



**CITY OF NEW PORT RICHEY**  
RFP24-001: State Lobbying  
Services

To the City of New Port Richey:

Please accept this proposal from The Southern Group of Florida, Inc. (The Southern Group) in response to the Request for Proposals for State Lobbyist Services for the City of New Port Richey (City). In this proposal, The Southern Group offers to provide the highest level of professional services in the advocacy of the City's state governmental programs and initiatives as outlined in the RFP.

With our long history of service to clients, The Southern Group has the experience and expertise to continue to assist the City of New Port Richey in navigating the complexities of securing specific budget priorities, crafting strategies to achieve success in the passage or defeat of legislation, and engaging with the executive and regulatory agencies that are vital in the implementation of your goals. The Southern Group is eager to act as your advocate, providing you with reliable representation and strategic direction to navigate the political landscape in every arena of Florida government.

While The Southern Group truly functions as a team, we will have key personnel serve as the primary contacts for the City. As the firm's local government expert, I will serve as the team lead. Laura Boehmer, Stephanie Cardozo, Seth McKeel and David Shepp will also serve on the City of New Port Richey team. The lobbyist team leads, combined with the talents of all of our partners listed in the attached proposal, will work hard to deliver results for the City. Together, we will serve as an extension of your team.

You have our commitment to represent the City of New Port Richey passionately and ethically. We appreciate your consideration as you make the very important decision of selecting your Florida lobbyists.

Sincerely,

Mike Moore, Partner



## 1.

The Southern Group of Florida, Inc. was established on June 21, 1999, in Tallahassee, FL. With office locations throughout Florida – Tallahassee (1999), Orlando (2005), Tampa Bay (2006), Jacksonville (2009), Miami (2009), Florida Keys (2018), and Broward (2022)—The Southern Group has a statewide presence that is unmatched. The Southern Group is the largest lobbying firm in the state and has been referred to as “the most powerful lobbying firm in Florida” by political reporters in the Sunshine State.

## 2.

- 3D Digital (2023)
- Advantage Behavioral Health Services (2022)
- Aerospace Center for Excellence (2022)
- Affordable Housing Advisors, LLC (2023)
- AF Group Insurance (2018)
- Age of Learning, Inc. (2022)
- Airbnb (2017)
- Ajax Building Company, LLC (2007)
- AJM Conservation and Cattle LLC (2023)
- Altria Client Services, Inc. (2011)
- Ambrosia Treatment Centers/Neuroscience Research Institute (2021)
- American Property and Casualty Insurance Association (2020)
- American Resort Development Association (2022)
- Anderson Columbia Co., Inc. (2015)
- Aon Consulting, Inc. (2009)
- Apple Inc. (2021)
- Aramark Correctional Services, LLC (2023)
- ArchWell Health Medical Group of Florida, PA (2023)
- AIM (2022)
- Association of Florida Colleges, Inc. (2011)
- Assurant, Inc. (2023)
- Atkins North America (2012)
- Aucilla Research Institute, Inc (2023)
- Austin Commercial (2023)
- Inception Fertility Ventures (2022)
- Independence Landing (2022)
- Independent Electrical Contractors, Inc., Florida West Coast Chapter (2015)
- Indian River State College Foundation, Inc. (2022)
- InnovaCare Health, Inc. (2019)
- Intellectual Technology, Inc. (2020)
- International Business Machines Corp. (2019)
- International Paper (2014)
- Invesis US (payable by Invesis UK Ltd) (2023)
- IOA Re, LLC (2018)
- Isograd Inc. (2023)
- Jacksonville Jaguars, LLC (2012)
- Jacksonville University (2021)
- Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens (2019)
- JAX Chamber (2020)
- JAX Executive Jet Center, Inc. (2023)
- JAXUSL LLC (2023)
- JLC Services, Inc. (2023)
- Junior Achievement of Florida Foundation (2022)
- Key West International Airport (2023)
- KidsSPOT (2022)
- Kinder Morgan, Inc. (2023)
- Koch Companies Public Sector, LLC (2013)
- Kofile Technologies, Inc. (2022)

- Baldwin Risk Partners, LLC (2022)
- Bamboo Health (2017)
- Bay County Board of County Commissioners (2020)
- Beck/Sloan Properties (2022)
- Beefree LLC d/b/a Freebee (2023)
- Beep Inc. (2021)
- Beer Industry of Florida (2014)
- Bellini Better World Foundation (2020)
- Bloomboard, Inc. (2023)
- Bolt Solutions, Inc. (2013)
- Bonnet Springs Park Inc. (2023)
- Breakthru Beverage Florida (2001)
- BrightStar Care (2022)
- Broward County (2015)
- BSA Claims Services (2019)
- Cabot Citrus OpCo, LLC (2023)
- Caesars Enterprise Services, LLC (2013)
- Calibrate Health, Inc. (2022)
- Capital Health Plan (2010)
- Capital Trust Agency, Inc. (2008)
- Carvajal Consulting & Management (2023)
- Cengage Learning, Inc. (2020)
- Central Florida Development Council (2019)
- Centurion Group, Inc. (2022)
- CES Consultants (2023)
- CGL Companies (2023)
- Cigna Corporate Services, LLC (2023)
- City of Apalachicola (2019)
- City of Bradenton (2021)
- City of Coral Gables (2017)
- City of Crystal River (2017)
- City of Doral (2023)
- City of Jacksonville Beach (2020)
- City of Lakeland (2015)
- Kyndryl, Inc. (2021)
- Lakeland Regional Health Systems (2014)
- Lake Nona Property Holdings (2007)
- Lake Wales Property Holdings, LLC (2023)
- Lake Wire Owner, LLC (2023)
- Land Developers Consortium, LLC (2023)
- LandSouth Group (Natural Bridge) (2022)
- Lemon Grove Mitigation Bank (2023)
- Lennar Homes, LLC (2023)
- LEO Technologies (2022)
- Liberty Landscape Supply (2021)
- Liberty Mutual Insurance (2023)
- Linebarger Goggan Blair & Sampson LLP (2023)
- LUBA Casualty Insurance Company (2021)
- Management 10 (2023)
- Marina Pointe East Developer, LLC (2023)
- MAXIMUS (2010)
- McKesson Corporation (2007)
- McLane Company, Inc. (2013)
- MCNA Dental Plans (2005)
- Meridium Group, Inc. (2022)
- Metro Development Group, LLC (2021)
- Miami Dade Clerk of Court (2016)
- Miami Shores Village (2021)
- Miami Wilds LLC (2023)
- Mid-Bay Bridge Authority (2023)
- Miller Electric Company (2020)
- Monroe County School District (2022)
- Moore, Inc. (2023)
- Mote Marine Laboratory (2015)
- Museum Of Science And History Of Jacksonville Inc (2021)
- NASCAR, LCC (2016)
- Nassau Financial Group (2023)

