

FRA Legislative meeting summary for 11/07/2025

The Florida Renal Association's (FRA) Legislative Committee met for the 10th time in 2025 on Friday November 7. Below is a summary of the meeting led by FRA Lobbyist Ron Watson,

Kidney Day 2026 is Feb 8th-10th, please save the date!!

NEWS and NOTES:

- **Federal Government Shutdown** – The Federal Government shut down continues and is the longest in history to date. However, the Florida government is still plugging along. SNAP benefits are being denied, and many people are struggling to put food on the table. Our church pantry had the longest lines we have ever had!
- **Democrats benefit?** – There were several off-year elections held this week, and the Democrats seemed to benefit from the government shutdown, with Governorships and the mayor of NY winning.
- **Tariffs and Oil Drilling** – The Florida caucus was caught off guard this week with a proposal from the Feds to allow more oil drilling in the Gulf waters. The entire delegation signed a letter asking them to reconsider!! On again and off again tariffs are also affecting many things in the economy. Affordability seems to be the driving factor in politics these days as inflation and price increases continue to pinch consumers.
- **Governor's Race** – Orange County mayor and former Sheriff Jerry Demmings (D) has entered the 2026 Governors race. His focus is on rising costs/affordability, local control and public safety/infrastructure. He is challenging David Jolly in the D primary who is a former R congressman from Pinellas County now running as a D! On the R side, wealthy investor James Fishback has also entered the race for Governor. He came out swinging now joins former Speaker Paul Renner (R) and the front-runner Cong. Byron Donalds (R) in the primary. Lt. Gov. Jay Collins is still deciding if he will also enter the race, but it looks like first lady Casey DeSantis is probably not going to run herself. President Trump has endorsed Donalds, but Gov. DeSantis has not endorsed anyone to date!
- **Florida Health Freedom and Wellness Healthcare Plan** - Former Speaker Renner released his healthcare plan, which is focused on eliminating Obamacare, removing vaccine mandates, parent rights, healthy schools, a healthy food focus with exercise, community wellness and preventative care. Cong Donalds opposes Obamacare but has released no specific plan.

Committee Week Updates:

- The **Senate** had a very light schedule this week with the Health Policy and the Appropriations subcommittee on Health and Human Services not bothering to meet. Only nine committees met and 19 others had a scheduled time but chose not to meet. A dental care for veterans' bill passed a committee as did a bill on civil liability for the wrongful death of an unborn child. The Finance and Tax committee heard a presentation on ad valorem millages, which is being discussed because of the proposed property tax reductions being considered. The Senate so far has been very quiet on property taxes.
- The **House** Health and Human Services Committee heard a presentation on the federal rural health transformation grant program by AHCA. These grants are a part of the big-beautiful bill and will be at least \$100 million a year for 5 years as well as other potential grants totaling

another \$500 million. The Health Professions and Programs subcommittee got a briefing on rare disease council and the pediatric rare disease grant program. The Health Care Facilities and Systems subcommittee had an AHCA presentation on bills passed last year. The Health Care Budget subcommittee heard a Medicaid Managed Care Plan performance presentation also by AHCA. A nursing education bill passed a committee as did one on sovereign immunity and suits against the government.

Bills Filed:

- A **living organ donor donation bill** has been put into bill drafting for 2026. This year's version will be focused on granting 30 days PAID leave for state workers making a donation over and above any sick leave they may have accumulated. The second section of the bill would require all other employers to grant non-paid 30 day leaves, which may prove problematic for small employers. SB 390 is by Sen. Harrell and the House sponsor is still being decided.
- The House has filed another **Social Workers Licensure bill**, this one dealing with the use of **artificial intelligence** or A.I. The bill defines A.I. and bans its use in their professional practice; however, it exempts administrative or supplementary support services from the ban. This would include appointments, scheduling, billing, insurance claims etc

The **FRA legislative agenda presently includes** supporting the social workers licensure compact, the living organ donor time off bill, the expanded use of home modalities, improved/accountable transportation options, food is medicine, self-administration of Erythropoietin (ESAs) in Medicaid coverage, continuation of third party payor of insurance premiums, protecting Medi-Gap policies and getting a Medicaid fee increase.

There are three weeks of committee meetings left before the 2026 session on January 13. Stay tuned for further updates and thank you for your membership in the FRA!

KIDNEY DAY 2026

February 8-10

The 20th annual Kidney Day will take place from February 8-10 in Tallahassee. The tentative schedule includes an NKFF walk on Sunday the 8th at 4pm with a nice dinner reception at the private Governors Club Sunday evening. Monday should be a half-day meeting with CE credits being offered, a meeting with AHCA officials and a working reception that night to get prepared for Tuesday at the Capitol. We have reserved the entire 3rd floor Rotunda and will be hosting kidney screenings while we meet with legislators/staff throughout the day.