

2026 Legislative Session

Marine Industries Association of Florida Week 6

We have officially finished six weeks of the 2026 legislative session, and we are hoping and praying to finish March 13th, but there is still a lot of unfinished business to attend to this year.

We are happy to report that the House of Representatives and the Florida Senate have passed their respective budget bills and announced their conferees in anticipation of budget conference beginning soon.

This week the House of Representatives took on probably the biggest issue of the year, property taxes, and passed one of their proposals off the House floor and sent it to the Senate. This issue has and will continue to be a huge issue as we try and tie up outstanding issues like the budget and potential tax package for the upcoming fiscal year. The property tax issue is important to local governments, homeowners, commercial property owners, law enforcement and first responders to name a few.

As we begin to see House and Senate committees conclude their work and we begin to focus more on the House and Senate floor action and debate as we head to the finish line, we still cannot predict if we will end on time, extend legislative session or come back for one or multiple special sessions,

We anticipate that the seventh week will provide valuable insights and guidance regarding developments in the weeks ahead, enabling us to begin preparations for the upcoming election season. Stay tuned as the next few weeks will be fast and furious. We will get all information to you as soon as we are able.

Below are some of the bills we have highlighted for you and some budget highlights as well.

Please let us know if you would like us to add any other boating issues to the report.

Thank you again for allowing us to be your voice in Tallahassee!

Boater Safety

[Senate Bill 900 by Senator Ileana Garcia](#)

[House Bill 1447 by Representative Rob Long](#)

Boating safety continues to be a hot topic in Florida. Last year, the legislature passed major changes to boating safety laws.

This year there is a bill in the Senate and House adding to what was passed last session. These bills are very lengthy and need a concise and thorough review by the industry and law enforcement.

We have reached out to FWC and asked for their commentary on this bill.

Senate Bill 900 by Senator Garcia **was temporarily passed** in its first committee of reference in Senate Criminal Justice Committee on January 20th. The bill had one amendment filed by the sponsor and a late filed amendment



by Senator Martin. **The bill was not scheduled in Senate Criminal Justice during the second, third, fourth, fifth or sixth weeks of Session. The Senate Criminal Justice Committee is not scheduled to meet again as of the writing of this report.**

Senate Bill 900 has three committees of reference. Senate Criminal Justice Committee, Senate Appropriations on Transportation and Economic Development and Senate Fiscal Policy.

House Bill 1447 was referred to four committees. The bill was referred to House Criminal Justice Subcommittee, House Governmental Operations, House Budget Committee and House Judiciary Committee. **The bill did not make the February 18th agenda and as of the writing of this report, there are not more meetings scheduled for the first committee of reference.**

Public Waters

[Senate Bill 1042 by Senator Ana Maria Rodriguez](#)

[House Bill 669 by Representative Peggy Gossett-Seidman](#)

The bills include everything from mooring boundaries to protecting beaches and bathing places. The bill concerning aspect of the bill would be the language specifying local government boundaries when applying for mooring field permits.

The Senate Bill is sponsored by Senator Rodriguez and has three committees of reference. The first committee is the Senate Health Policy Committee. **The bill was not heard in the sixth week. The Senate Health Policy Committee is not scheduled to meet again as of the writing of this report.** The bill is also referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment and General Government. **We will continue to watch for amendments.**

House Bill 669 has four committees of reference. The bill refers to House Natural Resources and Disasters Subcommittee, House Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee, House Budget and House State Affairs.

A proposed committee substitute and amendment to the proposed committee substitute passed the House Natural Resources and Disasters on February 12th. Representative Skidmore did a fantastic job asking questions regarding the need for the bill. The Town of Palm Beach did waive in support of the proposed committee bill. **We will continue to watch this bill as it could be amended to other bills.**

The bill had two committees of reference removed and now only has one committee left, the House State Affairs Committee. The bill is not on the agenda for February 24th but still could be placed on agenda February 26th.