- City of Neptune Beach (2023)
- City of Orlando (2007)
- City of Palm Coast (2021)
- City of Panama City (2019)
- City of Plant City (2017)
- City of Port St. Joe (2022)
- City of Sanford (2017)
- City of Sarasota (2020)
- City of St. Petersburg (2022)
- City Rescue Mission, Inc. (2023)
- Clay County Board of County Commissioners (2022)
- Clay County District Schools (2023)
- Coastal Waste & Recycling, Inc. (2023)
- Code.org (2023)
- Connecting Everyone with Second Chances (2021)
- Copart, Inc. (2009)
- CPF MIB, LLC (2023)
- Critical Response Group (2022)
- Crossroads Hope Academy (2023)
- CVS Health (2008)
- Darden, Inc. (2015)
- Daytona State College Foundation, Inc. (2015)
- Deering Park 1, LLC (2023)
- Desoto County Board of County Commissioners (2014)
- DEX Imaging, Inc. (2017)
- Discovery Hobe Sound Investors, LLC (2022)
- Dixie District School Board (2023)
- Dream Finders Homes, LLC (2022)
- DSM Technology Consultants (2015)
- Dwyer Workforce Development (2023)
- Early Learning Coalition of Palm Beach Co (2016)
- Easterseals Florida, Inc. (2021)
- Neal Communities (2023)
- Ocean Reef Club (2019)
- One Call Medical, Inc. (2013)
- One Homecare Solutions LLC (2014)
- One Path Diagnostics, LLC (2022)
- Nelson & Company, Incorporated, EIL NC Main Office Complex, LLC, and 83 Clark Street, LLC (2023)
- New Kings Truck Yard, LLC (2023)
- Next Insurance, Inc. (2021)
- NGA Human Resources, Inc. (2019)
- Nopetro Energy Holdings (2023)
- Northwest Florida State College (2023)
- Nucor Corporation (2018)
- Nutanix, Inc. (2022)
- Ocean Reef Club (2019)
- One Call Medical, Inc. (2013)
- One Homecare Solutions LLC (2014)
- One Path Diagnostics, LLC (2022)
- OnSolve, LLC (2023)
- On Track School (2023)
- Orlando City Soccer Club (2013)
- Orlando Science Center (2015)
- Orlando SED Partners (2023)
- Osceola County (2015)
- OUTFRONT Media LLC (2021)
- Owens Realty Services (2023)
- PAIRIN, Inc. (2023)
- Panasonic Corporation of North America (2022)
- Parmco Airport Hospitality LLC (2023)
- Peace River Center for Personal Development (2015)
- Pearl Holding Group (2018)
- Performance Services (2023)

- Easterseals Northeast Central Florida (2021)
- Easterseals Southwest Florida, Inc. (2021)
- EDC3, LLC (2021)
- Edmentum, Inc. (2021)
- Elite Medical Transport, Inc. (2023)
- Elite Parking Services of America, Inc. (2023)
- Embrace Families, Inc. (2011)
- Embry-Riddle Aeronautical Univ (2011)
- Employer Direct Healthcare, LLC (2023)
- Encompass Health (2018)
- Equifax Inc. (2023)
- Ernst & Young (2002)
- Fairness in Taxation (2017)
- FAV Infrastructure Group LLCv (2023)
- Federal Engineering, Inc. (2020)
- FedEx Corporation (2019)
- Fidelity National Financial, Inc. (2013)
- First Data Government Solutions LP (2020)
- Flagler College (2012)
- Flagship Airport Services, Inc. (2023)
- Florida Cannalytics, LLC (2021)
- Florida Citrus Sports Events Inc. (2023)
- Florida Court Clerks and Comptrollers (2018)
- Florida Economic Development Council (2023)
- Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association (2019)
- Florida Insurance Council, Inc (2021)
- Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority (2023)
- Florida Petroleum Marketers Association (2021)
- Florida Polytechnic University Foundation (2015)
- Florida Prepaid College Foundation, Inc. (2011)
- Florida Pulp & Paper Association (2014)
- Florida Senior Living Association (2022)
- Florida Sheriffs Association (2012)
- Florida SouthWestern State College Foundation (2022)
- Phillips & Jordan Inc (2020)
- Pier B Development (2021)
- Pigeon Key Foundation (2021)
- Pinellas County Board of City Comm (2018)
- Polk County Clerk of Court (2015)
- Polk County Sheriff's Office (2015)
- Smart Horizons Career Online Education (2022)
- Smart Mass Transit Coalition (2023)
- SMG Drones, LLC dba DARIUS (2023)
- Southeastern University (2015)
- Southern Regional Education Board. (2019)
- Styx Holdings Development, LLC (2023)
- Sunset at North Miami LLC (2023)
- Sunset Marina LLC (2021)
- Sunshine Gasoline Distributors, Inc. (2013)
- Sunz Insurance Company (2016)
- SVN Southland Commercial (2023)
- Talitrix LLC (2023)
- Tallahassee Community College Foundation (2012)
- Tall Timbers Research, Inc. (2018)
- Tax Collector's Office for Polk County (2019)
- TECO (2000)
- Tenet HealthSystem Medical, Inc. (2013)
- Territorium Inc (2023)
- Tesla, Inc. (2018)
- The Arrow Advisory Group LLC (2023)
- The Boselli Foundation (2023)
- The Ferber Company (2020)
- The Florida House Experience (2019)
- The Gasparilla Inn & Club (2017)
- The Goodman Company (2023)
- The Lunz Group (2022)
- The Mahaffey Apartment Company (2022)
- The Rudder Club of Jacksonville (2023)

- Florida State Alliance YMCA (2001)
- Florida State College at Jacksonville Fou (2016)
- Florida Trucking Association (2004)
- Florida Turfgrass Association (2023)
- FMR LLC (2009)
- Fort Freedom Inc. (2022)
- FortiFi Financial Inc. (2023)
- Fortitude Group Services, Inc. (2023)
- Friends of Florida Iron and Steel (2021)
- Friends of PHX JAX (2023)
- G.L. Homes, Inc. (2003)
- Garth Solutions, Inc. (2023)
- Gasparilla Island Conservation and Improv (2019)
- Gator Dredging (2023)
- GMF Steel Group (2023)
- Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC (2021)
- Gopher Resource (2021)
- Grain Management, LLC (2019)
- Green Group Holdings, LLC (2022)
- Guardian Fleet Services, Inc. (2023)
- Guidehouse Inc. (2023)
- GuideWell Group, Inc. (2001)
- H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute Hospital (2020)
- Habitat for Humanity of Key West and Lower FL Keys, Inc. (2022)
- Habitat for Humanity of the Middle Keys, Inc. (2022)
- Habitat for Humanity of the Upper Keys, Inc. (2019)
- Harrell's, LLC (2016)
- HeyTutor (2023)
- Hillsborough Community College Foundation Inc. (2015)
- Homes by WestBay, LLC (2023)
- I.M. Sulzbacher Center for Homeless, Inc (2023)
- The School Board of Polk County, Florida (2023)
- The Skills Center, Inc. (2022)
- TLO 12 SunGate, LLC (Timberline Real Estate Partners) (2021)
- Town of Belleair (2023)
- Town of Miami Lakes (2017)
- Town of Southwest Ranches (2013)
- Track Group, Inc. (2023)
- Tropical Audubon Society (2023)
- Turo, Inc. (2023)
- U.S. LawShield Legal Expense Corporation (2023)
- University of Central Florida (2023)
- University of Florida Foundation Inc (2021)
- University of North Florida (2022)
- Urban SDK (2022)
- US Sugar Corporation (2014)
- Verra Mobility (2009)
- Visit Orlando (2023)
- Volusia County (2018)
- Walmart Inc. (2023)
- Walt Disney Parks and Resorts, U.S. (2001)
- Wander Media Company (2023)
- Waypoint Capital Partners Advisors LLC (2023)
- Wells Fargo (2002)
- West Pasco Youth Soccer Assoc Inc DBA Florida Premier FC (2023)
- Whataburger Restaurants LLC (2023)
- Windstream Communications (2021)
- WMG Development, LLC (2023)
- Workday, Inc. (2023)
- Xennial Digital (2023)
- YMP Real Estate Management, LLC (2021)
- Young Circle Property, LLC (2022)

### 3.

Our firm represents local governmental entities throughout the state of Florida, and our success rate speaks for itself. During the 2023 Legislative Session, The Southern Group team helped secure over \$2 billion in new or sustained state funding for our clients. Our lobbying success, demonstrated year after year, is the result of a large team of lobbyists with exceptional relationships across the legislative and executive branches of government in both parties, coupled with great communication with our clients, and a deep subject matter expertise that crosses over all industries and subject areas. Below is a comprehensive list of our clients of similar size to the City, the year we began representing them:

**City of Lakeland, 2001** - The Southern Group has worked closely with the city of Lakeland's legislative delegation members to introduce, pass legislation and fund initiatives covering everything from transportation, infrastructure (roads and airport), utility services (Lakeland Electric, water/wastewater), public safety, economic development (Spring Training Stadium for Detroit Tigers and RP Funding Center), Community Redevelopment Areas & Florida Enterprise Zones, as well as parks & recreation facilities, to name a few. Additionally, The Southern Group has navigated the Local Bill process for the city when statutory changes to the city's Charter are required. Specific appropriation wins include: \$20 million for Spring Training Stadium for Detroit Tigers (2014), \$5.6 million for Lakeland Linder Airport Control Tower (2013), \$2.4 million for Seven Wetlands Park (2016, 2017, 2019, 2023), \$7 million in water quantity infrastructure for Polk Regional Water Cooperative (2021), and \$50,000 towards a Cultural Arts Grant (2023).

