

August 2022 Activity Report

This last month Florida held their primary elections on August 23rd. About 1.3M Floridians were voted out of 14M registered. Last week, voter turnout in several counties in the greater Tampa Bay region exceeded the statewide average. In Sarasota County, the 37% turnout was among the highest in the state. Supervisor of Elections Ron Turner says it was also the county's largest turnout for a primary in 30 years. Several hotly contested races for school board fueled the higher turnout.

In Pinellas and Manatee counties, the 31% turnout was well above the statewide average of about 26%. In Hillsborough and Pasco counties, one of every four registered voters cast a ballot in last week's elections. That is about the same as primaries two years ago, despite the placement of school funding referendums on the ballots for both counties. In Polk, only 24% of voters cast a vote. But Republicans outpolled Democrats by a margin of 52 to 38%. Two of the four Republicans running for Polk School Board won, with another entering a runoff.

In total, Florida had around 11% total turnout for Primary night.

Breakdown of the races.

Two key Congressional primaries took place in Tampa Bay. In CD 15, former Secretary of State Laurel Lee won the Republican nomination, beating Representative Jackie Toledo and Senator Keli Stargel, among others. Lee will face Democrat Alan Cohn in November. In CD 13 in Pinellas County, Anna Paulina Luna beat a crowded field for the open seat, formerly held by Democrat Charlie Crist, but after redistricting, now leans more Republican. She now faces Democrat Eric Lynn.

Below is an overview of other races in Tampa Bay. Not all candidates had primaries. A universal primary took place for some races without candidates from both parties, which meant that last night's winner was elected to that seat.

Federal

Val Demings won the Democratic primary for U.S Senate and will challenge incumbent Republican Senator Marco Rubio.

Incumbent U.S Reps Kathy Castor, Vern Buchanan, and Gus Bilirakis won their primaries. Castor will face James Judge, who won the Republican primary last night. Congressman Bilirakis won with 80% of the vote. Congressman Dan Webster and Scott Franklin were successfully reelected due to no opposing party candidate.

Statewide

Aramis Ayala won the Democratic primary and will face incumbent Attorney General Ashley Moody. Senate President Wilton Simpson won the Republican primary for Commissioner of Agriculture and will now face Democrat Naomi Esther Blemur.

Florida Senate

SD 20 – Jim Boyd won his universal primary and has been reelected with almost 80% of the vote.
SD 22 – Senator Joe Gruters won the universal primary and has been successfully reelected.

Florida House

Pasco

HD 53 – Jeff Holcomb won the Republican primary for the Pasco/Hernando seat.
HD 55 – Kevin Steele won the Republican primary.
HD 56 – Republican Brad Yeager won the universal primary and was elected to fill outgoing Rep. Amber Mariano’s seat.

Pinellas

HD 58 - Kim Berfield won the Republican Primary, defeating Jason Holloway
HD 59 – Pinellas Berny Jaques won the Republican Primary, defeating Jennifer Wilson
HD 62 – Rep. Michele Rayner won the Democratic Primary, defeating former Representative Wengay Newton

Hillsborough

HD 65 – Karen Pittman narrowly won the Republican primary, with only three hundred votes more than her competitor Jake Hoffman
HD 68 – Incumbent Rep. Lawrence McClure won the Republican primary
HD 69 – Danny Alvarez won the Republican primary and will now face incumbent Democrat Rep. Andrew Learned

County Commission

Hillsborough County Commission - Michael Owen won the universal primary and has been elected to District 4. In District 7, Republican Joshua Wostal won the Republican primary to challenge incumbent Comm. Kim Overman.

In Pinellas, Commissioner Dave Eggers won the universal primary and has been re-elected to the county commission. Brian Scott won the Republican primary for district two and will now face incumbent Comm. Pat Gerard.

Seth Weightman won the Republican Primary for District 2 of the County Commission in Pasco. In District 4, Gary Bradford beat incumbent Commissioner Christina Fitzpatrick for the Republican nomination.

School Board

In Pinellas, Lisa Cane and Caprice Edmond were reelected. Districts 3 and 6 will go to a runoff election in November as no candidates received more than 50% of the votes.

In Pasco, Cynthia Armstrong and Megan Harding were reelected to the school board. District one will go to a runoff.

Other notable races across the state

Max Frost unexpectedly won the Democratic primary for Congressional District 10 in central Florida. The 25-year-old outsider beat State Sen. Randolph Bracy and former three-term U.S Rep. Alan Grayson to win.

State Senator Aaron Bean won the Republican primary in Congressional District 4 with 68% of the vote. State Senator Annette Taddeo won the Democratic Primary for CD 27 in South Florida. She will challenge incumbent Congresswoman Maria Elvira Salazar.

Rep. Ralph Massullo was reelected to HD 23. In Polk County, Rep. Josie Tomkow was reelected, and Jennifer Canady, the wife of Supreme Court Justice, was elected to HD 50.

Democratic Rep. Geraldine Thompson has been elected to Senate District 15, defeating fellow Democratic Rep. Kamia Brown in the open primary. Democratic Senator Shevrin Jones was reelected to the South Florida SD 34.

