

November 2022 Activity Report

On November 8th over 2.7 million Floridians cast their vote on Tuesday's election, with a turnout of over 52%. Below is an overview of the election results.

A Red Wave: Republicans Win Big Across the State

Republicans enjoyed a red wave in Florida in Tuesday's election across all levels of Government. Republicans outvoted Democrats in Hillsborough and Pinellas by 3%, a trend that was seen across the state as Democrats failed to rally their voter base.

Gov. Ron DeSantis beat former Gov. Charlie Crist by almost a 20% margin, a significant increase from his 2018 election which was so close it required a recount. His win is the largest margin by a Republican candidate for governor in modern Florida history. [Tampa Bay Times](#)

All Cabinet positions are now held by Republicans: AG Ashley Moody and CFO Jimmy Patronis were reelected, and former Senate President Wilton Simpson was elected to Commissioner of Agriculture. [Tampa Bay Times](#)

Republicans in the Florida House and Senate took the supermajority, with the Senate capturing 28 seats out of 40 and the Florida House capturing 86 of 120. The House map included five races where House Democrats' campaign arm put up contested fights, and they lost four of them. Incoming House Minority Leader Fentrice Driskell, a Tampa Democrat who ran House campaigns during the 2022 midterms, raised \$5 million, a record sum for the House Democratic caucus. But the caucus was overwhelmed by Speaker Paul Renner's campaign operation and the enormous red wave that hit Florida and swept both DeSantis and Rubio to double digits victories.

Two key seats were flipped in Tampa Bay: Republican Jay Collins unseated Democrat Sen. Janet Cruz, and Republican Danncy Alvarez unseated Democrat Rep. Andrew Learned. In Tallahassee, incumbent Democratic Sen. Lorraine Ausley lost to former FSU football player Republican Corey Simon. [Florida Politics](#). In South Florida, Republican Alexis Calatayud won the open SD 28, in a district that voted for President Biden in 2020. Among the losses for Democrats was Rep. Carlos Guillermo Smith (D-Orlando), who was one of the caucus' most vocal members. Republicans spent more than \$1.5 million in TV ads going after Smith, a huge amount for a statehouse seat. [Florida Politics](#)

Republican U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio beat back a challenge from U.S. Rep. Val Demings to win a third term in Washington with more than 57% of the vote. In FL Congressional District 13, Republican Anna Paulina Luna defeated Dem Eric Lynn with 53% of the vote, in the seat held by former Gov. and Congressman Charlie Crist, prior to redistricting. In FL-15, former Secretary of State and Republican, Laurel Lee, defeated Democrat Alan Cohn, in the Congressional District that includes Hillsborough, Pasco, and Polk counties. [Tampa Bay Times](#)

Florida Voters Reject Constitutional Amendments

None of the three constitutional amendments managed to surpass the 60% approval threshold, and therefore will not be enacted. [Tampa Bay Times](#)

Amendment 1 would have prevented a property's assessed value from increasing after improvements were made to help combat flood damage. The proposal would give certain homeowners a tax break when they update their home to make it less susceptible to flood damage but as of last night, only 57% of voters approved the measure. Amendment 2 asked voters whether to repeal the Constitution Revision Commission. The CRC, which meets every 20 years, is a 37-member commission that suggests constitutional amendments that go directly to the ballot for a public vote. The proposed amendment received 54% of voter approval. Amendment 3 asked Floridians to consider an additional homestead property tax exemption for those who work in critical public service jobs. This achieved only 58% of voter's approval.

Lawmakers are gearing up to return to Tallahassee next week for Organizational Session, which will take place on Tuesday, November 22nd at 10 am. During this event, Senate President Kathleen Passidomo will formally take the reins, along with her counterpart in the House, Speaker Paul Renner. Passidomo and Renner will formally preside over their respective chambers for the next two Sessions.