**City of Crystal River, 2015** - The Southern Group was hired by the City of Crystal River to secure legislative appropriations and funding through the DEP. Additionally, The Southern Group has assisted with many regulatory issues with both FDOT, DEP, and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission. Since our engagement, we have secured over \$34.3 million in the state budget for the cleanup of Kings Bay and other city projects. During the 2023 legislative session, The Southern Group secured \$3.35 million worth of projects to continue the restoration of Kings Bay and design and permit a new and resilient Crystal River Government Center.

**City of Plant City, 2017** - Throughout our representation of the city of Plant City, The Southern Group has secured over \$15 million for various priority projects, including road expansion, a park, and an aquifer augmentation project. In 2023, The Southern Group secured \$5 million for McIntosh Preserve. A Florida's Communities Trust property, the construction of this project removes 7,620 pounds of Total Nitrogen and 2,280 pounds of Total Phosphorus per year from surface waters, beneficially reuses recycled water to hydrate wetlands and keep them healthy, and provides the public access to wild and scenic Florida. In addition to appropriations, The Southern Group continues to defeat legislation that threatens home rule. In 2018, we defeated a bill that would have impacted the City's ability to conduct elections in the years it preferred.

**City of Palm Coast, 2017** - Since our engagement with the city of Palm Coast, The Southern Group has pioneered various infrastructure and safety projects. This past session, The Southern Group secured nearly \$54.6 million in funding for city roadway widening projects, fire stations and water projects. Specific appropriations funded this year include \$18.4 million for Old Kings Road Widening Phase 2, \$4.5 million for the Belle Terre Parkway Safety Project, \$1,250,000 for the Palm Coast P-1 Weir Replacement, \$5 million for a new fire station, \$25,000,000 for Mantanzas Woods Parkway and \$500,000 for the design of Old Kings Road.

**City of Bradenton, 2021** - Throughout our representation of the City of Bradenton, The Southern Group has worked on various projects to help the City administration by educating them on funding opportunities, building relationships with State agencies, and assisting in crafting appropriation and grant applications. The Southern Group was successful in securing \$500,000 for their priority appropriation request for a sanitary Sewer Lining Program for infiltration/inflow reduction. In addition, The Southern Group assisted the City in securing close to \$3 million in grant funding for drainage improvements in February of 2022. In 2023, The Southern Group secured over \$2.2 million in funding for projects such as Emergency Generators for Lift Stations, Sanitary Sewer Lining Program and 9th Street Park.

# Conflicts of Interest

The Southern Group of Florida, Inc. certifies that we do not have any potential conflicts of interest due to any other clients, contracts, or property interests. No member of our firm's ownership, management, or staff currently have a vested interest which might be considered a conflict of interest.

*Diane Adams*

Diane Adams  
Chief Administrative Officer  
The Southern Group

State of Florida  
County of Leon

Signed by Diane Adams, who is personally known to me, this 11th day of August, 2023.

*Emma Shockley*

Emma Shockley  
Notary Public



5.

N/A

6.

## A connected network of influential experts spanning the Southeast

The Southeast United States, steeped in rich tradition and strong political leanings, has always exerted an out-sized influence on the political history of America. More recently, the influx of people seeking warmer climates and better jobs has boosted the South as an economic power, and the long-range projections for population growth make it an attractive choice for families and businesses.

The Southern Group has offices throughout the South and an extraordinary grasp of its political complexities. With dozens of lobbyists working in this region of the country, The Southern Group affords an unprecedented opportunity for you to wield influence in this vital and growing region.





### Access:

Knowing influential decision makers

### Advocacy:

Knowing precisely what to say

### Influence:

Knowing how to win for clients

Applying calculated influence demands dynamic strategies that keep pace with societal trends and economic outlooks. Survival of the smartest, fastest, and most connected is the new norm.

## We are an influence firm.

When The Southern Group was founded twenty years ago, our firm pioneered the lobbying industry in Florida and beyond. We were the first to offer a unique type of advocacy that was driven by aligning the best and brightest candidates from business, government, and politics, and establishing a network of offices that offer our clients unparalleled access to local and state government.

Over the last two decades we have cultivated and retained a strong team of experts who help our clients build winning strategies, navigate the pathways to power, and connect with decision makers—whether in government or business. We know how to navigate the halls of government because most of us already served in them.

Today, the sharp lines between government, business, and constituencies have blurred. Applying calculated influence demands dynamic strategies that keep pace with societal trends and economic outlooks. Survival of the smartest, fastest, and most connected is the new norm. While lobbying will always be our foundation, tomorrow has reshaped who we are and how we access, advocate, and influence.

With an unparalleled team of experts, a culture of excellence and a legacy of winning, we continue to redefine what it means to be an influence firm.

Tenacious. Disciplined. Strategic.

For over 23 years, our team has successfully championed our clients' interests and built a well-recognized legacy as the premier lobbying firm in the Southeast. To continue this success, we must push beyond the lobbying tactics of the past. Modern advocacy requires a team of experts that will unite experience and connections with innovation, agility, and undeniable strength. Every industry. Every interest. Winning results begins here.

20+

YEARS

50+

LOBBYISTS

10

MARKETS



Our diverse team across the state of Florida makes us a leader in the lobbying industry.

# 1,873

Total number of pieces of legislation filed for consideration during the 2023 Legislative Session (bills, resolutions, PCBs, memorials, etc.)



The Southern Group directly facilitated over \$2 billion in funding for our clients in the FY 2023-2024 budget.

# \$2B+

NEW OR SUSTAINED  
APPROPRIATIONS PROJECT  
FUNDING

During the 2023 Legislative Session...

# 2,333

appropriations project funding requests were submitted by members of the House.

# 2,253

Local Funding Initiative Requests were filed by members of the Senate.

# \$2B+

For the past two fiscal years, we have secured over \$2 billion in funding from the Florida Legislature.

## **THE SOUTHERN GROUP EXCELS AT SECURING FUNDING WITHIN STATE AGENCIES**

There is significant money available within executive agencies that the City should be exploring. The Southern Group will make it a priority to work directly with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), the Department of Emergency Management (DEM), the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the Department of Health (DOH), and the Water Management Districts. We will proactively seek incentives and funding opportunities from these agencies on behalf of the City. Additionally, there are economic incentives and infrastructure funding available from the Governor's Job Growth grant fund in a partnership with local government.

The Southern Group will provide strategic guidance to the City on how best to achieve the City's legislative goals. The scope of work would begin with a consultation with the City Manager and key staff to develop the 2024 legislative priorities. Because of our extensive experience working with local governments and knowledge of leadership priorities, we can advise the City on which projects have the most chance of success. Once the priority issues have been identified, The Southern Group will work to get City officials in front of the appropriate legislative member, committee staff, or agency official to advocate the City's position. Our relationships with budget committee and subcommittee chairman allow for access to discuss your priorities in advance of the Session. The Southern Group is equally equipped to enhance the City's relationships within the executive branch. For executive branch requests, we will work with the necessary state agency leaders to advocate on the City's behalf to help secure grant funding or support a policy proposal. Our team is able to make introductions amongst agency leaders, including but not limited to their grant management, program administration and leadership teams.

