

FRA Legislative meeting summary for 05/02/2025

The Florida Renal Association's (FRA) Legislative Committee met for the fourth time in 2025 on Friday May 2nd. Below is a summary of the meeting led by FRA Lobbyist Ron Watson. (*Some content has been added that occurred after the meeting!*)

Friday, May 2nd was scheduled to be the last day of the regular 60-day session or "Sine Die", but the 2025 session will be going into overtime to complete a budget. There is only one bill the Florida legislature must pass every year, which is a balanced budget. Disagreements over a sales tax reduction favored by the House, a \$1,000 homestead property tax refund by the Governor and a more modest targeted tax relief from the Senate have left a \$4.5 billion difference in the spending plans. Anger and distrust have spilled into public view as an original compromise tax deal blew-up which was part of the deal to extend the session through June 6th. It looks less and less likely to be completed then as the Governor has threatened a veto of any sales tax reduction. July 1st is the deadline for a new budget to prevent a governmental shutdown! However, all other bills that didn't pass by midnight on May 2nd died and will not be considered in the extended session.

Mr. Watson then moved onto the News/Notes section established by former long-time FRA lobbyist Bob Reynolds.

NEWS and NOTES:

- **FSU shooting tragedy** – Tallahassee was rocked during the end of session when a gunman killed two and wounded 6 more people before being shot by police at the student union of FSU campus, which is less than 2 miles from the Capitol. Committee rooms were locked down as meetings progressed while there was an active shooter warning on campus.
- **NKFF Kidney Walk in Tallahassee on May 3rd** – The NKFF Kidney walk that was scheduled to occur with Kidney Day on March 9th was rescheduled to Saturday May 3rd due to another year of horrible weather. The FRA is thrilled to partner with the NKFF and thanks all of the attendees who participated.
- **Rule update on Florida Medicaid Dialysis Services Coverage Policy.** The main Medicaid dialysis regulation which creates the [Florida Medicaid Dialysis Services Coverage Policy](#) has been published by AHCA for another comment period. Public comments are being accepted through May 27th and another meeting is scheduled for June 3rd at 2pm.
- **New AHCA Secretary not confirmed.** Shevaun Harris was recently appointed AHCA Secretary; however, she was not confirmed by the Senate and will have to be reappointed by the Governor to serve for the next year. If not confirmed by the Senate at the next session, she would be forced to step down at that time.
- **Sen. Jason Pizzo**, the Leader of the Senate Democratic Caucus, announced on the Senate floor that he is not only stepping down as Leader, but he is quitting the Democratic Party entirely by changing his registration to NPA or independent. He stated the Democratic Party is dead! Sen. Lori Berman was chosen as his replacement.

Since they extended the session and did not call a separate special session, the proposed budget bills remain in play as they passed their respective chambers. This is good news for our budget proviso language on home modalities which is contained in both proposed budgets.

Despite the lack of a budget and all the public feuding, several big legislative issues did pass late in the session including a prohibition on the use of state parks for golf courses/pickle ball etc.; a constitutional amendment ballot bill that makes many additional regulations on petition gathering and the processes of being approved; a condo bill that attempts to correct some of the problems with the original condo bill after Surfside collapse; a so called “Free Kill bill” which would remove a prohibition on certain medical malpractice lawsuits (going to be vetoed!); a huge Agriculture bill that removes fluoride from all state water systems; a school safety bill; an animal abuse registry; a bill banning the geoengineering of weather(?); a beach access bill and a couple others.

Some of the big issues that died late this session included Senate President Albritton priority on a “Rural Renaissance” which directs over \$200 million in funding issues for small communities, including some focus on health care services. *(However, it may still be included in the on-going budget negotiations.)* There was also no agreement on property insurance reform, hemp regulations, PIP auto insurance, or scope of practice fights, to name a few. The House put together a “healthcare train” which included many separate healthcare issues including scope of practice, pediatric ER, electronic prescribing, unlicensed activity, out-of-network provider notification, vaccination status bill of rights, and Medicaid permanently disabled. They included this with the rural renaissance language the Senate wanted. The train bounced back and forth several times before being completely gutted to only include nursing education language, which passed.

Unfortunately, the FRA supported Social Workers Licensure Compact bill ([HB 27](#)) died after passing the House floor but was never heard in the Senate. Most other healthcare priorities also died including the transplant bills, the food is medicine bill, transportation options, and drug coverage. Some other healthcare issues that died included nursing staffing levels, restrictive covenants or anti compete clause, patient records bill (14 days), mandatory electronic prescribing, “vaccination status” in patient bill of rights and out of network provider notice bills. . The good news is nothing bad happened, including no changes to third-party payer of insurance premiums and no changes to Medi-Gap! And House Resolution 8005 by Rep. Barnaby was published which is a resolution declaring March 2025 as Kidney Disease Awareness Month, March 10th as Florida Kidney Day and March 13 as World Kidney Day!

2026 Kidney Day Planning already underway. Mr. Watson thanked all the FRA members who helped plan, organize and execute the 19th annual Florida Kidney Day at the Capitol. He talked about the early planning already underway for the 20th annual Kidney Day which should be in mid-January, (***Possibly Tuesday January 20th***) due to an early start for session. Please help us plan for the next Kidney Day and help develop the issues we will be fighting for.

Hopefully we will get a budget before July 1st, and the tensions will settle down once that occurs. Thank you for your membership in the FRA. Tell a friend.