House and Senate Leadership Teams Announced

On November 22nd, both President Passidomo and Speaker Renner unveiled their key leadership teams. Speaker Renner yesterday announced the appointment of Representative Michael Grant as Majority Leader for the upcoming Legislative term. As Majority Leader, Representative Grant will be responsible for guiding the Republican Conference and shepherding the Republican agenda throughout Committee Weeks and the Legislative Session. Speaker Renner said, "The best leaders in our process excel at guiding members through the challenges and opportunities they face during their time of service in Tallahassee. Representative Grant's skill in moving bills through the legislative process and management of floor debate positions our 85-member supermajority for success." Representative Grant represents District 75, which includes parts of Sarasota and Charlotte County. He was recently re-elected to his fourth consecutive term and previously served as Majority Leader from 2020-2022. Speaker Renner also recommended Representative Chuck Clemons to the House leadership team as Speaker pro tempore for the upcoming Legislative term. Representative Clemons represents the people of House District 22, which includes Gilchrist, Levy, and part of Alachua County. He was recently re-elected to his fourth consecutive term. Recently, Representative Clemons served as Deputy Majority Leader and Majority Whip from 2020-2022.

On the Senate side, legislative veterans will serve in the top roles of the Senate Republican leadership team during the upcoming year, with Panhandle Sen. [Doug Broxson](#) tapped to lead the budget-writing Appropriations Committee and Sen. [Debbie Mayfield](#), R-Melbourne, named to the powerful Rules Committee chairmanship. Senate President-designate [Kathleen Passidomo](#) on Monday named six long-serving members to help her lead the chamber, which will have a supermajority following last week's elections. The group includes members that are among the more conservative members of the caucus, but experience in the Legislature is the main common element in the choices. The Naples Republican

chose Sen. [Dennis Baxley](#), R-Lady Lake, to serve as Senate President Pro Tempore. While he came into the Senate with Passidomo in 2016 after having served with her in the House since 2010, Baxley also served in the House previously from 2000 to 2007, giving him nearly two decades of experience in the Legislature. Serving as Pro Tempore will be a familiar role for Baxley, who had the same role under former House Speaker Marco Rubio. Palm Coast Republican Sen. [Travis Hutson](#) was tapped as Chairman of the Committee on Fiscal Policy for the 2022-24 term. Hutson is currently the longest continuously serving senator, having won a special election in 2015. He also ran for Passidomo's role as Senate President but was unsuccessful. Passidomo said the choice of Broxson to lead the crafting of the new budget would build on his past work as the top education budget writing in the chamber.

Organizational Session

During this time lawmakers met for Organization Session, where the new members and leadership were officially sworn in. Senate President Passidomo and Speaker Paul Renner took the gavel to preside over their chambers for the first time.

In Speaker Renner's [chamber address](#), he highlighted some of his priorities. This includes hurricane recovery and resiliency, addressing inflation, housing affordability, respecting parental rights, and expanding educational freedom, and protecting against the use of Environmental, Social, and Governance Goals (ESG) being used in Florida's credit rating.

Speaker Renner has made several changes to the [committee structure](#), most notably adding a Select Committee on Hurricane Resiliency and Recovery. He also selected Rep. Michael Grant to serve as Majority Leader, and Rep. Chuck Clemons as Speaker Pro Tempore. Yesterday he announced his [committee leadership](#), which includes Rep. Tom Leek as Appropriations Chair, Rep. Lawrence McClure as State Affairs Chair, and Rep. Fine as Health & Human Services Chair, and Rep. Massullo as Education & Employment Chair.

Senate President Passidomo noted in [her speech](#) that hurricane recovery and affordable housing will be her top priorities. President Passidomo added that protecting family values and ensuring that parents have a say in every decision affecting their child is another priority, as is expanding the state's Wildlife corridor to connect it to the Florida Trail System. President Passidomo announced her [leadership team](#) last week, with Senator Dennis Baxley as Senate President Pro Tempore, Senator Hutson as chair of the Committee on Fiscal Policy, Senator Mayfield as Rules Chair, Senator Broxson as Appropriations Chair, Senator Albritton as Majority leader.

Senator Lauren Book and Representative Fentrice Driskell were elected the Minority Leaders of their chambers.

