



## Week Six – February 17-21, 2020

Florida House of Representative members last week got their first look at a comprehensive tax package that includes provisions designed to help Floridians before and after a hurricane.

[HB 7097](#) by [Representative Bryan Avila \(R-Hialeah\)](#), provides for several tax reductions and other tax-related changes designed to directly impact families and businesses. Among its hurricane-related provisions, the bill extends to five years the timeframe for commencing changes, additions or improvements that replace all or a portion of property damaged following a disaster.

The bill, which is on the [House Appropriations Committee](#) agenda for today (Tuesday), also provides for a seven-day Disaster Preparedness Sales Tax Holiday from May 29 through June 4, 2020. During the holiday, the following items are exempt from the state sales tax and county discretionary sales surtaxes:

- A portable self-powered light source selling for \$20 or less
- A portable self-powered radio, two-way radio, or weather band radio selling for \$50 or less
- A tarpaulin or other flexible waterproof sheeting selling for \$50 or less
- A ground anchor system or tie-down kit selling for \$50 or less
- A gas or diesel fuel tank selling for \$25 or less
- A package of AAA-cell, AA-cell, C-cell, D-cell, 6-volt, or 9-volt batteries, excluding automobile and boat batteries, selling for \$30 or less
- A nonelectric food storage cooler selling for \$30 or less
- A portable generator that is used to provide light or communications or preserve food in the event of a power outage selling for \$750 or less
- Reusable ice selling for \$10 or less

In other action last week, the [Senate Community Affairs Committee](#) unanimously passed [SB 1270](#) by [Senator Tom Lee \(R-Brandon\)](#). The bill would add new training requirements for governing board appointees on ethics and fiduciary responsibilities. The bill is applicable to Citizens Board of Governors. It heads to the [Rules Committee](#) which has two more meetings scheduled.

The committee also unanimously passed [SB 1636](#) by [Senator Dennis Baxley \(R-Ocala\)](#). The bill abolishes nearly two dozen inactive or antiquated advisory bodies and programs, including the My Safe Florida Home Program Advisory Council, upon which Citizens executive director has a seat. The bill now goes to the [Rules Committee](#).

The [House Appropriations Committee](#) heard [HB 895](#) by [Representative David Santiago \(R-Deltona\)](#). The bill sets up a procedure to allow the value of the lender's force-placed collateral protection insurance to be reimbursed as a covered policy. The bill passed 28-0 and now goes to the [House Commerce Committee](#).

The [Senate Rules Committee](#) unanimously passed [SB 1188](#) by [Senator Ben Albritton \(R-Bartow\)](#). The bill provides public records exemptions for certain sensitive business information held by the Department of Financial Services which is protected from public records disclosure requirements if held by the Office of Insurance Regulation (OIR). The exemptions would extend to information that would injure the subject insurer or insurance group by providing competitors with confidential business information. The bill now goes to the full House of Representatives for a vote.

The [House Ways and Means Committee](#) unanimously passed [HB 1339](#) by [Representative Clay Yarborough \(R-Jacksonville\)](#). The bill addresses several housing issues related to development zoning and impact fees, affordable housing, and mobile homes. The bill now goes to the [House Commerce Committee](#).

The [House Commerce Committee](#) passed three bills of specific interest that will now go to the full House of

Representatives for a vote:

- [HB 359](#) by [Representative David Santiago \(R-Deltona\)](#) the House's comprehensive insurance package.
- [HB 529](#) by [Representative Jennifer Webb \(D-St. Petersburg\)](#) relating to insurance guaranty associations. The bill changes the amount of coverage that [Florida Insurance Guaranty Association](#) (FIGA) must provide for each condominium unit within a condominium association from a maximum of \$100,000 multiplied by the number of units to \$200,000 multiplied by the number of units.
- [HB 1211](#) by [Representative Shev Jones \(D-West Park\)](#), which amends reinsurance law to add criteria that an assuming insurer must meet in order for a ceding insurer to be given credit for reinsurance ceded to that assuming insurer.

On deck this week, the [House Appropriations Committee](#) today takes up HB 7097 by Representative Avila. The bill is outlined above.

The [Senate Rules Committee](#) will hear [SB 1492](#) by [Senator Tom Wright \(R-Port Orange\)](#). The bill is a priority consumer protection bill by CFO Jimmy Patronis. The bill requires insurance companies to settle claims in 90 days and increases the time a consumer must cancel a contract with an adjuster. SB 1492 also removes the consumer's obligation to pay a \$100 deductible to FIGA in order to receive payment on their claim through FIGA.

The Rules Committee will also take up the agenda is [SB 1636](#) by [Senator Dennis Baxley \(R-Ocala\)](#), which is outlined above.