



Legislative Update Week 9

2020 Legislative Update-Week 9

Although this was scheduled to be the last week of the 2020 Legislative Session, both chambers continue to work on a final budget agreement. With the state law required 72 hour “cooling-off period” it is anticipated that the final budget vote and end of session will be Thursday, March 19th.



Florida Forever

On Sunday the Appropriations Conference Committee on Agriculture, Environment and General Government Chair, Representative Raschein, announced the House and Senate had agreed to recommend funding Florida Forever at \$100 million. It has been reported that this amount will not change but it's also been stated that everything is still on the table as the House and Senate hammer out the final budget.

This week the following bills passed and are being sent to the Governor:

Water Quality

SB 712 – Water Quality Improvements by Mayfield was sent to the House for debate. Four House amendments were filed and all four failed. The bill was approved by the House by a vote of 118-0. While lauded as land mark water quality legislation, this bill is just a first step to address Florida's serious water quality problems.

Endangered and Threatened Species

SB 680 – Shark Fins by Sen. Hutson was sent to the House where the House bill companion sponsor, Representative Jacobs, was honored by an amendment naming this the Kristen Jacobs Ocean Conservation Act. The second amendment tacked on by the House eliminated the Senate grandfather clause to allow FL Fishery permittees an exemption until 2025. This amendment allows the sale of shark fins to continue for FL permit holders but also requires a FL Fish and Wildlife impact study on the issue to be completed by December 31, 2021.

Environmental Fines and Enforcement

HB 1091 – Environmental Enforcement by Randy Fine, which raises fines and penalties on environmental violations passed the full House last week by a vote of 106-0 and was sent to the Senate for final consideration and passage. The Senate added one amendment this week regarding requirements to inspect and maintain sewer lines from the street to a residence. This Thursday, the House concurred with the changes and the bill passed 115-0.

We will send another update mid-week once the budget is released to the public and a final vote takes place.

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