The Legislature is set to meet again on December 12th for the first committee week and a special session on hurricane relief and property insurance. During this Special Session, it is rumored that lawmakers will focus on one way attorney fees, which has been an issue long championed by the Florida Chamber and Associated Industries of Florida. The measure will essentially be loser pays if passed into law. We believe other measures will take place during the regular session to address the industry problem, but

the focus for this upcoming Special Session will be attorney fees. As Leadership for both the House and Senate said this is the one measure that would have an immediate impact.

Committee Weeks and Special Session

Dates for the Interim Committee Week dates have been released:

- Monday, December 12 – Friday, December 16, 2022
- Tuesday, January 3 – Friday, January 6, 2023
- Tuesday, January 17 – Friday, January 20, 2023
- Monday, January 23 – Friday, January 27, 2023
- Monday, February 6 – Friday, February 10, 2023
- Monday, February 13 – Friday February 17, 2023
- Monday, February 20 – Friday, February 24, 2023

FSA Will comes to Tallahassee on January 17th for their Tallahassee Trip

Regular Session will convene on Tuesday, March, 7th and run for sixty days until Friday, May 5th. The committee weeks will serve as a time for lawmakers to hear policy, work on budget proposals.

House Announces Committee Chairs

Florida House Speaker Paul Renner this past Friday announced the appointment of Committee Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Whips for the 2022-2023 Legislative Session. Speaker Renner also made additional leadership appointments to the 85-member Majority Conference. Below are the key committees

Appropriations Committee
Chair, Rep. Tom Leek
Vice Chair, Rep. Lawrence McClure
Whip, Rep. Jim Mooney

Agriculture & Natural Resources Appropriations Subcommittee
Chair, Rep. Thad Altman
Vice Chair, Rep. Melony Bell

Infrastructure & Tourism Appropriations Subcommittee
Chair, Rep. Alex Andrade
Vice Chair, Rep. Linda Chaney

Commerce Committee
Chair, Rep. Bob Rommel
Vice Chair, Rep. Patt Maney
Whip, Rep. David Borrero

Insurance & Banking Subcommittee

Chair, Rep. Wyman Duggan
Vice Chair, Rep. Tom Fabricio

Regulatory Reform & Economic Development Subcommittee
Chair, Rep. Tyler Sirois
Vice Chair, Rep. Lauren Melo

Infrastructure Strategies Committee
Chair, Rep. Bobby Payne
Vice Chair, Rep. Sam Garrison
Whip, Rep. David Smith

Agriculture, Conservation & Resiliency Subcommittee
Chair, Rep. James Buchanan
Vice Chair, Rep. Rick Roth

Transportation & Modals Subcommittee
Chair, Rep. Fiona McFarland
Vice Chair, Rep. Tom Fabricio

Water Quality, Supply & Treatment Subcommittee
Chair, Rep. Cindy Stevenson
Vice Chair, Rep. Randy Maggard

Judiciary Committee
Chair, Rep. Tommy Gregory
Vice Chair, Rep. Toby Overdorf
Whip, Rep. Randy Maggard

Civil Justice Subcommittee
Chair, Rep. Will Robinson
Vice Chair, Rep. John Snyder

Rules Committee
Chair, Rep. Daniel Perez
Vice Chair, Rep. Linda Chaney

State Affairs Committee
Chair, Rep. Lawrence McClure
Vice Chair, Rep. Mike Caruso
Whip, Rep. Alex Rizo

Constitutional Rights, Rule of Law & Government Operations Subcommittee
Chair, Rep. Spencer Roach
Vice Chair, Rep. Webster Barnaby

Local, Federal Affairs & Special Districts Subcommittee
Chair, Rep. Jenna Persons-Mulicka
Vice Chair, Rep. Kaylee Tuck

Ways & Means Committee
Chair, Rep. Stan McClain
Vice Chair, Rep. James Buchanan
Whip, Rep. Chip LaMarca

Speaker Pro Tempore
Rep. Chuck Clemons

Majority Office
Majority Leader, Rep. Mike Grant
Deputy Majority Leader, Rep. John Snyder
Chief Floor Whip, Rep. Adam Botana

Below are few articles of interest we thought you would like to read.