The bill language is also available to be amended onto other bills since it was heard in its first committee. We are watching closely as this language could be amended onto other boating bills.

The House Bill and Senate Bill are now comparable.

Boating Restricted Areas

[House Bill 1173 by Representative Tyler Sorois \(House Majority Leader\)](#)

This bill was filed by the House Majority Leader. The bill does not have a Senate companion currently. The bill is referred to three committees, House Natural Resources and Disasters Subcommittee, House Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee and House State Affairs Committee. A delete everything amendment was heard and passed the House Natural Resources and Disasters Subcommittee on February 12th. Again, Representative Skidmore did a good job of asking questions especially requesting clarity if FWC still needed to approve the ordinances as staff changed “shall not” to “may not” in the delete all. This is a drafting concern, and we have discussed it with staff. **We have also discussed it with the Senate and with FWC. FWC believes they will still have final say over approving the ordinances.**

As anticipated, this language was also amended in Representative Andrade’s bill (HB 1103) regarding code enforcement and derelict vessels. This bill is up in House State Affairs on February 24th. From this point forward, we will watch HB 1103 for this language and its Senate companion SB 1682.

Please remember, last year bills without Senate companions did pass as they were sent to the Senate and referred to committee, heard and then passed on the Senate floor. We will be watching this bill closely.

Again, we discussed our concerns with FWC regarding local interpretation which could be permissive with the drafting change.

Surface Waters/Coral Reefs

[Senate Bill 1422 by Senator Ileana Garcia](#)

[House Bill 1319 by Representative Lindsay Cross](#)

This bill filed by Senator Garcia and Representative Cross are no longer identical. Senate Bill 1422 has three committees of reference. The bill is referred to Senate Environment and Natural Resources, Senate Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment and General Government and Rules. The bill passed the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee on February 3rd with a delete everything amendment. The bill is now related to Coral Reefs. We sent the bill and staff analysis for review. If you are interested in reviewing the information immediately, please click the link above for the Senate Bill. **The bill does reference Palm Beach. The bill is not on the agenda this week in the Senate Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment and General Government on the 25th.**

House Bill 1319 by Representative Cross only has two committees of reference. The bill is referred to House Natural Resources and Disaster and House State Affairs Committee. **The bill did not make the agenda on the 18th. As of the writing of this report, there are not any more meetings on the calendar.**

Nature Based Coastal Resiliency

[Senate Bill 302 by Senator Ileana Garcia](#)

[House Bill 1035 by Representative Jim Mooney Jr.](#)

House Bill 1035 is referred to two committees of reference. The bill is referred to the House Natural Re-

sources and Disasters Subcommittee and the House State Affairs Committee. The bill passed the House Natural Resources and Disasters Subcommittee unanimously. The bill passed the House State Affairs Committee on February 17th as a committee substitute and is now ready to be heard on the House floor.

Senate Bill 302 passed the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee with an amendment. The bill is now a committee substitute. The bill has two more committees of reference. The next stop is the Senate Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment and General Government. The last stop for the bill is the Senate Fiscal Policy Committee.

Senate Bill 302 passed the Senate Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment and General Government this week. The bill passed with a delete all amendment 11-0. The bill is now a Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute. **The bill passed the Senate Fiscal Policy Committee. CS/CS/SB 302 passed the Senate floor and is now in messages to the House.**

The bills are **similar**.

Local Administration of Vessel Restrictions

[Senate Bill 1682 by Senator Jay Trumbull](#)

[House Bill 1103 by Representative Alex Andrade](#)

The bills are identical. They allow local governments to pass ordinances granting code enforcement administrative authority over vessels at risk or becoming derelict, derelict vessels and long-term anchoring permits.

