



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

MID-SESSION REPORT
FEBRUARY 2024



2024-25 State Budget



Governor's Budget

\$114.4 billion

House & Senate

Budget numbers are closely aligned around \$115-116 billion.

Key Differences

- Live Healthy Initiative
- State Prisons
- My Florida Home Program
- Job Growth Fund
- Visit Florida
- Conservation
- Governor's Salary



Significant Legislation



HJR 7017

Increases second homestead exemption annually by change in CPI.

HB 1417 / SB 1638

Makes available new funding streams for water quality projects and the conservation of working lands.

HB 1061 / SB 536

Modifies funding model and operational requirements of CBCs.

HB 1053

Provides mandatory distances between schools and vaping retailers.

SJC Priority Projects



Regional Emergency Response Capacity

- Central Public Safety Station
- All Hazards Training Facility and Unified Command Center
- District 23 Regional Medical Examiner's Office

Transportation

- State Road 16
- County Road 2209

Coastal Restoration

- South Ponte Vedra Beach
- Vilano Beach Main Street

SJC Policy Initiatives

Emergency Responders



Current Situation

Routine exposure to toxic chemicals may make firefighters more likely to develop neurological disease.

Policy

Expand presumptive disability to first responders diagnosed with neurodegenerative diseases.

SJC Action

- Brought awareness to issue.
- Met with Department of Financial Services.
- Pursuing State support for comprehensive research.

SJC Policy Initiatives

Hastings Rural Designation



Current Situation

Hastings lost its statutory identity as a rural community on March 1, 2018, the day Hastings became part of unincorporated St. Johns County.

Policy

Amend Florida Statutes to restore the statutory identity of Hastings as a rural community, facilitating public infrastructure investment, agricultural tourism, and the protection of working lands.

SJC Action

- Working with delegation on amendments in each chamber.

SJC Policy Initiatives

Restoration of Regional Estuaries



Current Situation

Need for improved regional coordination and strategy to estuary restoration.

Policy

Forge a regional estuary partnership with Flagler and Volusia counties to enhance collaboration and bring additional resources to the area.

SJC Action

- Stakeholders identified.
- Meetings and discussions with DEP, delegation, and SJRWMD.
- Invitations to participate sent.

SJC Partnerships

State Museum of Black History



Museum Proposal

- Former Florida Memorial University site honors the legacy of those who heroically led the civil rights movement in Florida.
- Partnership with Florida Memorial University, West Augustine CRA.
- Supported by Florida A&M University and the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission.

Take the Survey

[Florida Museum of Black History](#)
[Task Force Public Survey](#)



BREAKING NEW GROUND

St. Johns County meets with the Florida Department of Education Executive Team.

According to Chancellor Dr. Paul Burns, this meeting was the **FIRST TIME** in his recollection a County Commissioner and County Administration officials from any of the 67 counties has sought a collaborative meeting with the Department of Education.

1

Discussion Topics

School Facility Capacity



2

Discussion Topics

Teacher Recruitment



3

Discussion Topics

School Security