## **RELATIONSHIPS ARE KEY**

Relationship building and advocacy are The Southern Group's core competency. Strong relationships with key decision-makers from all over the state are paramount to an effective lobbying operation. We regularly analyze our relationships with public officials and are continually building and improving those relationships with the ever-changing cast of state leaders and officials who appropriate funding, create and implement public policy. Some of those key leaders may include:

- Senate President Kathleen Passidomo
- Senator Debbie Mayfield, Majority Leader
- Senator Ben Albritton, future Senate President (2025/2026) and Chairman of Select Committee on Resiliency
- Senator Jim Boyd, future Senate President (2027/2028), Chairman of Banking and Insurance and Vice Chairman of Agriculture

- Senator Jay Trumbull, future Senate President (2029/2030), Chairman of Commerce and Tourism and Vice Chairman of the Appropriations Committee on Transportation, Tourism and Economic Development
- House Speaker Paul Renner
- Representative Bobby Payne, Chairman of Infrastructure Strategies
- Representative Lawrence McClure, Chairman of State Affairs and Vice Chairman of Appropriations
- Representative Tom Leek, Appropriations Chairman
- Representative Danny Perez, future House Speaker (2025/2026) and Rules Chairman
- Representative Sam Garrison, future House Speaker (2027/2028), Chairman of Health Care Appropriations Subcommittee and Vice Chairman of Infrastructure Strategies Committee
- Representative Jennifer Canady, future House Speaker (2029/2030)

Perhaps most importantly, our team has unmatched relationships with key committee chairmen and ranking members of the legislature from outside of the City's legislative delegation. Some of those key leaders may include:

- Senator Jason Brodeur, Chairman of the Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment and General Government
- Senator Alexis Calatayud, Chairman of Community Affairs
- Senator Nick DiCeglie, Chairman of Transportation
- Representative Thad Altman, Chairman of Agriculture & Natural Resources Appropriations Subcommittee
- Representative Alex Andrade, Chairman of Infrastructure & Tourism Appropriations Subcommittee

Many of our team members graduated out of Florida's executive branch agencies and still maintain great relationships with the leadership teams. Some of those individuals include:

- Secretary Alex Kelly, Florida Commerce
- Adam Callaway, Chief of Staff, Florida Commerce
- Secretary Jared Perdue, FDOT
- Leda Kelly, Chief of Staff, FDOT
- Secretary Shawn Hamilton, DEP
- Anna DeCerchio, Chief of Staff, DEP
- Cody Farrill, Cabinet Affairs Director, Executive Office of the Governor

- Chris Spencer, Director of the Office of Policy and Budget
- India Steinbaugh, Cabinet Affairs Director, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- Isabelle Garbarino, Legislative Affairs Director, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Immediately upon engagement we will begin cultivating champions among the current class of legislative policy leaders, as well as building for the future, setting up long-term relationships with the up-and-coming leaders. As leadership changes in both chambers and in the executive branch, members across Florida will be instrumental in achieving the appropriation and policy goals of the City. This will be something your Southern Group lobbying team will evaluate on a regular basis to make sure we are positioning the City in the most successful way possible.

## 2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The upcoming 60-day Legislative Session will begin on January 9, 2024, with seven Interim-Committee weeks to take place throughout the Fall and Winter of 2023. Similar to other legislative sessions, we expect Home Rule to be under constant attack. Specifically related to development, impact fees and "shock clock" building permits are expected to be addressed. Sovereign immunity, solid waste and utility operations are other policy discussions we expect to make a splash during the 60-day session.

While this proposal outlines an immediate appropriations and policy strategy for the upcoming legislative session, The Southern Group is prepared to work with the City to develop a successful, multi-year advocacy plan.

**October:** By October 15th, the Program Plans help shape agency Legislative Budget Requests (LBRs), which provide breakdowns of how much money agencies require for personnel and other needs.

- Continue building relationships with legislative and executive branch leaders
- Interim Committee Week #2 - October 9-13, 2023 (Senate Only)
- Interim Committee Week #3 - October 16-20, 2023

**November:** Throughout the committee weeks, we will work with bill sponsors and key decision-makers to ensure their buy-in. We will continue to monitor legislation as it gets filed and prepare to review the Governor's recommended budget.

- Interim Committee Week #4 - November 6-9, 2023
- Interim Committee Week #5 - November 13-17, 2023

**December:** The Governor uses the LBRs to make his budget recommendations for each state agency. His proposed budget must be presented 30 days before the beginning of legislative session.

- Begin monitoring bill drafts and filing
- Secure bill sponsors and complete necessary appropriations project request forms
- Interim Committee Week #6 - December 4-7, 2023
- Interim Committee Week #7 - December 11-15, 2023

**January-March:** The 60-day Legislative Session will kick off January 9, 2024 and is expected to conclude "Sine Die" on March 8, 2024. During session, we will continue navigating the budget and bill processes in both chambers, ensuring bills are heard in their respective committee stops, while simultaneously playing defense against unwanted legislation by the City. During the closing weeks of session, budget conference will take place where each chamber negotiates their budget priorities.

- Follow House Rules on filing appropriations request(s)
- Submit Senate Local Funding Initiative Request (LFIR) form(s)
- Navigate the appropriations projects process in each chamber to ensure bills are heard

7.

- > AFFORDABLE HOUSING
- > AGRICULTURE
- > BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS
- > BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
- > CANNABIS
- > CAMPAIGNS
- > ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & INCENTIVES
- > EDUCATION
- > ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT, & SUSTAINABILITY
- > FINANCE & INSURANCE
- > GAMING & LOTTERY
- > HEALTH CARE
- > HOUSING
- > LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT
- > LOCAL GOVERNMENT
- > MANUFACTURING
- > PUBLIC SAFETY
- > RED TIDE
- > REGULATORY ISSUES
- > TAX POLICY
- > TECHNOLOGY & TELECOMMUNICATIONS
- > TOURISM
- > TRANSPORTATION
- > UTILITIES
- > WATER
- > WORKFORCE TRAINING



# THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

We know how to navigate the halls of government because most of our team has already served in them. With hundreds of combined years experience in local and state government, our team of experts are prepared to build winning strategies.

- Agency Assistant and Deputy Secretaries (FDOT, DMS, DOE)
- Agency Chiefs of Staff (AHCA, DMS, DFS, DOE)
- Agency Communications Directors (DEP, DOE, DCF, DOEA)
- Agency Legislative Affairs (AHCA, OIR, DEO, PSC)
- Attorney General
- Chief Lobbyist
- Chief of Staff's to Cities and Counties
- City Commissioner
- Commissioner FDLE
- County Commissioner
- Deputy Chief of Staff (HUD)
- Executive Director of DHSMV
- Florida Insurance Commissioner
- Florida Republican Party Chair
- FSU President (2)
- Governor's Cabinet Affairs Director
- Governor's Chief of Staff
- Governor's Deputy Chief of Staff
- Hospital District Commissioner
- House and Senate Staff Members
- House Appropriations Chairman
- Miami-Dade Republican Party Chairman
- Secretary of AHCA
- Secretary of DMS
- Secretary of FDOT
- Secretary of State
- Senate Minority Leader
- Speaker of the House (2)
- State College President
- Top Fundraisers to Statewide & Local Officials
- Water Management District Board Member

# THE TEAM

## Jacksonville



Stephanie Cardozo



Jim Gilmore



Chris Hagan



Karis Lockhart



Oscar Anderson



Kelly Cohen



Kaley Slattery

## Orlando

## Tampa Bay



Laura Boehmer



Justin Hollis



Seth McKeel



Mike Moore



Sydney Ridley



David Shepp

## South Florida



Oscar Braynon



Edgar Castro



Kate DeLoach



Nelson Diaz



Avery Lopez



Oneca Lowery



Heidi Richards



Crystal Wagar

## Tallahassee



David Altmaier



Brian Bautista



Paul Bradshaw



David Browning



Rachel Cone



Wendy Dodge



Chris Dudley



Mercer Fearington



Nicole Kelly



Henry Mack



James McFaddin



Paul Mitchell



Erin Rock



Clark Smith



Monte Stevens



John Thrasher



Jared Torres



Sheela VanHoose

# KEY PERSONNEL

While all 40 of The Southern Group's Florida lobbyists will be available to advance the goals of the City of New Port Richey as their expertise and relationships are needed, five key partners will serve as the team leads. There will be no subcontractors on this project.

