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MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 8, 2021
SUBJECT: Weekly Update

Interim Committee meetings will begin the week of January 11, 2021 in advance of the annual Legislative Session, which starts March 2, 2021. Most of these meetings will be geared toward information gathering and subject matter presentations.

At this time, 297 bills have been filed. Included below are those bills where we are actively engaged and those we are monitoring on your behalf. Please review and notify us if you have questions, or if there are other issues you would like us to add to the tracking. The full text of each bill is available on the legislative web sites (www.flsenate.gov and www.myfloridahouse.com.)

COVID Update:

By the Numbers:

Virus Update as of 1/7/21

Total numbers of cases since the pandemic started: 1,429,722

Deaths of Florida Residents: 22,481

Percentage of available hospital beds statewide. 19.30%

Percentage of available adult intensive-care unit beds statewide. 15.56 %

Vaccine Update as of 1/7/21

First dose: 384,223

Series Completed: 14601

Overdue for 2nd dose: 417

State Action:

- Governor Ron DeSantis announced that Hard Rock Stadium is opening as the first state operated COVID-19 drive-thru vaccination site. The Miami Hard Rock site began administering the first doses of the vaccine today as a soft launch and will open fully on Friday, January 8.
- Governor Ron DeSantis [announced](#) that the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) and Florida Department of Health (FDOH) have partnered with Publix Supermarkets to establish COVID-19 vaccination sites. Governor DeSantis made this announcement at the first Publix vaccination site in Ocala.
 - Through a partnership with FDEM and FDOH, Publix is receiving 15,000 doses of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine to launch a new pilot program at 22 select Publix Supermarkets, beginning Friday, January 8. Appointments can be made beginning Thursday, January 7.
- The four new actions the Governor announced are listed below, with more information available [HERE](#).

1) Expanding access to vaccine with additional state-supported sites.

Governor DeSantis has directed the Florida Division of Emergency Management to work with the Florida Department of Health to identify state-run COVID-19 testing sites that can convert into vaccine sites. Additional information regarding the locations of these sites will be available in the coming days.

2) Deploying the vaccine into underserved communities.

Governor DeSantis has directed the Florida Division of Emergency Management to identify places of worship and other locations in underserved communities where the vaccine may be administered. Florida has already begun a pilot program in Escambia County, where over 500 seniors have received their vaccine and have been scheduled for their booster shot, which they will receive at the same location.

3) Reinforcing vaccination efforts with additional staff.

Governor DeSantis has directed the Florida Division of Emergency Management to immediately hire 1,000 contract nurses to support vaccination efforts. These nurses will be deployed throughout the entire state to help run vaccination sites, including public sites run by the state or counties and private sites such as South Seminole Hospital. These nurses will supplement the many personnel already in the field, including 800 Florida National Guardsmen, who have been supporting the state's response since the beginning of the pandemic.

4) Continuing to prioritize long-term care facility residents.

There is no time to waste to vaccinate Florida's most vulnerable residents. Governor DeSantis is directing the Florida Division of Emergency Management to assume additional responsibilities regarding the administration of vaccines in Florida's over 3,000 assisted living facilities, supplementing and accelerating the efforts being undertaken by CVS and Walgreens, pursuant to their agreement with the federal government.

Interim Committee Meetings :

Meetings of Interest: committee notice and/or packets linked therein

Monday Jan 11, 2021

- S. Procedural briefing for Committee chairs and Vice chairs 1:00 pm

Tuesday Jan 12, 2021

- S. Children, Families and Elder Affairs: 9:00 am

- <https://www.flsenate.gov/Committees/Show/CF/ExpandedAgenda/4950>

Wednesday Jan 13, 2021

- S. Health Policy: 9:00 am
 - <https://www.flsenate.gov/Committees/Show/HP/MeetingNotice/4944>
- S. Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services: 12:30 pm
 - <https://www.flsenate.gov/Committees/Show/AHS/ExpandedAgenda/4956>
- H Children, Families & Seniors Subcommittee: 2:00 pm
 - <https://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Documents/publications.aspx?Committeed=3087&PublicationType=Committees&DocumentType=All&SessionId=90>
- H Civil Justice and Property Rights Subcommittee: 4:00 pm
 - <https://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Committees/meetingnotice.aspx?MeetingId=12691&SessionId=90&Committeed=3097>
 - HB 0007 Civil Liability for Damages Relating to COVID-19 (McClure)

Thursday Jan 14, 2021:

- H Health & Human Services Committee: 9:00 am
 - <https://myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Committees/meetingnotice.aspx?MeetingId=12685&SessionId=90&Committeed=3085>
 - The filed House COVID liability bill currently excluded health care providers, this committee will be a workshop on COVID liability for those who fall under Health and Human services
- H Pandemics & Public Emergencies Committee: 9:00 am
 - <https://myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Documents/publications.aspx?Committeed=3102&PublicationType=Committees&DocumentType=Meeting%20Notices>
 - HB 009 Protecting Consumers Against Fraud in a Pandemic
- S Committee on Pandemics Preparedness and Response: 11:30
 - <https://www.flsenate.gov/Committees/Show/PPR/ExpandedAgenda/4957>

COVID Protocols

The Senate President and the Speaker of the House have adopted contrasting COVID-19 protocols for upcoming committee meetings while overall encouraging members to limit face-to-face interactions with the public.