OIR Approves Lower Workers Comp Rates

State Insurance Commissioner David Altmaier issued a final order approving a proposed 8.4% reduction on new and renewed workers' compensation policies that was recommended by the National Council on Compensation Insurance earlier this year. Florida businesses have seen a nearly 74% reduction in their rates over the last 20 years, according to the Office of Insurance Regulation. The licensed rating agency assessed data from 2019 and 2020 to recommend the new lower rate on behalf of workers' compensation insurance companies. In a report submitted to the state, the national insurance organization found a consistent decline in wage replacement claims from injured employees seeking workers' compensation benefits. "For the sixth consecutive year, Florida businesses will see a reduction in workers' compensation rates – which also means lower insurance costs for employers," said Altmaier. Workers' compensation insurance is coverage purchased by employers that provide benefits for job-related employee injuries and in exchange, the business is immune from some injury lawsuits by workers. Attorney General Ashley Moody and Chief Financial Officer Jimmy Patronis were both in favor of the updated reduction, saying it will benefit small businesses in the state. The new decrease in workers' compensation insurance policies is scheduled to take effect Jan. 1, 2023. [OIR Press Release](#) / [Florida Politics](#) / [Insurance Journal](#)

State of Emergency Declared in 34 Counties as State Awaits Another Storm, Nicole Heads Toward Central East Coast

As parts of Florida brace for another possible tropical storm or hurricane, Gov. Ron DeSantis [issued an executive order](#) declaring a state of emergency for 34 counties. Subtropical Storm Nicole formed Monday morning in the Atlantic and is expected to develop into a Hurricane before making landfall in southeast Florida later this week. Brevard, Broward, Charlotte, Citrus, Clay, Collier, DeSoto, Duval, Flagler, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, Hillsborough, Indian River, Lake, Lee, Manatee, Martin, Miami-Dade, Nassau, Okeechobee, Orange, Osceola, Palm Beach, Pasco, Polk, Putnam, Sarasota, Seminole, St. Johns, St. Lucie, Sumter, and Volusia counties are all under a state of emergency. Forecasters are warning of the risk of coastal flooding, heavy winds, extreme rain, rough surf, and beach erosion along Florida's east coast, with wind gusts expected as early as Tuesday. The storm is currently moving toward the Bahamas and both hurricane and tropical storm watches have been issued for parts of Florida's east coast. The governor said the state is monitoring the storm and urges residents to get prepared. [DeSantis Press Release](#) / [Tampa Bay Times](#) / [Orlando Sentinel](#) / [The Weather Channel](#) / [Fox News](#) / [NPR](#) / [National Hurricane Center 7 a.m. Tuesday Public Advisory](#)

The Central Bank's sprint

The Federal Reserve [raised interest rates once again today](#) as fears mount over Chair Jerome Powell's race to tackle inflation. Officials are suggesting that future rate hikes could be smaller, given how much the Fed has already raised borrowing costs. [But as Victoria Guida reports, central bank watchers are still concerned](#) that Powell is jacking up rates too quickly, before it's even possible to measure the effects of previous rate hikes on either inflation or the economy.

The following events took place in November 2022.

Date	Name	Purpose	Follow Up
11/4	Austin Stowers, LAD CFO's Office	Introductory	
11/11	Jacksonville Transit Authority Meeting	Follow up on Letter sent, meeting with Julie Bonsail	
11/17	FSA Board Meeting Ft. Lauderdale		

Future Meetings

Date	Name	Purpose
1/17	FSA Tallahassee Trip	
2/9	FSA Casa Monica Resort	
5/18	FSA Annual Meeting Swann Resort Orlando	

- Sent SFAA Report on Economic Value of Surety Bonding to key elected and staff.
- Assisting with coordinating FSA meeting in Tampa by making outreach to the Edition Hotel
- Coordinating Tallahassee trip on 1/17, by securing conference room.

- Provided info on Deland bonding information to Exec Committee
 - Sent list of freshmen lawmakers and draft letter for exec committee to send out congratulatory letters
 - Scheduling meeting Sen. Grall and rep. Overdorf on liens and bonds bill.
 - Provided full election night recap to the board
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