**Mike Moore:** is a former member and Chair of the Pasco County Board of County Commissioners, serving from 2014–2022. Mike brings a deep knowledge of the Tampa area and expertise in helping local governments establish critical infrastructure to better serve the growing area, which will be invaluable to the City. Mike provides expertise to his clients on issues related to local government administration, growth and economic development, transportation, tourism and healthcare. Mike sits on several boards in the Tampa Bay area including BayCare Hospital Wesley Chapel.

**Laura Boehmer:** spent years working inside local government, Laura serves as our local government expert. She has been responsible for securing millions of dollars in state and federal funding for cities and counties and has incredible insight on local government issues. Laura is an active participant in the Florida City and County Managers Association, The Florida Association of Counties, The Florida League of Cities and the Florida Association of Intergovernmental Relations.


**Stephanie Cardozo:** is one of the state's best political campaign strategists through her passion for local politics and formidable campaign results. Stephanie brings in-depth knowledge of the local government landscape and strategy, following a long and successful career campaigning for top Democratic leaders in Florida. Stephanie was an integral member of Donna Deegan's Jacksonville mayoral campaign team, having served as Finance Director. Stephanie is a Board Member and Finance Director for the Purple Playas Foundation.

**Seth McKeel:** is a former appropriations Chairman in the Florida House having served from 2006 – 2014. Having been responsible for writing the State Budget, Seth's expertise in all matters relating to appropriations is invaluable. Seth also spent time in local government, serving on the Lakeland City Commission before being elected to the Florida House of Representatives.

**David Shepp:** brings nearly 20 years of experience representing private and public sector clients. His familiarity with the Sarasota community stems from his 15-year representation of Mote Marine Laboratory, as well as with Feld Entertainment. Dave also has a depth of knowledge on local government issues due to representing the City of Lakeland since 2001. Dave is an active participant of the Florida League of Cities and the Florida Association of Intergovernmental Relations.



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## Mike Moore

Mike Moore joined The Southern Group's Tampa office in 2022 after serving the residents of Pasco County and the larger Tampa Bay Region for nearly a decade. As a past member and Chair of the Pasco County Board of County Commissioners, Mike was instrumental in helping his local government establish critical infrastructure to better serve the growing area. At Southern, Mike provides expertise to clients on issues related to local government administration, growth and economic development, transportation, tourism and healthcare.

Mike began his elected service in Pasco County in 2014 and was subsequently re-elected in 2018. He served as Chair of the Commission in 2017 and 2020, and as Vice Chairman in 2016 and 2019. Throughout his tenure, Mike was involved in several high-profile projects in the Tampa Bay area including the development of Wesley Chapel, named one of the fastest growing areas in the nation. Additionally, Mike helped oversee the completion and opening of the 98,000 sq. ft. Wiregrass Ranch Sports Campus of Pasco County, which now hosts several major regional and national tournaments. Pasco County also saw the addition of a 17,800 sq. ft. recreation center at Wesley Chapel District Park, which includes a 7,000-square-foot playground adapted for children with disabilities under Mike's leadership. Mike played a major role in transforming Pasco County's tourism bureau to emphasize the activity and sporting resources developed throughout the county.

A staunch advocate for transportation projects, Mike worked closely with state legislators and leadership on appropriations for several road infrastructure projects to improve the daily commute of over 600,000 Pasco County residents during his tenure.

Prior to his government service, Mike founded a successful healthcare company which he built from the ground up. He grew the company to be the largest of its kind in the Tampa Bay Region and later sold the company to a private equity group in 2012. In 2014, Mike was appointed to the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council, where he helped tackle regional issues related to transportation, economic development, housing, and emergency preparedness. In 2017, Mike was awarded the community hero award by the now the North Tampa Bay Chamber of Commerce for his herculean efforts to help residents following the devastation caused by Hurricane Irma.

Mike graduated with his bachelor's degree from the University of Central Florida and lives in Wesley Chapel with his wife and three children. Mike sits on several boards in the Tampa Bay area including BayCare Hospital Wesley Chapel. He previously hosted the radio program Reel Politics on AM 860 The Answer and FM 93.7 in the Tampa Bay market.



## Laura Boehmer

A trusted partner in the Tampa office since 2009, Laura Boehmer brings a unique skill set to her private and public sector clients. Laura has almost 20 years of experience working with local, state, and federal governments. Having worked as high-level staff inside local government, Laura focuses much of her practice on assisting city and county governments to achieve their goals. Additionally, private sector clients utilize Laura to help them navigate and succeed with the procurement processes of public sector entities. Laura focuses these efforts with her relationships in a nine-county region which include Citrus, Hernando, Pasco, Hillsborough, Pinellas, Manatee, Sarasota, DeSoto and Polk.


Throughout her 20 years of working in and around government, Laura has developed expertise in numerous areas, including appropriations, local government procurements, economic and business development, education, public and private partnerships, strategic planning, telecommunications, transportation, tourism, and environment.

Laura is unique at The Southern Group as being one of the only partners who has served as high-level staff in local government, namely chief lobbyist for the City of St. Petersburg. In that role, Laura directed the federal appropriations process for the city and succeeded in securing millions of dollars in federal grants and earmarks. In addition to her federal work for the city, Laura was also responsible for developing, strategizing, and advocating for the city's state legislative program, and was instrumental in the creation and implementation of the city's sustainability program. Laura also worked for former Mayor Rick Baker in his roles as chairman of the Century Commission for a Sustainable Florida, vice-chair of the Governor's Action Team on Energy and Climate Change, and group leader of Governor Crist's Transition Team. This experience gave Laura exposure to numerous policy issues affecting municipal governments, including economic development, housing, and procurement, as well as the opportunity to build statewide relationships with politicians and business leaders.

Prior to working for the City, Laura spent five years as legislative staff in the Florida House of Representatives. Laura has worked and volunteered on multiple political campaigns and spent time working with a large corporate PAC. Having analyzed patterns of Congress and maintained communications between a corporate government relations department and PAC members, Laura is well versed in the political efforts of both private and public sectors.

A native of Wisconsin, Laura earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Central Florida. Laura resides in Pinellas County with her husband and their two children. When not at work, you can find Laura spending time with her family either playing golf, snow skiing, or loyally cheering on the Green Bay Packers.

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## Stephanie Cardozo

Stephanie Lewis Cardozo joined the Southern Group after a long and successful career campaigning for top Democratic leaders in Florida. Cardozo has earned a reputation as one of the state's best political campaign strategists through her passion for local politics and formidable campaign results. Most recently, Stephanie was an integral member of Donna Deegan's Jacksonville mayoral campaign team. Serving as Senior Finance Director, Stephanie helped Deegan become the first woman to be elected as the Mayor of Jacksonville.

Stephanie started her political career as an intern in former Governor Charlie Crist's office. She quickly found her passion for local politics and went on to be the Statewide Finance Director at Ruth's List Florida, where she managed donor relations and budgets for local and statewide campaigns.

Stephanie served as Finance Director for Charlie Crist's 2014 gubernatorial campaign and his 2016 congressional campaign before becoming the Deputy Campaign Manager for Chris King's gubernatorial campaign in 2018. In this role, Stephanie led strategy development, managed communications with key stakeholders, and oversaw a multi-million-dollar campaign budget.

Stephanie's experience with gubernatorial campaigns led her to another statewide campaign leadership opportunity in 2018 with Nikki Fried's Agriculture and Consumer Services campaign. After serving as senior advisor and helping Fried get elected, Stephanie moved into the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services as Deputy Chief of Staff and Director of External Affairs.

Stephanie serves as a Board Member and Finance Director for the Purple Playas Foundation. This non-profit organization provides support and resources to families of children with chronic illnesses.

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## Seth McKeel

Seth is a Managing Partner in our Tampa Bay office.