In HD 29, State Rep. Webster Barnaby won with a 30-vote lead over Rep. Elizabeth Fetterhoff. Rep. Daisy Morales lost to newcomer Rita Harris in the HD 44, with Harris successfully elected. In Northwest Florida, Shane Abbott was elected to House District 5, and Griff Griffiths was elected to HD 6.

Below are some articles that may be of interest. Please let us know if you have any questions.

[Florida election roundup: Charlie Crist wins, aims DeSantis – Tampa Bay Times](#)

[Florida, local primary election results: governor, county races, more – Tampa Bay Times](#)

[Tampa Bay's 5 Congressional seats were up Tuesday: Here is what happened – Tampa Bay Times.](#)

Hillsborough County to Look at Apprenticeship Program

The item is on Thursday's September 8th Board of County Commission meeting. Direct the County Attorney's Office and County Administration to review and advise on options for a possible apprentice program targeting ex-offenders aimed at helping them get the training needed to land jobs and explore partnering with the City of Tampa, and 2) direct staff to review and advise on the possibility of creating incentives to companies bidding on specific county contracts by awarding points during the procurement process related to the hiring of ex-offenders, and 3) direct staff to advise if there are ways to strengthen Hillsborough County's hiring practices described to ex-offenders.

Commissioner Gwen Myers has prioritized this in collaboration with Abe Brown Ministries. This follows as the City also looks to establish a Ban the Box ordinance.

Tool Tax Holiday Started This Past Weekend

A new state tax holiday on power tools, work equipment, and trade textbooks and codebooks, such as for those studying to be plumbers or engineers, starts Saturday in Florida and runs to Sept. 9. Work boots, toolboxes, shop lights, and safety equipment are among the items covered by the "Skilled Worker Tools Sales Tax Holiday." Those who benefit from the tax break are expected to save about \$12 million.

NCCI Calls for Drop in Workers Comp Premiums

The National Council on Compensation Insurance advises an 8.4% reduction on new and renewed workers' compensation policies beginning next year based on data from 2019 and 2020. The national insurance organization submitted a report to the Florida Office of Insurance Regulation following a consistent decline in wage replacement claims from injured employees seeking workers' compensation benefits. State Insurance Commissioner David Altmaier and his actuaries plan to review the filing and hold a public hearing on the new recommendations soon.

Climate, Health care, and Tax Bill

On Tuesday, August 16th, President Biden signed a historical [climate, health care, and tax bill](#), saying his administration is in "a season of substance" after the legislation lingered on his domestic agenda for more than a year. The package aims to make sweeping changes to significant parts of the U.S. economy, investing \$300 billion in climate and energy initiatives, limiting prescription drug prices, and imposing a

new minimum tax on large corporations. The legislation is also projected to reduce the federal deficit, in a move that Democrats pitched as a critical element in slowing inflation.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 is a reduced version of the Biden administration's proposed Build Back Better Act.
- At the end of a decade, according to Democrats, the U.S. will realize a deficit reduction of more than \$292 billion while lowering inflation, investing in energy production, and reducing healthcare costs.
- Of the \$725 billion in revenue raised, the legislation calls for \$313 billion from a 15% corporate AMT.
- The legislation is the most significant investment in climate and energy in the U.S.
- Whether the legislation reduces inflation is the point of most contention, with proponents saying it will at least have a modest effect in coming years and opponents saying it will have no effect at all.

Plant City Building Fee Schedules

They worked with Plant City to redo their permit fee schedule. They had been assessing fees based on the value of the project, which is illegal. As a result, we collaborated with them to completely overhaul their schedule.

Rules

Notice of Proposed Rule

Department: Department of Business and Professional Regulation

Division: Departmental

Rule No.: 61-35.003

Purpose: The purpose and effect are to amend Rule 61-35.003, F.A.C., to adopt legally binding application forms for the Board of Accountancy.

https://www.flrules.org/gateway/View_Notice.asp?id=26179347

The following events took place in August 2022.

Date	Name	Purpose	Follow Up
8/2	FSA Touch Base Call	Get up to speed with Jared and Michael	
8/18	Attended FSA Top Golf		
8/18	Attended FSA Reception/Dinner	Introductory to RSA, brought Rep. Overdorf to come and speak	

		about liens and bonds bill.	
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Future Meetings

Date	Name	Purpose
9/8	FSA Officer Monthly call with RSA	
9/9	Trina Kramer, House Judiciary	Introductory
9/9	Booter Imhof, Staff Director, Senate Reg. Industries	Introductory
9/15	Robert Babin, Senate Finance and Tax Staff Director	Introductory
9/15	Tom Cibula, Senate Judiciary Staff Director	Introductory
10/4	Kurt Hamon, House Commerce Staff Director	Introductory

- Participated in an intro call with Michael Moyer and Jared Simon on 8/2
- Sent Plant City new permit fee schedule
- Provided updates on the City of Tampa Ban the Box Ordinance and Hillsborough County School District apprenticeship ordinance. As they may try to use surety to enforce.
- Registered to represent FSA at the state level
- Invited Board to attend Laurel Lee, candidate for Congressional District 15, campaign Kick-Off on 6/17
- 6/21 Worked with Jared on Hillsborough County Compliance Bonds
- Scheduling Introductory meetings for Officer Board with Office of Insurance Regulation and Chief Financial Officer’s office in Tallahassee.