The Senate bill has three committees of reference. The bill passed the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee on January 27th. The bill passed the Senate Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment and General Government, the second committee of reference on February 4th. The bill was amended with language reducing the number of moorings in statute for the Key West Bight City Dock. Senate Bill 1682 is now a committee substitute. **The bill passed the Senate Rules Committee on February 17th. The bill was then placed on the Senate Special Order and temporarily postponed and waiting for the House bill to come over. The House bill is up in its last committee this week and we will see what amendments are attached.**

The House Bill also has three committees of reference. The bill is referred to House Natural Resources and Disasters Subcommittee, House Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee and House State Affairs Committee. The bill passed the House Natural Resources and Disasters Subcommittee is January 28th with an amendment and is now a committee substitute. The bill passed the House Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee with amendments including adding the language from the House Boating Restricted Area bill. **The final stop for the bill is the House State Affairs Committee. The bill is on the House State Affairs agenda on February 24th. The deadline for amendments is February 23rd at 5 pm.**

We have reached out to FWC and discussed these bills.

Motor Vehicle Registration

We will be watching House Bill 841 by Representative Fabricio and Senate Bill 982 by Senator Rodriguez relating to Motor Vehicle Registration. Meetings this week hinted that vessel registration potentially could be added to this proposed legislation. We will keep you posted.

The Senate Bill is not on the agenda this week in its first committee of reference.

The House Bill passed the first committee of reference without any amendments this week. **House Bill 841 passed the House State Affairs Committee on February 17th as a committee substitute. The bill is now on the House Special Order calendar February 25th.**

Property Taxes

Property tax has been a topic of discussion for the last year. This issue continues to take center stage.

This week the House of Representatives passed Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute for House Joint Resolution 203 by Representative Monique Miller relating to Elimination of Non-School Property for Homestead. The bill had numerous amendments and heated debate. Ultimately, the bill passed on the House floor 80-30 and was sent to the Senate and is now waiting to be heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

For more information or to read the analysis or final language please click on the link below.

<https://flhouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail.aspx?BillId=82728&SessionId=113>

The House of Representatives still has several other potential resolutions moving through the process.

The Senate has yet to release their plan and the Governor has yet to release his plan either.

The Senate and the House would need to pass the same property tax language for it to appear on the 2026 ballot in November.

We will keep you posted as this issue continues to move through the process and we still have three weeks left in the 2026 regular session.

This issue has the potential to be a special session topic in the spring.

Also keep in mind the Governor cannot veto a joint resolution, joint resolutions go to the ballot for the voters to decide in November.

Budget Highlights

Please find below some of the budget highlights we have found in the House and Senate proposed budgets. Please remember, this is just the start of the budget process and there is a long way to go to iron out differences and ultimately come up with a balance budget both chambers will agree on.

The House and Senate did pass their respective budgets off the floor this week. The House of Representatives and the Florida Senate have named budget conferees for the conferencing process. Hopefully, both chambers will agree on allocations soon and we can begin finalizing a balanced budget.

We will keep you updated on the progress of budget talks as they progress.

HB 5001 House Budget

Beaches

1883 GRANTS AND AIDS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND NONSTATE ENTITIES - FIXED CAPITAL OUTLAY BEACH PROJECTS - STATEWIDE
FROM LAND ACQUISITION TRUST FUND . . 50,000,000

Funds in Specific Appropriation 1883 are provided to the Department of Environmental Protection for distribution to beach and inlet management projects consistent with any component of the comprehensive long-term management plan developed in accordance with section 161.161, Florida Statutes. Funds may be used in accordance with section 161.101, Florida Statutes, for projects on annual ranked lists, storm repair projects, or projects on lands managed by the state.

Boating

1865 SPECIAL CATEGORIES CORAL REEF PROTECTION AND RESTORATION
FROM GENERAL REVENUE FUND 8,000,000

Funds in Specific Appropriation 1865 are provided for coral reef restoration and protection efforts.

