



Willhite Wire

Representative Matt Willhite

DISTRICT 86



2020 LEGISLATIVE SESSION REPORT

DISTRICT OFFICE

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COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

- Rules Committee
- Commerce Committee
- Business & Professions Subcommittee
- Local Administration Subcommittee

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR REPRESENTATIVE

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The 2020 Legislative Session came to an end on March 19, six days later than initially intended. This Legislative Session was the last of my second term in office. Thank you for allowing me to represent the constituents of the 86th Florida House District.

Below I have summarized some key legislation that was introduced in Tallahassee this year, and have provided an overview of the budget for FY 2020-2021. If you have any questions about any of the following, please feel free to call my office at 561-791-4071. It has been an honor to serve you in the Florida House.



Respectfully,

Matt Willhite, State Representative

SPONSORED BILLS PASSED

CS/HB 835 - Alzheimer's disease

I am pleased to report that House Bill 835, relating to Alzheimer's Disease, passed today on the House Floor. This crucial piece of legislation aims at creating the Office of Alzheimer's Disease within the Department of Elderly Affairs. Currently, 560,000 Florida families have been devastat-

ed by Alzheimer's Disease and related dementias. As the third-largest state in the country, Florida must find innovative solutions to addressing dementia-related conditions, and act as a national leader in combating these illnesses. I am proud to have championed efforts to combat this disease and

set Florida up as a national leader in the fight against Alzheimer's. This legislation will establish the Dementia Services Coordinator. This new position will help to provide our constituents currently living with this disease and the 1.1 million caregivers - who sacrifice so much, with the support that they deserve.

S P O N S O R E D B I L L S P A S S E D

CS/CS/SB 59 – Automated Pharmacy

This legislation will allow pharmacies to dispense certain prescription drugs through an automated dispensing machine. Already, long-term care facilities, hospices, and prisons utilize this technology. However, now, this technology will be extended for

use outside of institutional settings. After passing both chambers of the Legislature, Automated Pharmacy Systems now heads to the Governor. I am grateful for everyone that worked so hard to get this legislation through the process. With the passage of this bill, we hope to expand an individual's access to their prescrip-

tion medication. These machines will only dispense generic brand medications. Nonetheless, this technology will make it easier for busy parents and people living in rural communities to access the medicines that they need safely.

“With the passage of this bill, we hope to expand an individual’s access to their prescription medication”

H E A L T H C A R E

CS/CS/SB 404 – Abortion

This bill amends the "Parental Notice for Abortion Act" to add a requirement for parental consent before a minor can obtain an abortion. Current law requires parental notification, rather than parental consent. Concerningly, this

bill also increases the criminal penalty (from a first-degree misdemeanor to a third-degree felony) for violating the existing requirements of health practitioners during an attempted abortion. We spent hours discussing and debating this bill on the House Floor. This Session was the second year in a row that we voted on

this legislation. Like last year, I voted against this legislation.



H O M E R U L E

This year we heard from officials of local governments and homeowners alike, as they advocated for local control of vacation rentals. HB 1011 – Vacation Rentals is a preemption bill for the regulation of short term rentals through platforms like Air BnB. Expressly, HB 1011 would have preempted to the state control of vacation rental properties

such as Airbnb, prohibiting local law, ordinance, or regulation from allowing or requiring inspections or licensing of these facilities. Proponents of this legislation argued that the local authority of vacation rentals is stifling business and hurting this budding industry. On the other hand, local governments argued that the industry is flourishing; they would like to have some home rule authority to meet local needs.

When I listened to homeowners about their concerns, they typically spoke about the desire to know who their neighbors are, which becomes complicated when new guests come and go frequently. This bill never made it to the House Floor for a full vote, but when I heard this bill in the Commerce Committee, I voted against this legislation.