Seth McKeel joined The Southern Group's Tampa office as Managing Partner in 2014 after a long and distinguished career in public service. Seth has developed expertise in numerous areas, including economic and business development, energy, health care, land use and development, marine science, policy, public and private partnerships, telecommunications, transportation, and water.


Seth's political career began in 1999 with his election to the Lakeland City Commission at age 24, its youngest member. This experience in municipal government allowed Seth to hone his expertise in achieving local consensus. Seth was elected to the Florida House of Representatives in 2006 and re-elected until the conclusion of his eight-year term limit in November of 2014. As a legislator, Seth tackled tough issues, including agriculture, energy, higher education reform, and natural resources policy. He chaired the Polk County and Hillsborough County Legislative Delegations for two consecutive years, as well as the larger nine-county Bay Area Legislative Delegation.

A strong commitment to fiscal responsibility earned Seth the trust of House Speaker Will Weatherford, who in 2012 tapped Seth to chair the Appropriations Committee, where he led the Florida House's efforts to balance the \$77 billion budget of the third largest state in the Union. Under Seth's leadership, Florida maintained AAA bond rating and set aside more than \$3 billion in healthy reserves.

Seth proudly serves on the Board of Directors of the Fish and Wildlife Foundation of Florida. Seth is also the founding director of The Schools of McKeel Academy Charter School. Seth was recognized with the YMCA's Servant Leadership Award and is a graduate of Leadership Florida, Leadership Lakeland, and a member of Florida Blue Key.

A graduate of the University of Florida, Seth was awarded the Presidential Medallion, one of the university's highest awards, for his service to UF and higher education. Seth is among the fifth generation in his family to call Florida home. Seth and his wife, Kim, live in Lakeland with their two children.

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## David Shepp

David Shepp joined The Southern Group's Tampa Bay office in 2015. David provides services to businesses, economic development entities, educational institutions, local governments, national companies, and statewide trade associations. Activities include legislative and agency monitoring and advocacy, research and analysis, resource development, and strategic communications.

David began his Florida political career in 1996 as a legislative assistant, learning the intricacies of the Florida legislature and building relationships in Polk County and Tallahassee. In 2000, he managed former Commissioner of Agriculture Adam Putnam's victorious congressional campaign. Between then and now, he led Florida Strategic Group, a full-service government affairs consulting firm, for 14 years, securing tens of millions of dollars in the Florida budget for his clients.

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David continues to work closely with the central and southwest Florida legislative delegations and enjoys strong relationships with leaders at every level of the legislative committee structure, as well as the staff behind the scenes of public policymaking.

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In 2018, David received a commendation from Sheriff Grady Judd for the successful passage of the guardian program element of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act. David has also been recognized as Best State Lobbyist by the National Independent Electrical Contractors Association. Currently, David serves on the Central Florida Development Council Advisory Board, the Lakeland Chamber of Commerce Business Voice, and the Peace River Center Advisory Board.

A Florida native, David has a BA in political science from Florida State University and resides in Lakeland with his wife, Shannon, and their son.

## 8.

### **MONITORING AND REPORTING SERVICES**

The Southern Group strives to keep our clients engaged and informed throughout the year. Our daily newsletter, *What's Trending Florida*, offers a high-level, insider's point-of-view of what is happening at all levels of government. Throughout the interim committee weeks and legislative session, The Southern Group's policy and research team develop bill and committee reports relative to the City's areas of interests, ranging from local government to environment and transportation policy changes. These reports will be sent regularly by your lobby team, typically on Fridays during committee weeks and legislative session. These reports contain a calendar of the events of interest for our client in the upcoming week, hyperlinks to committee reports and a bill tracking report for each piece of legislation. An example of our Local Government Industry Report can be found below.

Upon the conclusion of Legislative Session, our team takes a deep dive into the budget and provides budget summaries by silos for our clients to better understand the funding resources available in the upcoming year(s). An example of our FY 2023-24 transportation, tourism and economic development budget summary can be found in the page below. Our team is also available for in-person briefings after session, providing the City Administration and City Commissioners a summary of the City's legislative agenda. Our team is also available for in-person briefings after session, providing the City Administration and City Commissioners a summary of the City's legislative agenda.

### **LOGISITICS**

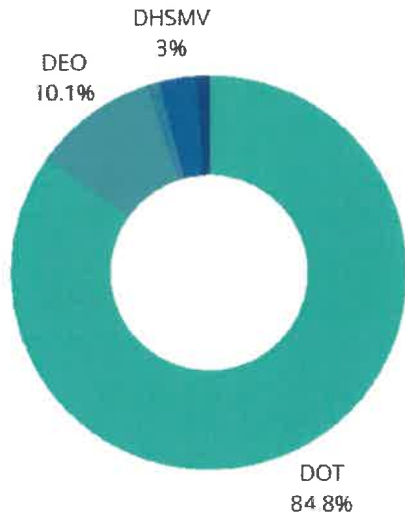
The City will have year-round access to our buildings for meetings and appointments. The Southern Group's 11,000 square foot Tallahassee office is conveniently located a block from the capitol grounds and other major state government buildings. We routinely host large meetings for our clients and their guests, coordinating receptions in our office for clients to engage with legislators and other decision makers.

In addition to our available meeting space, your lobbying team is readily available to assist with the scheduling of meetings with key influential members of the House and Senate, decision-makers within the Executive Branch. Our team is able to assist with meeting preparations including but not limited to drafting leave-behind materials, compiling background information and bios of your meeting attendees, assisting with meals, and assist with travel logistics.

# Transportation, Tourism and Economic Development

## Fiscal Year 2023-24 Budget Overview

*This document is current as of May 5, 2023, and prior to the Governor's final signature of the budget.*



Budget negotiations between the House and Senate yielded a historic \$117 billion budget for Fiscal Year 2023-24, which includes nearly \$11 billion in reserves. The Transportation, Tourism and Economic Development portion of the budget encompasses \$18 billion of the overall budget. Governor DeSantis has until July 1, 2023 to act upon the budget.

### Department of Transportation (DOT)

Budget Total: \$15.2 Billion

#### Work Program Overview:

- State Highway Construction Projects- \$2.8 Billion
- Arterial Highway Construction- \$306 Million
- Highway Maintenance- \$617 Million
- Construction Inspection Consultants- \$583 Million
- Safety Projects- \$251 Million
- Resurfacing- \$1.5 Billion
- Bridge Construction- \$700 Million

#### County Transportation Projects - \$62.7 Million

#### Local Transportation Projects - \$400 Million

Contact your Southern Group lobbyist for the full list of projects.

#### Data Infrastructure Modernization - \$1.5 Million

From the funds in Specific Appropriation 2072, \$1,516,594 is provided to the Department of Transportation for data infrastructure modernization. The funds shall be held in reserve. The department is authorized to submit quarterly budget amendments to request release of funds pursuant to the provisions of chapter 216, Florida Statutes, and based on the department's planned quarterly expenditures. Release is contingent upon approval of a detailed operational work plan and a monthly spend plan that identifies all project work and costs budgeted for Fiscal Year 2023-2024. The department shall submit monthly project status reports to the Executive Office of the Governor's Office of Policy and Budget, the chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, and the chair of the House of Representatives Appropriations Committee. Each status report must include copies of each task order and the progress made to date for each project milestone, deliverable, and task order, planned and actual deliverable completion dates, planned and actual costs incurred, and any project issues and risks.

### **Transportation Disadvantage - \$62 Million**

From the funds in Specific Appropriation 2011, \$6,000,000 shall be used by the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged for an innovative grant program. Funds shall be used to provide competitive grants to community transportation coordinators for innovative service delivery that is more cost efficient for the program and time efficient for the users. Grants may be for projects in which a community transportation coordinator works with a non-traditional service provider, such as a transportation network company or other entity that provides door-to-door, on-demand, or scheduled transportation services. A county may submit one project that encompasses multiple goals or a single goal, such as providing cross-county mobility or reducing service gaps between existing routes and the user's final destination. A county may not receive more than one award and may receive a maximum award of \$750,000. Multiple counties may partner for a grant of up to \$1,500,000 provided that the project includes a goal of providing regional mobility in addition to any other goals. A ten percent local match is required for all grants. All funds shall be used to provide direct services to transportation disadvantaged clients.

