



GRAYROBINSON

METROPLAN ORLANDO

2025 Legislative Session Report

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HB 5501 - DOCUMENTARY STAMP TAX DISTRIBUTIONS

On Friday, May 2, the Florida Legislature extended the 2025 Regular Session through House Concurrent Resolution 1631. The session is extended until 11:59 pm on Friday, June 6, 2025. HB 5501 is one of the 16 bills outlined in the resolution that can still be considered.

HB 5501 amends the distribution of documentary stamp tax revenues by redirecting a portion of the funds currently allocated to various state trust funds into the General Revenue Fund. The bill repeals provisions of Chapter 2023-17, Laws of Florida—also known as the Live Local Act—which govern how certain revenues are allocated for housing programs.

Under the bill, the general revenue service charge on documentary stamp tax collections would be reinstated, and the current \$150 million annual allocation for affordable housing would be eliminated. Additionally, the bill redirects the distribution of documentary stamp tax proceeds from the Department of Transportation to general revenue in the amount of \$466.75 million or 20.5453 percent of remaining revenues after required distributions in each fiscal year is deposited into the State Transportation Trust Fund for the New Starts Transit Program, the Small County Outreach Program, the Strategic Intermodal System, and the Transportation Regional Incentive Program. This change would significantly reduce funding for the State Transportation Trust Fund.

BILLS THAT PASSED THE LEGISLATURE

HB 85 (KENDALL) - HAZARDOUS WALKING CONDITIONS

Companion Bill: SB 650 (Leek)

The bill expands the criteria for identifying hazardous walking conditions for public elementary school students who use walkways parallel to the road to walk to and from school. The bill adds that a walkway is also considered hazardous if it is along a limited access facility, as defined in s. 334.03(12), F.S. As a result of this change, local governments may incur additional transportation costs for students who now qualify for school transportation due to these newly designated hazardous walking conditions.

HB 351 (PLASENCIA) - DANGEROUS EXCESSIVE SPEEDING

Companion Bill: SB 1782 (Pizzo)

The bill creates a new criminal offense for “dangerous excessive speeding,” which applies when a person operates a motor vehicle either by exceeding the speed limit by 50 miles per hour or more, or by driving at 100 miles per hour or more in a manner that endangers the safety of others or interferes with the safe operation of the vehicle. Under the bill, a first conviction for dangerous excessive speeding is punishable by up to 30 days in jail, a \$500 fine, or both. A second or subsequent conviction carries a penalty of up to 90 days in jail, a \$1,000 fine, or both. Additionally, if a second or subsequent offense occurs within five years of a prior conviction, the driver’s license must be revoked for at least 180 days and up to one year.

The bill also requires any driver cited for exceeding the speed limit by more than 50 miles per hour to appear at a mandatory hearing before a designated official. Furthermore, it amends current law to authorize—rather than require—law enforcement officers to indicate the applicable civil penalty on traffic citations for speeding violations involving speeds of 30 miles per hour or more, or 50 miles per hour or more over the posted limit.

SB 462 (DICEGLIE) - TRANSPORTATION

Companion Bill: HB 567 (McFarland)

The bill addresses various transportation-related provisions, including:

- Requires counties to annually submit information regarding their use of the Charter County and Regional Transportation System Surtax revenues to the Office of Economic and Demographic Research, with the office compiling such information into a report to the Legislature and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)
- Authorizes local governments to adopt ordinances regarding age and identification requirements to operate an electric bicycle, motorized scooter, or micromobility device.
- Authorizes local governments to provide training on the safe operation of electric bicycles, motorized scooters, and micromobility devices.
- Prohibits a person from operating a motor vehicle or vessel on a flooded street or highway at a speed that creates an excessive wake.
- Prohibits the designation of new metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) in areas contiguous to an existing MPO.
- Requires FDOT to convene MPOs of similar size to exchange best practices annually. Authorizes FDOT to provide training to new members of MPO governing boards through FDOT or certain other entities.
- Provides for the integration of new technologies into MPO transportation plans.
- Authorizes FDOT and each MPO to execute a written agreement to establish a cooperative relationship regarding transportation planning.
- Requires FDOT to establish, in cooperation with the MPO, performance metrics for the MPO, and provides that the MPO must annually report on its performance.
- Requires FDOT to prioritize highway projects on the Strategic Intermodal System to make a highway corridor contiguous in its functional characteristics.
- Requires FDOT to implement a Next-generation Traffic Signal Modernization Program to increase the interconnectivity of traffic signals.

HB 479 (DALEY) - LEAVING THE SCENE OF A CRASH INVOLVING ONLY DAMAGE TO VEHICLE OR PROPERTY

Companion Bill: SB 1378 (Arrington)

The bill allows a court to require a driver convicted of leaving the scene of a crash, resulting in damage to an attended vehicle or other property, to pay restitution to the owner for any damage caused or contributed to by the driver.

