendment must be read by title on three separate days in each legislative house before it can be voted on final passage. The first reading usually occurs when the bill title is published in the *Journal*, though it can also take place in the Chamber. After being favorably reported by the committee of reference, a bill is read a second time in the Chamber. During the second reading, questions may be asked and amendments considered. If amendments are adopted, the bill is engrossed. Once a bill is read a third time in the Chamber, members may debate the bill and then a vote on final passage occurs. If amendments are proposed on third reading, a two-thirds vote is required for the amendments to be adopted.

**Recess**—The period occurring within a legislative day when a body that has been in session temporarily suspends its proceedings.

**Referendum**—A vote of the electors on a specific measure presented for approval or rejection on a ballot. A referendum is required as a condition for the effectiveness of a local bill if proof of publication has not been provided.

**Reviser's Bill**—A bill prepared by the Division of Law Revision and Information within the Office of Legislative Services that makes grammatical, editorial, or other technical changes in the Florida Statutes for clarity and proper interpretation. It may also remove certain obsolete, inconsistent, redundant, invalid, or superseded statutes and laws or parts thereof from the official statutes.

**Ruling of the Chair**—A decision by the committee chair or the presiding officer concerning a question of order or procedure.

**Secretary of the Senate**—The constitutional officer designated by the Senate to record its proceedings and assist Senate officers, members, and staff in the detailed processes of lawmaking.

**Sergeant at Arms**—The Chamber officer charged with enforcing the directions of the President of the Senate or the Speaker of the House of Representatives as to security and decorum in the Chamber and committee meetings.

**Session**—The term is used to refer both to a particular day's meeting of the House or the Senate and to the entire period for which the Legislature has been convened. There are five types of session that may be convened: executive, extended, joint, organization, regular, and special.

**Executive Session**: A session excluding from the chamber or committee room all persons other than members and essential staff personnel. Section 4(b) of Article III of the State Constitution provides that the Senate may resolve itself
into executive session for the sole purpose of considering a person's appointment to office or removal or suspension from office.

**Extended Session:** A regular or special session that has been prolonged beyond its allocated time in order to complete action on introduced legislation. Extension of a session requires a three-fifths vote by members in each house.

**Joint Session:** The annual session held the first day of a regular session in the House Chamber and attended by members of both houses, the Governor, the Cabinet, members of the Supreme Court, and invited guests. During this session, the Governor informs the Legislature concerning the condition of the state, proposes such reorganization of the executive department as will promote efficiency and economy, and recommends measures in the public interest. Joint sessions are also held on other occasions.

**Organization Session:** Section 3(a) of Article III of the State Constitution directs the Legislature to convene on the 14th day after the general election, solely for the purpose of organization and election of officers.

**Regular Session:** The annual session that begins on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March of each odd-numbered year, and on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March, or such other date as may be fixed by law, of each even-numbered year, for a period not to exceed 60 consecutive days. There is no limit on the subject matter that may be introduced in a regular session.

**Special Session:** Special sessions may be called by Proclamation of the Governor, by Joint Proclamation of the House Speaker and the Senate President, or by the members of the Legislature for the purpose of considering specific legislation and shall not exceed 20 consecutive days unless extended by a three-fifths vote of each house. In order for members of the Legislature to call a special session, three-fifths of the members of both houses must vote in favor of calling a special session.

**Sine Die**—Latin for without day. The motion to "adjourn sine die" is the last action of a session of the Legislature. Each house may adjourn on its own motion.

**Speaker of the House of Representatives**—The presiding officer of the House of Representatives. The Speaker of the House is elected by the full membership of the House of Representatives for a term of two years.

**Technical Amendment**—A non-substantive amendment used to correct errors such as spelling, numbering, incorrect coding, or directory language. The Rules Committee may make technical corrections of a purely non-substantive nature to legislative measures.
**Glossary**

**Term Limits**—The constitutional limits on the number of consecutive terms a member may serve in the same Chamber. Section 4(b) of Article VI of the State Constitution limits legislators to eight consecutive years.

**Veto**—An objection by the Governor to an act passed by the Legislature, which kills the act unless it is reenacted by two-thirds vote of both houses.

**Vote**—The formal expression of a house's decision on the final passage of legislation. The State Constitution requires that the vote of each member be entered in the *Journal*. The type of votes include:

- **Extraordinary Vote**: A vote requiring more than a simple majority for passage. For example, it takes two-thirds of the members voting to override the Governor's veto or to move to waive the requirement for readings of a bill on separate days.

- **Favorable Vote**: The necessary votes obtained in either house for a legislative matter to pass in that house.

- **Tie Vote**: When an equal number of legislators vote for and against a bill, amendment, or motion. The measure dies, having failed to receive a majority vote.

- **Unfavorable Vote**: When an issue fails to receive the necessary number of favorable votes.

- **Voice Vote**: An orally expressed vote. When asked by the presiding officers, members respond "yea" or "nay." The presiding officer then decides which side prevailed. A voice vote is allowed on some legislative issues such as motions, amendments, and resolutions, but it cannot be used for passage of bills or joint resolutions.

- **Yield**—When a legislator grants part of the allotted time for which he or she has the floor to another member, usually for questions or clarification of the yielding legislator's discussion.
The Florida House of Representatives offers sponsored groups House Chamber tours and Mock Sessions. A Mock Session is a one-hour program which includes a Chamber Tour and is excellent for school groups who would like to experience how a bill becomes a law.

To schedule a tour of the House Chamber, please visit:
http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/ChamberTours/WelcomePage.aspx

For detailed contact information and other resources:

The Florida House Website