U N I O N S

CS/HB 1 – Dues and Uniform Assessments



Legislature heard a bill that requires a public employee who wishes to join a union to sign a membership authorization form. In short, this bill will place an unnecessary regulation on labor when we should be making it easier for people to join these employee organizations. As a labor member for 24 years, I have lived in this system, and understand the hard work that goes into our labor organizations. The people who work hard every day for these labor organizations want to be able to prosper and provide for their families; therefore, I voted against this legislation.

S T A T E B U D G E T F O R F I S C A L Y E A R 2 0 2 0 - 2 0 2 1

The total budget for FY 2020-2021 is \$91.2 billion, \$32 billion in General Revenue funds and \$57.1 billion from Trust Funds. This year's budget is \$2.1 billion more than FY 2019, making it the most massive budget in the State's history. While we are undergoing the COVID19 Pandemic, there is a chance that the Legislature reconvenes later to allocate additional funding to combat this crisis. Below is a quick summary of the current budget. We have broken the budget down into silos, or categories. We have pointed out some of the critical components of each silo.

H E A L T H A N D H U M A N S E R V I C E S

Section 3 of the General Appropriations Act brings us to the Health and Human Services portion. In FY 2020-2021, Health and Human Services agencies received \$39.36 billion. Co funding that comes from the Federal Government and the State. Out of the total allocation of \$39.36 billion, \$22.60 billion in federal funding (57.4%) and \$16.76 billion in state funding (42.6%).

The Department of Health (DOH) received total funds of \$3,107 billion. Provided in the funding to DOH are \$27,296 million in federal funding and \$25,150 million in state General Revenue for the current year (2019-2020) VOCID019 response. Both amounts are nonrecurring; specifies that any unspent funds will roll over to the 2020-2021 budget for the same purpose. Further, provided is \$9,105,926 to DOH for "Emergency Disease Threat Response" to combat the Hepatitis A outbreak in the State.

E D U C A T I O N

In the Education sector, \$27.042 billion were allocated.

The Department of Education (DOE) received a \$997.1 million increase from the last fiscal year. Found within the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP), there is an allocation of \$180 million for safe schools and \$100 million for Mental Health Assistance. Also, there is an increase in teacher salaries – a \$500 million increase. Overall, there is a 2.40% increase for Per Student Funding, bringing it

to \$7,839.58 per student. Furthermore, public schools received \$7 million in Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO) funds from the General Revenue, a \$445,062 increase from FY 2019. On the other hand, charter schools received an \$11.39 million increase, bringing their PECO funding to \$169.6 million.