The bill was signed by the Governor on 04.29.25.

HB 687 (KENDALL) - DRIVING AND BOATING OFFENSES**Companion Bill: SB 138 (Wright)**

The bill increases the penalty for a conviction for DUI manslaughter, BUI manslaughter, vehicular homicide, or vessel homicide from a second-degree felony to a first-degree felony if a person has a prior conviction for DUI manslaughter, BUI manslaughter, vehicular homicide, or vessel homicide. The bill authorizes a judge to issue a search warrant for a person's blood sample if the sample is relevant to establishing that the person committed a misdemeanor DUI or BUI.

HB 703 (ROBINSON) - UTILITY RELOCATION**Companion Bill: SB 818 (McClain)**

The bill establishes the Utility Relocation Reimbursement Grant Program within the Department of Commerce to assist communications service providers in covering the costs of relocating utility infrastructure when such relocation is required by local governments. Current law requires providers to relocate infrastructure in the public right-of-way at their own expense when instructed by a municipality or county. These bills uphold that requirement but introduce a grant program to reimburse providers for costs directly tied to physical relocation.

The program is funded by \$50 million annually, redirected from the Local Government Half-Cent Sales Tax Clearing Trust Fund, resulting in a recurring \$50 million decrease in revenue shared with cities and counties.

The Department of Commerce is responsible for establishing rules for the program, including application procedures, required documentation, and a reimbursement timeline not to exceed 90 days. Only direct relocation costs are eligible; administrative and indirect costs are excluded.

HB 961 (MANEY) - DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAY SAFETY AND MOTOR VEHICLES**Companion Bill: SB 1348 (Trumbull)**

The bill makes a number of changes to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) procedures. It prohibits and penalizes individuals who sell or offer to sell DHSMV or tax collector service appointments without authorization. It allows tax collectors to mail certain documents or make them available at their offices and revises the process for issuing disabled parking permits, including creating a lifetime permit for individuals permanently disabled due to amputation or dismemberment. It also designates the week of April 14 as "Move Over Awareness Week."

SB 1662 (COLLINS) - TRANSPORTATION**Companion Bill: HB 1397 (Abbott)**

Similarly to SB 462, SB 1662 makes numerous changes related to transportation, mainly:

- Revises the qualifications for Florida Transportation Commission (FTC) members to require that at least three commissioners have expertise in higher education, transportation, or workforce development, and remove the requirement that all members must have business managerial experience in the private sector

- Requires the FTC to monitor the efficiency, productivity, and management of any transit entity receiving funding under the public transit block grant program;
- Creates the Florida Transportation Research Institute, with representatives from specified state colleges and universities, as a consortium of higher education professionals. The institute must advance the state's transportation infrastructure and systems through research, education, and engagement, including the award of grants to member and nonmember institutions and the use of funds from the State Transportation Trust Fund for operations and programs.
- Creates an Intermodal Logistic Center working group within FDOT and provides for its membership and responsibilities relating to the expansion and development of intermodal logistic centers. A final report of the working group is due January 1, 2027, and the working group expires June 30, 2027
- Revises FDOT's annual spending requirement relating to landscaping and requires FDOT's landscaping standards to include native landscaping materials

HB 1525 (BUSATTA) - PREARRANGED TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Companion Bill: SB 1696 (Calatayud)

The bill makes it a second-degree misdemeanor to intentionally impersonate a transportation network company (TNC) driver through false claims, counterfeit TNC signage, or any actions that mislead others into believing the person is a legitimate TNC driver.

Additionally, the bill clarifies that TNC services are not classified as privately owned or operated bus transit systems in relation to transit safety standards.

It authorizes the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged to use funds to contract with alternative transportation providers for persons with disabilities, requiring that these services be customized to individual needs and meet commission service standards.

The bill also amends the definition of "transportation service provider" in paratransit service contracts.

BILLS THAT FAILED TO PASS

HB 221 (GENTRY) / SB 88 (WRIGHT) - UTILITY TERRAIN VEHICLES

The bill defines the term "utility terrain vehicle" (UTV) and permits their operation on certain roadways. Specifically, it authorizes UTVs to be legally driven on two-lane county roads and two-lane municipal streets where the posted speed limit is below 55 miles per hour. UTVs may only cross segments of the State Highway System when doing so at approximately a 90-degree angle and only at locations where the crossing can be made quickly and safely.

The bill allows UTVs to be operated at any time of day, but only by licensed drivers or by individuals with a learner's permit under the direct supervision of a licensed driver. Additionally, the bill grants counties and municipalities the authority to adopt ordinances imposing more restrictive regulations on UTV operation and equipment than those set forth by state law.