### **Moving Florida Forward - \$4 Billion**

Section 215: The nonrecurring sum of \$4,000,000,000 is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the Department of Transportation for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 for the Moving Florida Forward Plan to accelerate the completion of selected road projects and provide traffic congestion relief in the state. The funds shall be placed in reserve. The department shall submit a budget amendment for approval by the Legislative Budget Commission pursuant to the provisions of chapter 216, Florida Statutes. The budget amendment must include a project list, implementation schedule, finance plan, and budget authority necessary to implement the initiative.

### **Improved Safety/Mobility of Residents in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties - \$6 Million**

From funds the Department has retained which were originally appropriated for the bridge replacement contract of US 98 (Pensacola Bay), the Department shall allocate an amount not to exceed \$6 million to projects it has identified that will best improve the safety or mobility of the residents of Escambia and Santa Rosa counties and that have not been funded in the Work Program in the 2023-2024 fiscal year. The Department is authorized to submit budget amendments as needed to amend the Work Program pursuant to the provisions of section 339.135, Florida Statutes, to implement these items.

### **Small County Outreach Program (SCOP) Municipality Transportation Projects - \$9 Million**

From the funds in Specific Appropriation 2026, \$9,000,000 is provided for transportation projects in municipalities pursuant to section 339.2818(7), Florida Statutes.

## **Division of Emergency Management (DEM)**

### **Continued Statewide Emergency and Mass Notification System - \$3.5 Million**

From the funds in Specific Appropriation 2679, \$3,500,000 in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund is provided to continue the statewide emergency and mass notification system with the capability to provide alerts of imminent or actual hazards to all Florida's citizens, businesses, and visitors.

### **Local Government Access to WebEOC - \$2.5 Million**

From the funds in Specific Appropriation 2680, \$2,500,000 in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund is provided to the Division of Emergency Management to provide baseline capabilities allowing local governments' access to WebEOC through the state hosted web application.

### **Maintenance and Implementation of Enterprise Business Solution - \$3 Million**

From the funds provided in Specific Appropriation 2680, \$3,000,000 of nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund is provided to the Division of Emergency Management for the maintenance, operations, planning, and implementation of the agency's enterprise business solution. The Division of Emergency Management shall assess the status of this system and division technology resources to determine and plan the remaining work necessary to complete required application capabilities. Of these funds \$1,900,000 shall be placed in reserve. Release is contingent upon approval of an operational work plan and status report updated on a quarterly basis that identifies the scope of remaining work and includes: (1) a detailed schedule for the design, development, and deployment of required functionality; and (2) a detailed monthly spending plan that includes all estimated and actual project costs budgeted for Fiscal Year 2023-2024. Upon submission of the operational work plan and status report, the department is authorized to submit quarterly budget amendments requesting release of funds pursuant to the provisions of chapter 216, Florida Statutes, and based on the division's quarterly planned expenditures.

### **Emergency Management Critical Facility Needs - \$90.5 Million**

Contact your Southern Group Lobbyist to see the full list of projects.

### **Public Hurricane Shelter Retrofit Project - \$3 Million**

Funds in Specific Appropriation 2710 from the Grants and Donations Trust Fund reflect the transfer of \$3,000,000 of mitigation funds from the Hurricane Catastrophe Fund pursuant to section 215.555(7), Florida Statutes. These funds shall be used to retrofit existing facilities used as public hurricane shelters as specified in section 215.559(1)(b), Florida Statutes

### **Emergency Management and Procurement**

The Division of Emergency Management must submit quarterly status reports on the outstanding obligations for each federally declared disaster event to the Executive Office of the Governor's Office of Policy and Budget, the chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, and the chair of the House of Representatives Appropriations Committee no later than the 15th day of the month following the end of a quarter. Based on the most recent quarterly report, the division must also provide an allocation of funding by appropriation category and funds needed to meet these obligations for the budget request year. In order to properly store, manage, maintain, and deploy emergency supplies, the Division of Emergency Management, in consultation with the Department of Health, shall issue Invitations to Negotiate (ITN) for a turnkey stockpile solution that includes the lease, buildout, and operation of one warehouse facility that serves as the hub facility for the storage and movement of emergency supplies in Florida during emergency activations and responses. ITN responses must be from experienced providers who can demonstrate successful past performance of projects similar in size, scope, and complexity. Respondents must have at least five years of direct experience in receiving, storing, managing, and distributing state or federal stockpiles. The division shall select and recommend to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the ITN response that has the best value for the state for final approval. ITN responses shall include:

1. An initial assessment of the existing inventory of supplies that includes a review of the condition of supplies, proper disposal of spoiled or renewal or disposal of expired supplies, sale of unnecessary supplies, onboarding of supplies into an inventory and quality management system, and relocation of supplies into the appropriate environment in the new hub facility.
2. The lease and buildout of the hub facility with the capability to store and manage emergency supplies, including food and water, health and medical supplies, and medical equipment such as personal protective equipment, durable medical equipment, and medical countermeasures, in the correct environment with appropriate security, temperature, and humidity controls and in compliance with industry licensing and regulatory standards. Facility square footage, including warehouse space and surface lot area, shall be sufficient to access, maintain, inventory, and distribute such supplies.
3. A staffing plan that ensures facility staff have appropriate knowledge, skills, and training to maintain, organize, identify, and package all types of emergency supplies, including medical equipment. Staffing plans must demonstrate how staff will utilize the inventory and quality management system in day-to-day operations to support the division. The plans must identify the use and quantity of division staff and staff of the ITN respondent, as applicable, necessary to operate the hub facility. All staff, whether of the ITN respondent or the division, shall operate at the direction of the division.
4. An inventory and quality management system that can track and trace, in real-time, the state's emergency supplies. The system must be able to track the number, type, location, and expiration date of supplies; facilitate the regular testing, maintenance, and rotation of supplies and equipment; and provide reporting to assist in the state's emergency response and recovery.
5. Identification of the one-time and on-going costs associated with site selection and preparation, design and construction, retrofitting or renovations, leasing, utilities, inventory assessment and relocation, software, product maintenance or rotation, and staffing, as appropriate.

## **Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO)**

Budget Total: \$1.8 Billion

### **State Economic Enhancement And Development Grant Funding To Panhandle Counties - \$5 Million**

From the funds in Specific Appropriation 2342, \$5,000,000 in recurring funds from the State Economic Enhancement and Development Trust Fund is provided as grant funding for the following Florida panhandle counties to facilitate the planning, preparing, and financing of infrastructure projects in these rural communities: Calhoun, Gadsden, Holmes, Jackson, Liberty, and Washington Counties. Eligible uses of these funds include roads or other remedies to transportation impediments; storm water systems; water or wastewater facilities; and telecommunications facilities and broadband facilities. Grant funds are provided pursuant to section 288.0655(7), Florida Statutes.

### **CareerSource Florida Temporary Cash Assistance Analysis - \$1 Million**

From the funds, \$1,000,000 in nonrecurring funds from the Special Employment Security Administration Trust Fund are provided to CareerSource Florida for the analysis of options and development of an implementation plan for the Legislature to address benefits cliffs faced by families receiving temporary cash assistance or school readiness program services. At a minimum, the work product shall involve: 1. Financial modeling and a sensitivity analysis of standards for localized eligibility by county for continuing receipt of temporary cash assistance and for transitional services for former temporary cash assistance recipients. 2. Identification of best practices for local workforce development boards' case management and engagement with families who are currently receiving or transitioning from receipt of temporary cash assistance and school readiness program services. 3. Recommending a standardized tool for evaluating the needs of temporary cash assistance recipients for transitional assistance and other support services to achieve self-sufficiency. CareerSource Florida shall identify and analyze the implementation requirements for, interaction between, and fiscal impact and effectiveness of such options. The implementation plan shall include action steps, resource requirements, recommended assessment instruments, and identification of necessary policy and statutory changes. At a minimum, CareerSource Florida shall work with the local workforce development boards, the Department of Economic Opportunity, the Department of Children and Families, the Department of Education, and other relevant state agencies, which shall provide information and assistance as requested. The analysis and implementation plan shall be submitted to the Executive Office of the Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House of Representatives by October 1, 2023.