1869 SPECIAL CATEGORIES SEAGRASS RESTORATION TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE FROM GENERAL REVENUE FUND 2,000,000

1882 GRANTS AND AIDS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND NONSTATE ENTITIES - FIXED CAPITAL OUTLAY CLEAN MARINA
FROM FEDERAL GRANTS TRUST FUND . . . 200,000

1937A SPECIAL CATEGORIES GRANTS AND AIDS - SPECIAL PROJECTS
FROM GENERAL REVENUE FUND 350,000

Funds in Specific Appropriation 1937A are provided for the following projects:

Boater Safety Education Program (HF 1453)..... 100,000
Boating Safety Education, Advocacy & Outreach Program Expansion (HF 2128)..... 250,000

1938 SPECIAL CATEGORIES BOAT RAMP MAINTENANCE CATEGORY

FROM GENERAL REVENUE FUND 306,754
FROM FEDERAL GRANTS TRUST FUND . . . 1,279,730
FROM MARINE RESOURCES CONSERVATION TRUST FUND 67,048
FROM STATE GAME TRUST FUND 143,750

1942 SPECIAL CATEGORIES BOATING AND WATERWAYS ACTIVITIES
FROM MARINE RESOURCES CONSERVATION TRUST FUND 1,944,318

1947 SPECIAL CATEGORIES BOATING SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAM
FROM MARINE RESOURCES CONSERVATION TRUST FUND 625,650

1948 FIXED CAPITAL OUTLAY DERELICT VESSEL REMOVAL PROGRAM
FROM GENERAL REVENUE FUND 1,000,000

1951 GRANTS AND AIDS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND NONSTATE ENTITIES - FIXED
CAPITAL OUTLAY DERELICT VESSEL REMOVAL PROGRAM
FROM MARINE RESOURCES CONSERVATION TRUST FUND 2,291,976

The funds in Specific Appropriation 1951 are provided to the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for grants to local governments to remove, store, destroy, and dispose of, or to pay private contractors to remove, store, destroy, and dispose of, derelict vessels or vessels declared a public nuisance.

1951A GRANTS AND AIDS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND NONSTATE ENTITIES - FIXED
CAPITAL OUTLAY GRANTS AND AIDS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND NONSTATE ENTITIES - FIXED CAPITAL OUTLAY
FROM GENERAL REVENUE FUND 1,865,000

Funds in Specific Appropriation 1951A are provided for the following projects:

Boca Raton Public Safety Dock Rehabilitation (HF 3269).... 500,000
Clermont Coast to Coast Traffic Safety Control Station (HF 1371)..... 500,000 Historic
Spring Park Public Access Pier Project Phase II Construction (HF3042)..... 490,000
Indialantic Riverside Park Fishing Pier (HF 2105)..... 225,000
Melbourne Pineapple Pier Restoration (HF 2101)..... 150,000

1952 GRANTS AND AIDS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND NONSTATE ENTITIES - FIXED
CAPITAL OUTLAY FLORIDA BOATING IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

FROM FEDERAL GRANTS TRUST FUND ... 6,000,000
FROM MARINE RESOURCES CONSERVATION TRUST FUND 783,844
FROM STATE GAME TRUST FUND 1,250,000

2024 GRANTS AND AIDS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND NONSTATE ENTITIES - FIXED
CAPITAL OUTLAY ARTIFICIAL FISHING REEF CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM

FROM GENERAL REVENUE FUND 300,000
FROM FEDERAL GRANTS TRUST FUND ... 300,00

SB 2500
Senate Budget

Beaches

1883 GRANTS AND AIDS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND NONSTATE ENTITIES - FIXED
CAPITAL OUTLAY BEACH PROJECTS - STATEWIDE
FROM LAND ACQUISITION TRUST FUND .. 64,141,067

Funds in Specific Appropriation 1883 are provided to the Department of Environmental Protection for distribution to beach and inlet management projects consistent with any component of the compre-

hensive long-term management plan developed in accordance with section 161.161, Florida Statutes. Funds shall be used to fund post-construction monitoring and projects 1 through 4 on the Strategic Beach Management Plan and projects 1 through 6 on the Inlet Management Plan.

Boating

1865 SPECIAL CATEGORIES CORAL REEF PROTECTION AND RESTORATION
FROM GENERAL REVENUE FUND 8,000,000

Funds in Specific Appropriation 1865 are provided for coral reef restoration and protection efforts.