HB 241 (CROSS) / SB 350 (DICEGLIE) - OPERATING VEHICLES AND VESSELS

The bill revises the prohibition on driving at speeds greater than is reasonable and prudent under the existing roadway conditions to clarify that the prohibition applies to both highways and streets. Additionally, it prohibits operating motor vehicles, vessels, or other conveyances at speeds that create excessive wake on flooded or inundated roads.

These provisions are included in SB 462, which has been passed by the Legislature.

SB 432 (MCCLAIN) - POWER OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS TO LEVY SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS

The bill proposes to eliminate the authority of county commissioners to levy and collect special assessments. The bill effectively would have removed special assessments as a source of funding for certain municipal facilities and services.

HB 501 (TANT) / SB 1318 (GRALL) - HANDS-FREE DRIVING/TRAFFIC OFFENSES

The bill renames the Florida Ban on Texting While Driving Law to the Florida Hands-Free Driving Law and broadens the ban to prohibit the use of wireless communication devices in a handheld manner while driving, except for minimal interaction such as activating or deactivating functions. It mandates hands-free operation for sustained use and defines key terms. The bill imposes enhanced penalties for handheld device use in active work zones and school zones. Additionally, it requires a mandatory court hearing for crashes caused by running a red light or stop sign, with escalating fines and license suspensions for repeat offenses.

SB 504 (GRUTERS) - DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

The bill revises the Department of Transportation's guidelines for allocating construction project funds toward plant materials.

HB 545 (PERSONS-MULICKA) / SB 636 (MARTIN) - MOTOR VEHICLES USING THE FURTHERMOST LEFT-HAND LANE

The bill prohibits drivers from using the far-left lane on roads with speed limits of 65 mph or higher, unless passing, preparing to exit, complying with the Move Over Act, following traffic control devices, or responding to traffic or environmental conditions. Violations are treated as noncriminal moving violations with total penalties up to \$158. The Department of Transportation is directed to identify applicable roadways and post appropriate signage.

HB 577 (NIX) / SB 872 (INGOGLIA) - COUNTY PRICE CONTROLS FOR REMOVAL AND STORAGE OF ELECTRIC VEHICLES

The bill requires counties and municipalities to set maximum storage rates for electric vehicles towed from accident scenes. These rates may be up to three times the standard rates set by wrecker operators for gasoline or diesel vehicles. Additionally, wrecker operators are authorized to charge the actual cost plus 15% for cleaning up accident scenes involving electric vehicles, including incidents involving fires or

hazardous material discharges. The House version was amended and does not impose city-specific requirements.

HB 699 (MELO) / SB 1210 (MARTIN) - NONCRIMINAL TRAFFIC INFRACTIONS CAUSING VEHICLE CRASHES

The bill requires a mandatory court hearing for any driver who causes a crash while committing certain traffic violations. These violations include running a red light or stop sign, failing to stop for a pedestrian, failing to yield the right-of-way to a vehicle already in or approaching an intersection, or failing to yield at a four-way stop to a vehicle already in the intersection or to the vehicle on the right when both arrive at the same time. If the driver is found to have committed one or more of these violations at the mandatory hearing, the bill imposes additional penalties.

HB 1275 (MICHAEL) / SB 812 (CALATAYUD) - TRAFFIC INFRACTION ENFORCEMENT

The bill expands traffic infraction enforcement to include railroad traffic infraction detectors. It authorizes counties and municipalities to enforce laws at railroad-highway crossings and install these detectors, provided they obtain the railroad owner's consent.

PROPERTY TAX BILLS - FAILED

HJR 357 (CHAMBERLIN) - PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS (LINKED TO HB 359 BY CHAMBERLIN)

The bill proposes a constitutional amendment that would create a \$100,000 property tax exemption for real property with an implementation date of January 1, 2027.

SB 852 (MARTIN) - STUDY ON THE ELIMINATION OF PROPERTY TAXES

The bill directs the Office of Economic and Demographic Research (EDR) to conduct a study on eliminating and replacing property taxes. The study must evaluate the impact of eliminating property taxes on key public services, including education, infrastructure, and public safety. It must also assess the potential effects on the housing market and analyze how a shift to a consumption-based (sales) tax could affect Florida's business climate compared to other states. Additionally, the study must examine implications for the state's overall economic stability, consumer behavior, and long-term economic growth.

SJR 1016 (INGOGLIA) - HOMESTEAD EXEMPTIONS (LINKED TO SB 1018 BY INGOGLIA)

The bill proposes to remove the school district property tax levy homestead exemption and increase the non-school property tax levy exemption from \$25,000 to \$75,000.