

GRay Matters



It's not always black and white.

2020 Session: Week 1

1/20/20

Session has arrived.

The 60-day sprint began Tuesday with Governor **Ron DeSantis** outlining his successes one year into his first term before laying out his goals for 2020.

Among his priorities: A \$600 million allocation to boost starting teacher pay, streamlining of occupational licensing requirements, and more legislative action on the environment, including stiffer fines for polluters.

House Speaker **Jose Oliva** and Senate President **Bill Galvano** see eye to eye with the Governor on most issues, but the teacher pay plan is still a question mark — both leaders have kept their cards close to the vest.

The Florida House of Representatives



- House Speaker-designate **Chris Sprowls** mounted a major push to protect genetic data. A bill he is sponsoring would block life, disability, and long-term care insurers from using the results of a DNA test as grounds to cancel, limit, or deny coverage to customers. The House Health and Human Services Committee voted to advance the bill Thursday.
- There might not be a Constitutional Revision Commission come 2038, the next time the once-every-20-year panel is scheduled to convene. A pair of bills by state Representative **Brad Drake** that would repeal the CRC have made it through committee and are ready for a vote by the full House. The repeal will likely happen as the Senate is amenable — it approved similar legislation last year — and the Governor has said he's on board. If passed, voters would need to approve the repeal.

For a complete summary, read the full 2020 Legislative Journal for the House of Representatives from the first week of Session [here](#).

Florida Senate

Senator **Rob Bradley**'s effort to relax mandatory minimums for some nonviolent drug offenses got a unanimous vote from the Senate Appropriations Committee, which he chairs. It was the final committee stop for SB 346, which now heads to the Senate floor. For a complete summary, read the full 2020 Legislative Journal for the Senate from the first week of Session [here](#).



Bill of the Week

Several health care policies advanced through committee in the opening week of the 2020 Legislative Session — measures that would allow nurses to open independent practices, enable pharmacists to test and treat strep throat, and cap the price of insulin all scored early wins.

One House bill gaining traction is HB 599 by Republican Representative **Ana Maria Rodriguez**, which would allow physicians and Consultant Pharmacists to enter into a Collaborative Practice Agreement (CPA). A CPA is a formal agreement in which a licensed physician refers patients to a pharmacist under a protocol that allows the pharmacist to perform medication management services for specified patient care functions.

A Consultant Pharmacist is a licensed pharmacist who provides expert advice on the use of medications, after completing an approved course and a 40-hour assessment and evaluation period.

The bill would permit Consultant Pharmacists to enter into CPAs with health care facility medical directors or licensed physicians, podiatric physicians, or dentists who are authorized to prescribe medicinal drugs. It would also require a pharmacist to complete additional training required by the Board of Pharmacy in order to be licensed as a Consultant Pharmacist.

On Thursday, the House Health Quality Subcommittee added the bill to its agenda to be heard on Tuesday, January 21 at 10 a.m. in Mashburn Hall.

An approval of this bill by the Legislature would improve patient outcomes and decrease medical costs.

Federal Spotlight

GrayRobinson's Washington, DC office releases a newsletter each week entitled **The Golden Apple**, reporting on the "latest discord on Capitol Hill." This week's newsletter discusses affordable housing and if gentrification is worsening homelessness. The House Financial Services Committee held a [marathon hearing on Tuesday](#) to discuss four legislative proposals that seek to preserve affordable housing and make more housing available, especially in gentrifying neighborhoods. Even outside major metropolitan centers, housing shortages and housing availability mismatches are making

housing unaffordable for low and moderate-income families, and the panel argued over possible solution. Consensus emerged on the need to modify or reduce zoning restrictions that limit multifamily housing, but those changes generally need to be made at the local level, and are not within Congress's authority.

Witnesses suggested attaching housing commitments and tenant protection to Opportunity Zone grants, to prevent residents from being priced out of gentrifying neighborhoods. Although short-term rentals such as AirBnB have been blamed for driving up rents, witnesses noted that AirBnB rentals can provide income that allows residents to stay in homes they could not otherwise afford. Representative Cindy Axne (D-IA) expressed concern about rising rent on plots in manufactured housing communities, while Representative Andy Barr (R-KY) called for integrating manufactured housing into housing policy solutions.

Read **The Golden Apple** in its entirety [here](#).

Client Spotlight



Casa Valentina

Casa Valentina, Inc.

Janice M. Graham, Executive Director

My role at Casa Valentina entails developing, supporting, and leading a vision of a community where all foster youth receive the care and support they need to successfully transition into independent living.

Casa Valentina can help you strengthen your skills in financial literacy, self-care, and education to better position yourself as you transition from foster care to independence.

Something you wish people knew about your job or Casa Valentina that might not be obvious: Even though we are a small organization that houses only 21 youth at a given time, Casa Valentina serves over 350 additional youth across Miami-Dade County each year.

What excites you about going to work each day: There is never a dull moment at Casa Valentina! From helping a young lady navigate financial aid, to working with a young man on his astronomy assignment, Casa Valentina works with each person to support their individual needs.

Looking Ahead

The first week of the 2020 Legislative Session is in the books. Lawmakers will get a short break as Monday is Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and state offices are closed so no committee meetings will be held. They reconvene Tuesday.

The full House is scheduled to meet on Wednesday and Thursday, where they will consider bills that have already made it through the committee process.

The GrayRobinson Team

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