



March 6 – 10, 2017
2017 Legislative Session – Week 1

Tuesday, March 7th kicked off the official beginning of the 2017 Legislative Session. This is the first session with Speaker Richard Corcoran and Senate President Joe Negron presiding over their chambers. The only requirement of the legislature during this time is the passage of the budget at the end of the 60 days on May 5th. Opening day remarks by [Speaker Richard Corcoran](#).

Governor Rick Scott presented his annual [State of the State](#) on opening day to members of the Legislature, the Supreme Court and Cabinet. He opened his speech by addressing the tragedies Florida faced over the summer with the attack at PULSE nightclub in Orlando and the recent shooting at Fort Lauderdale airport. As expected, the Governor expressed the importance of his economic development programs by stressing the impact of tourism in Florida.

The challenges facing the Governor as he tries to save his economic development programs, Enterprise Florida and VISIT Florida, has been playing out in the press since the House proposed its elimination a few weeks back. An interesting (and surprising) turn of events occurred when Chris Hart, Enterprise Florida's CEO, submitted his resignation citing a difference in vision from the Governor. Mike Grissom was appointed to serve as the interim CEO.

The House of Representatives met for their first week of Session in 2017 and even voted to completely eliminate Enterprise FL and limit VISIT Florida by passing HB 7005 and HB 9. This stirred a long and controversial debate on the House floor about creating jobs and increasing tourism in Florida. Turning down Governor Rick Scott's initiatives paints a new face for the House and there are only more changes and additions to come.

With the implementation of the new House rule requiring members to submit appropriation project bills, some interesting statistics have been compiled. As of today, there are 1,205 "member projects" that total almost \$2.6 billion dollars. Of these, 126 budget project bills are currently eligible to be included in the House GAA (budget bill). The new rules require that any budget project bill must be heard in one subcommittee/committee of reference to be considered. Detailed information can be found attached to this report.

Governor Scott got hit again this past week when a lawsuit filed by the Florida House went in their favor. Leon County Judge Karen Gievers's ruling was released and we expect the Governor to appeal. Speaker Richard Corcoran sued the Department of the Lottery claiming that a vendor contract violated the law because it locked in future funding not appropriated by the Legislature.

A proposed committee bill by the House Careers and Competition Subcommittee would eliminate several business and professional regulations. It completely deletes the regulation of several professions that include: interior designers, hair braiders, hair wrappers, body wrappers, boxing announcers and boxing timekeepers. It passed the subcommittee with a 10-2 vote and has been filed as HB 7047.

[HB 789](#) was scheduled to be heard in its first committee of reference [Oversight, Transparency, & Administration Subcommittee](#) March 13th at 1pm, instead the bill was postponed in the committee. We will continue to monitor the bill, as it could be placed on the agenda as early as next week. Thank you to all of our members who lit up the phones and sent personal emails educating the Legislators on this very important issue.

If you have questions, please contact [Samantha Hobbs](#).