1869 SPECIAL CATEGORIES SEAGRASS RESTORATION TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE FROM GENERAL REVENUE FUND 2,000,000

1882 GRANTS AND AIDS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND NONSTATE ENTITIES - FIXED CAPITAL OUTLAY CLEAN MARINA
FROM FEDERAL GRANTS TRUST FUND . . . 200,000

1938 SPECIAL CATEGORIES BOAT RAMP MAINTENANCE CATEGORY
FROM GENERAL REVENUE FUND 306,754
FROM FEDERAL GRANTS TRUST FUND . . . 1,279,730
FROM MARINE RESOURCES CONSERVATION TRUST FUND 67,048
FROM STATE GAME TRUST FUND 143,750

1942 SPECIAL CATEGORIES BOATING AND WATERWAYS ACTIVITIES
FROM MARINE RESOURCES CONSERVATION TRUST FUND 2,626,025

1947 SPECIAL CATEGORIES BOATING SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAM
FROM MARINE RESOURCES CONSERVATION TRUST FUND 625,650

1948 FIXED CAPITAL OUTLAY DERELICT VESSEL REMOVAL PROGRAM
FROM GENERAL REVENUE FUND 2,600,000

1951 GRANTS AND AIDS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND NONSTATE ENTITIES - FIXED CAPITAL OUTLAY DERELICT VESSEL REMOVAL PROGRAM
FROM MARINE RESOURCES CONSERVATION TRUST FUND 2,400,000

Funds in Specific Appropriation 1951 are provided to the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for grants to local governments or to remove, store, destroy, and dispose of, or to pay private contractors to remove, store, destroy, and dispose of, derelict vessels or vessels declared a public nuisance.

1952 GRANTS AND AIDS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND NONSTATE ENTITIES - FIXED CAPITAL OUTLAY FLORIDA BOATING IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
FROM FEDERAL GRANTS TRUST FUND . . . 6,000,000
FROM MARINE RESOURCES CONSERVATION TRUST FUND 783,844
FROM STATE GAME TRUST FUND 1,250,000

1952B GRANTS AND AIDS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND NONSTATE ENTITIES - FIXED CAPITAL OUTLAY GRANTS AND AID - SPECIAL PROJECTS

FROM GENERAL REVENUE FUND 2,950,000

Funds in Specific Appropriation 1952B are provided for the following special projects:

Eckerd College Search and Rescue (SF 2504)..... 350,000
Glades County Indian Prairie Boat Ramp Improvements (SF 3345)..... 2,000,000 Indi-
alantic Riverside Park Fishing Pier (SF 1127)..... 450,000
Melbourne Pineapple Pier Restoration (SF 1178)..... 150,000

2024 GRANTS AND AIDS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND NONSTATE ENTITIES - FIXED
CAPITAL OUTLAY ARTIFICIAL FISHING REEF CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM
FROM GENERAL REVENUE FUND 5,300,000
FROM FEDERAL GRANTS TRUST FUND . . . 300,00

SB 2506
Fuel Tax Budget Conforming Bill

This Senate conforming bill is included in the discussions for budget conference. This bill changes existing statute for fuel taxes to percentages increasing funding that benefits certain groups including FWC. This is a bill will be monitoring closely.

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2026/2506/BillText/pb/PDF>

Boating Capital of the World

Calling all boaters to sign up to purchase a “Boating Capital of the World” license plate. There is a requirement to presale a certain number of license plates before they go into production. We need to get the work out and let everyone know this tag is available for pre-sales and the monies benefit Captain Sandy’s Charities.

We will be highlighting this project all Session and hope you can help us hit our goal!

Please sign up for every vehicle and boat trailer and share with friends and family!

PRE-ORDER your Boating Capital of the World license plate today!

www.boatingplate.com

Thank you so very much for allowing us to be your voice in Tallahassee!

Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.