

2024 Legislative Priorities Emerge

As the Legislature gavels in for the 2024 Session, top priorities are emerging for Florida Governor Ron DeSantis (R), Senate President Kathleen Passidomo (R – Naples) and Speaker of the House Paul Renner (R – Palm Coast).

Governor Ron DeSantis

Taking a quick break from the campaign trail in Iowa, Governor Ron DeSantis delivered the State of the State address on January 9, touting past accomplishments and outlining a relatively light policy agenda for 2024. The majority of the Governor's proposals revolve around fiscal responsibility including scaling back state spending by \$4 billion and reducing the state workforce, largely by eliminating vacant positions. The Governor laid out several additional priorities including:

- Another \$1.25 billion for teacher pay increases.
- Placing \$16.3 billion in reserves.
- \$1.1 billion in consumer-friendly tax cuts, including cuts to assessments and fees on homeowners' insurance.
- An additional \$20 million for law enforcement recruitment.
- \$1.1 billion for Everglades restoration.
- \$125 billion for land conservation.

The Governor's parting message to legislators as they embarked on the 2024 regular session was "stay the course."

Senate President Kathleen Passidomo

Senate President Passidomo experienced great success in the 2023 legislative session, including passage of a landmark affordable housing effort called the "Live Local Act." As she turns her eyes towards her second and final session at the helm of the Senate, she continues to focus on issues related to livability and affordability, particularly in healthcare. Her top priority for the 2024 session is an omnibus bill on healthcare intended to increase access and bolster Florida's healthcare workforce. She is calling the bill the "Live Healthy Act." Additional priorities for the Senate President are:

- Deregulation of the public school system to increase efficiency and innovation (a bill dubbed the "Learn Local Act").
- Expansion of professional licensure reciprocity.

- Creation of a dedicated stream of conservation funding utilizing state revenue share from the Seminole Gaming Compact.



Speaker Paul Renner

Speaker Paul Renner also enjoyed a tremendously successful session in 2023, ushering in comprehensive tort reform to Florida. He and his colleagues in the House were also successful in a nation-leading expansion of school choice in which all Florida students – regardless of their family income – are eligible for state vouchers. He looks to follow this success in his final session in 2024 by focusing on the following issues:

- Increased funding for students with disabilities.
- Healthcare price transparency.
- Social media ban for children 16 years and younger.
- Lowering discretionary spending and prioritizing long-term infrastructure investments.

The 2024 session is scheduled to conclude, *sine die*, on March 8, 2024.

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Congratulations to Chris for being recognized in News Service of Florida's 40 Under 40 Rising Stars!

Chris Dawson is an Attorney and professional Lobbyist for GrayRobinson's Orlando office and is licensed to practice law in both Florida and Alabama. He primarily focuses on lobbying and government relations for public and private sector clients at the executive and legislative levels of state government. He is credentialed as a Designated Professional Lobbyist by the Florida Association of Professional Lobbyists. Chris also holds two degrees in Civil Engineering and has experience in construction litigation and design professional malpractice defense.