### **Third-Party Review of Incentive Awards - Approx. \$1 Million**

From the funds, the Department of Economic Opportunity must contract for an independent third-party to verify that each business that receives an incentive award under an economic development program satisfies all of the requirements of the economic development agreement or contract, including job creation numbers, before a payment may be made under such agreement or contract. These comprehensive performance audit functions must include reviewing: 100 percent of all incentive claims for payment, including audit confirmations; the procedures used to verify incentive eligibility; and the department's records for accuracy and completeness. The independent third-party contractor must perform all functions and conduct all of the activities necessary to verify compliance with the performance terms of economic development incentive agreements or contracts.

### **VISIT FLORIDA - \$80 Million**

From the funds in Specific Appropriation 2357, \$5,000,000 is provided for VISIT FLORIDA to develop marketing for nature-based tourism and trail towns.

### **Space Florida - \$8.5 Million**

Operating Funds.

### **Space, Defense, and Rural Infrastructure from General Revenue Fund - \$25 Million**

From the funds in Specific Appropriation 2342, \$5,000,000 in recurring funds from the State Economic Enhancement and Development Trust Fund is provided as grant funding for the following Florida panhandle counties to facilitate the planning, preparing, and financing of infrastructure projects in these rural communities: Calhoun, Gadsden, Holmes, Jackson, Liberty, and Washington Counties. Eligible uses of these funds include roads or other remedies to transportation impediments; storm water systems; water or wastewater facilities; and telecommunications facilities and broadband facilities. Grant funds are provided pursuant to section 288.0655(7), Florida Statutes.

### **Florida Job Growth Grant Fund - \$75 Million**

### **Economic Development Toolkit - \$25 Million**

### **Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) - \$25 Million**

### **Low Income Housing Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) - \$16 Million**

### **Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Grant Programs - \$100 Million**

### **State Small Business Credit Initiative - \$170 Million**

### **Law Enforcement Recruitment Bonus Program - \$20 Million**

## Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV)

Budget Total: \$578.6 Million

### Florida Highway Patrol Training Academy Driving Range - \$9 Million

### Acquisition of Motor Vehicles - \$16.75 Million

### Florida Highway Patrol Communication Systems - \$6.75 Million

### Continued Motorist Modernization Project - \$10 Million

From the funds in Specific Appropriations 2778 and 2780, \$8,983,740 of nonrecurring funds from the Highway Safety Operating Trust Fund and \$1,010,000 of nonrecurring funds from the Gas Tax Collection Trust Fund are provided to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles for Phase 2 of the Motorist Modernization project. The department shall submit quarterly updates to its operational work plan and spending plan, quarterly independent verification and validation assessments, and quarterly project status reports to the Executive Office of the Governor's Office of Policy and Budget, the chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, and the chair of the House of Representatives Appropriations Committee. Each status report must include progress made to date for each project milestone, deliverable, and task order, planned and actual deliverable completion dates, planned and actual costs incurred, and any project issues and risks.

## Department of State (DOS)

Budget Total: \$220.5 Million

### Cultural And Museum Grants - \$32.4 Million

From the funds in Specific Appropriation 3265, \$32,400,000 in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund is provided for the Department of State 2023-2024 Cultural and Museum Grants General Program Support ranked list.

### Cloud Solution for Corporate Registry System

SECTION 210. The unexpended balance of funds from the General Revenue Fund appropriated to the Department of State in Specific Appropriation 3170A, of chapter 2022-156, Laws of Florida, shall revert and is appropriated to the department for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 to competitively procure a deliverables-based, cloud-hosted solution for the replacement of the current corporate registry system. The procurement must be awarded by competitive solicitation pursuant to section 287.057, Florida Statutes. These funds shall be placed in reserve. Upon submission of the unexecuted contract, the department is authorized to submit quarterly budget amendments to request release of funds being held in reserve pursuant to the provisions of chapter 216, Florida Statutes, and based on the department's planned quarterly expenditures. Release is contingent upon the approval of a detailed operational work plan and a monthly spend plan that identifies all related work and costs budgeted for Fiscal Year 2023-2024. The department shall submit quarterly project status reports to the Executive Office of the Governor's Office of Policy and Budget, the chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, and the chair of the House of Representatives Appropriations Committee. Each status report shall include progress made to date for each project milestone, deliverable, and task order; planned and actual completion dates; planned and actual costs incurred; and any project issues and risks. This section is effective upon becoming a law.



In Session, Week 9

***10 HEADLINE ISSUES FROM THE***

**2023**

**SESSION**

***READ THE REPORT***

presented by **THE SOUTHERN GROUP**

**BILL HIGHLIGHTS**

## **Land Use and Development Regulations ([SB 1604](#))**

The proposed legislation seeks to make changes to regulations regarding comprehensive plans, including: revising data sources used in consideration of the comprehensive plan and plan amendments; increasing the length of required planning period to 10 years, from 5 years, and to 20 years, from 10 years; removing a list of indicators a local government must consider relating to urban sprawl, instead requiring local governments to discourage urban sprawl by more effectively planning for future growth; revising the comprehensive plan evaluation and appraisal process to ensure timely updates; and other changes. The Senate bill passed along partisan lines last week by a vote of 27-13. The bill was approved on a 75-34 vote by the House and heads to the Governor's desk.

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## **FL Retirement System/ Special Risk Class Retirement Date ([SB 7024](#))**

Legislation that seeks to reform two existing retirement plans offered by the Florida Retirement System (FRS) unanimously passed in both chambers this week. The bill will now head to the Governor's desk. Specifically, the legislation aims to increase the employer-funded allocations to investment plan accounts by 1 percent for each membership class within the FRS Investment plan and increase the monthly Retiree Health Insurance Subsidy. The legislation also seeks to revise criteria surrounding the FRS Pension plan by amending the normal retirement date for members of the Special Risk Class to 25 years of creditable service, or age 55, instead of 30 years of creditable service, or age 60 assuming vesting requirements have been met.

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## **Term limits for School Board Members ([HB 477](#))**

The filed legislation seeks to control the length of service for a school board officials. Both bills seek to reduce the length of the term limit for a school board member from 12 years to 8 years, aligning school board terms with others provided for in the Florida Constitution. The Senate bill originally sought to create a term limit of 8 years for county commissioners but eventually the House prevailed. Currently, neither the Florida Constitution nor the Florida Statutes provide term limits for county commissioners. The House version, sponsored by Rep. Alex Rizo, passed the House and moved to the Senate, where it passed the Senate with a

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## **Local government comprehensive plans ([SB 540](#))**

The bill authorizes the prevailing party in a comprehensive plan or plan amendment challenge to recover attorney fees and costs, including reasonable appellate attorney fees and costs, without having to show that the non-prevailing adverse party participated in the proceeding for an improper purpose. It also resolves the split between the First and Second District Courts of Appeal by clarifying that the scope of the circuit court's review in a development order challenge. The bill has passed both chambers, most recently by a 87-30 vote in the House.

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## **Ethics requirements for public officials ([SB 774](#))**

Companion bills in the House and Senate make a wide array of changes to the state's Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees. Changes are proposed to annual disclosures, civil fines for violations, late fees and a host of other requirements. The bill has cleared both chambers, most recently the House by a 113-2 vote.

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# PRICE PROPOSAL

The Southern Group is the perfect investment for enhancing the City of New Port Richey's mission. The Southern Group proposes a 3-year contract with a monthly retainer of \$3,600, for state executive lobbying services.



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