E N V I R O N M E N T A L & T R A N S P O R T A T I O N

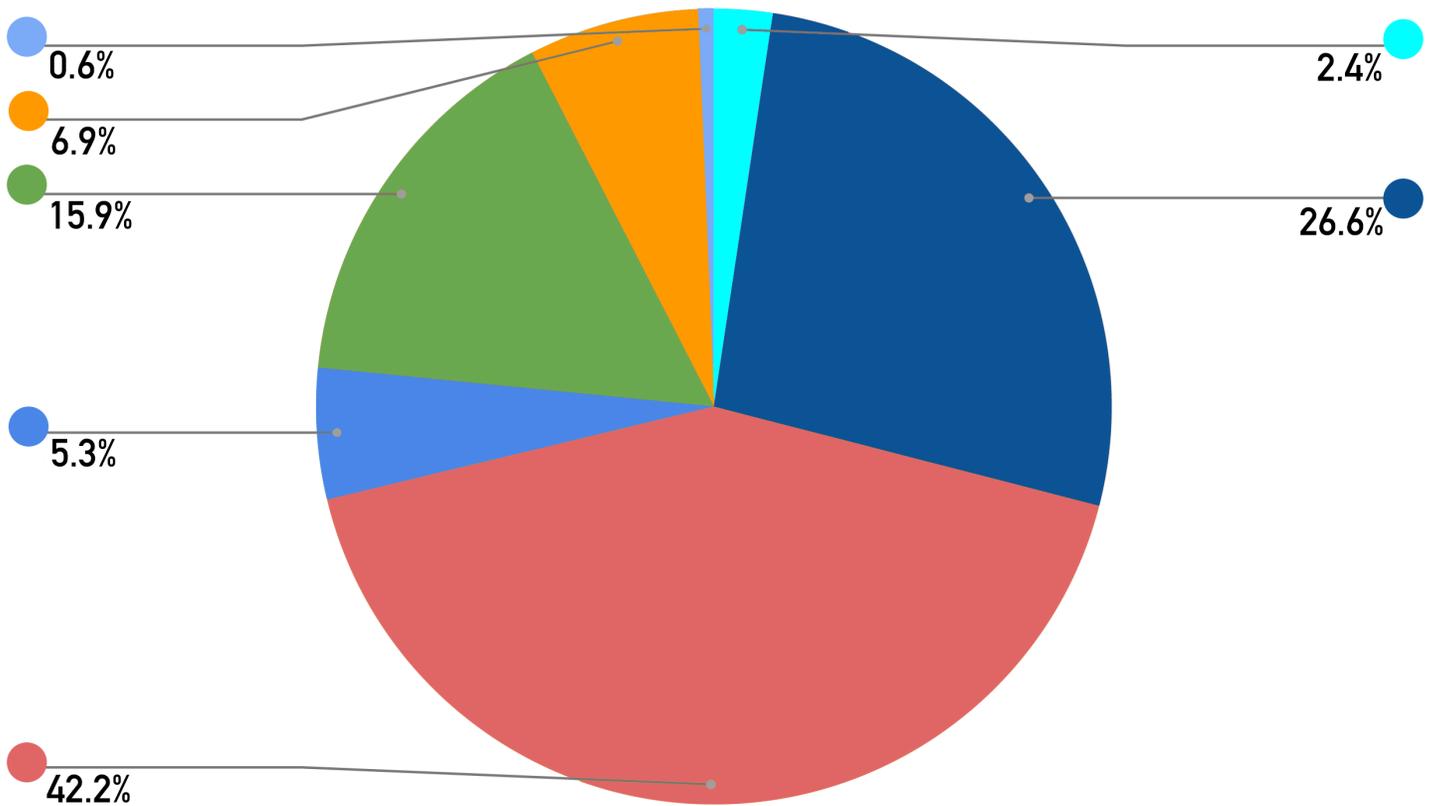
The Agencies in the Agriculture & Natural Resources silo received a total of \$4,479,927,497.

Within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, there are substantial increases to funding to Agricultural Water Policy Coordination, Florida Forest Services (disaster recovery funding), and Plant Pest and Disease Control (Citrus Health Response). On the other hand, the decrease in funding for the Office of Energy represents a drop in Federal Grant dollars rather than a reduction in state funding. The Office is staying with the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Further, the Rural Family Lands program received \$8.6 million, after receiving no funding last year.

D I S T R I C T 8 6 A P P R O P R I A T I O N S

Six appropriation projects that my Office worked on this year made it into the final budget. First, we're able to secure \$966,363 for the Town of Loxahatchee Groves. In particular, \$768,863 for the Southern D Road Improvements project, and \$47,500 for the North Road Equestrian/Multi-Use Trail Project, and \$150,000 for their Canal System Rehabilitation project. Moreover, The Wellington Wetlands Reuse Project received \$220,000, the Royal Palm Beach Commons Park All-Access Playground received \$250,000. Finally, the Palm Beach County New Fire Station on Flavor Pict Road received \$120,000.

HB 5001 - House General Appropriations Act



Education Enhancement ● \$2,215,290,786

Education ● \$24,827,397,091

Health & Human Services ● \$39,363,413,224

Criminal Justice & Corrections ● \$4,963,213,414

Environmental & Transportation ● \$14,801,367,235

General Government ● \$6,438,993,326

Judicial ● \$605,855,647

Total: \$93,215,530,723