Under the Senate plan, members of the public will have to watch remotely and testify from a civic center a few blocks from the Florida Capitol, unless they are invited to the meetings by committee chairs. Members of the press will be allowed to attend in-person meetings. The Senate has reserved three remote viewing rooms at the Donald L. Tucker Civic Center, where members of the public will be able to watch the proceedings and testify. The Senate has and continues to observe federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention protocols, which include face coverings, social distancing and frequent hand-washing. Senators have been urged to avoid in person meetings and to utilize available platforms to schedule meetings virtually for January. To maximize social distancing, the Senate intends to use its largest committee rooms and hold no more than three committee meetings at one time.

The House will limit the number of people who will be able to gather with state lawmakers during committee hearings. Seating in House meeting rooms will be socially distanced and limited to meetings where committees are discussing bills or potential legislation. The House will use an online registration system for people who want to provide substantive testimony and for the press. Seating in committee

rooms will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. Expanded seating capacity for on-site virtual testimony will be available on issues of great public significance and when scheduling allow. Visitors to House spaces, including lobbyists, will be required to observe social distancing and wear a face covering when in the company of another person. People who are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, who are in quarantine or who were recently diagnosed with the virus won't be allowed to enter the House.

House members are urged to use conference calls or virtual meetings as alternatives to in-person meetings and should make every effort to limit the number of people who are in their offices at one time. Members' offices generally accommodate two guests, and aides' offices generally have room for no more than one guest. In-person meetings should be by appointment only with sufficient time in between appointments to avoid crowding in common areas.

Legislation Actively Participating:

Legislation to Monitor:

- **HB 007 HB 0007 Civil Liability for Damages Relating to COVID-19 (McClure)**
 - Up in H Civil Justice and Property Rights Subcommittee on Wed, 1/13

Civil Liability for Damages Relating to COVID-19: Provides requirements for civil action based on COVID-19-related claim; provides that plaintiff has burden of proof in such action; provides statute of limitations; provides retroactive applicability. Effective Date: upon becoming a law
- **SB 0072 Civil Liability for Damages Relating to COVID (Brandes)**

Civil Liability for Damages Relating to COVID-19; Providing requirements for a civil action based on a COVID-19-related claim; providing that the plaintiff has the burden of proof in such action; providing a statute of limitations; providing severability; providing retroactive applicability, etc. Effective Date: This act shall take effect upon becoming a law and shall apply retroactively. However, the provisions of this act shall not apply in a civil action against a particularly named defendant which is commenced before the effective date of this act

Other Legislative issues of Note:

- **HB 1 Combating Public Disorder (Fernandez-Barquin)/ SB 484 (Burgess)**

Combating Public Disorder: Authorizes residents of municipality to file an appeal to Administration Commission if municipality makes reduction to budget of municipal law enforcement agency; revises provisions prohibiting obstructing traffic; provides for cause of action against municipality for failing to provide law enforcement protection during riot; revises penalty for assault or battery committed in furtherance of riot or aggravated riot; revises minimum term of imprisonment for battery on law enforcement officer in furtherance of riot; revises prohibition on damaging memorial; revises penalties for burglary or theft during riot & facilitated by riot; revises prohibition on fighting in public place; prohibits specified assemblies from engaging in disorderly & violent conduct; prohibits inciting or encouraging riot; creates affirmative defense to civil action where plaintiff participated in riot or unlawful assembly. Effective Date: July 1, 2021

 - Legislation ([HB 1](#), [SB 484](#)) filed in the House and Senate Wednesday would take up Gov. Ron DeSantis' effort to reduce violence at protests and punish looters that he announced after the racial justice protests of last summer, but were given new impetus by Wednesday's violent temporary takeover of the U.S. Capitol building, the governor said. "In 2020, I proposed legislation to stop violent assemblies, combat rioting and protect law enforcement," DeSantis said in a statement late Wednesday. "In light of today's events at our United States Capitol, we have no time to waste to uphold public safety." The

measures were filed by GOP Rep. [Juan Alphonso Fernandez-Barquin](#) of Miami in the House and fellow Republican [Danny Burgess](#) of Zephyrhills in the Senate.

- The measures, which are yet to be assigned to committees, also are aimed at blocking efforts to "defund" police, by allowing the governor's office to consider objections to proposals to reduce local police department budgets. The legislation also would make it an additional misdemeanor to commit assault during a riot, and a felony to commit a battery during a riot, and set certain minimum mandatory prison terms for violent rioters, and increase penalties for looting. The proposals would also make it a second degree felony to "destroy or demolish any memorial," including statues, tombstones, or plaques. Florida legislative leaders and the sponsors of the bills all cited the violence at the U.S. Capitol on Wednesday in a press release on the filing of the legislation, which DeSantis originally proposed in the aftermath of protests this past summer against police violence. "We respect the right to peacefully protest, but the shameful conduct we witnessed at the United States Capitol today and episodes of violent civil unrest that we have witnessed over the last several months have no place in our democracy," Burgess said in the statement. "This legislation makes it clear that here in Florida criminals who seek to thwart peaceful protests by willfully inciting violence, attacking law enforcement and destroying public or private property will be held accountable." [House-Senate-Governor's Office Press Release / HB 1 / SB 484](#)