

FRA Legislative meeting summary for 03/06/2026

The Florida Renal Association's (FRA) Legislative Committee met for the second time in 2026 on Friday March 6th. This is the first post-Kidney Day legislative meeting and there is one week (at least) left in the 2026 session.

The meeting started with a discussion of the recent **20th Annual Kidney Day** (Feb 8-10) and was led by Shannon Moore, FRA President. She gave a brief overview of the Sunday afternoon **NKFF fundraising walk** at Cascades Park and thanked the sponsors and supporters of NKFF. She also stressed the importance of the collaboration between FRA and NKFF. She next detailed the **Governors Club reception/ dinner** activities on Sunday evening including guest speakers Franklin County Sherrif AJ Smith, who described his transplant journey, as did patient Alex Berrios. We surprised Rep. Alison Tant (D-Tallahassee) with a FRA Healthcare Champion Plaque and she briefly spoke. And finally, we presented FRA Board member Amy Kozsuch with a Lifetime Achievement award for her years of dedication to patients. Even though it was Super Bowl Sunday, we had a good turn-out and great food/drink. Shannon next focused on the Monday **FRA mini-annual meeting** held at the Aloft Hotel. She mentioned several of the presentations including positive feedback. She also thanked the **sponsors and vendors (Davita, Vertex, Delorean AI, CFKC, Daniels, NKFF, HSAG and Watson Strategies)** who made all this possible. Finally, lobbyist Ron Watson detailed the **seventeen legislative meetings** with Senators, Representatives and staff that occurred on the **20th Kidney Day Tuesday**. He mentioned the third floor rotundo set up in the morning for FRA, vendors and the screening tables that did **KEEP screenings** (minus the urinalysis test) for the public. We divided up into two groups; one led by Ron Watson/Bob Loeper and the other led by Codie Paulie/Missy Timmins. Ron/Bob's group focused mainly on the House side and met w *Rep.s/staff Hodgers, Blanco, Nix, Campbell, Partington, Rosenwald, Andrade, Antone, Gerwig and Barnaby. Codie/Missy's group met w Sen.s/staff Passidomo, Massullo (MD), Gaetz and Leek. They also met w Rep.s Hunschofsky and Smith.* Lunch was provided at the Café in the basement (Early's) and we ended the day with *Sen. Gayle Harrell* meeting us on the **floor of the Senate for a tour** and we presented her with an FRA Healthcare Champion Award!

Session Update:

- **One week left to go** in the 2026 session, but there is **no budget in sight**. We would normally be in conference committees this weekend wrapping up negotiations on the \$1.4 billion differences by Tuesday. We would need a final proposed budget by Tuesday to meet the required 72 hour cooling off period before a final vote on Friday, the last scheduled day of session. However, the House Budget Chairman went home for the weekend! As a reminder, a balanced budget is the only bill the Florida constitution requires the legislature to pass annually, but it also requires the 72-hour cooling off period. Last session they needed an extra 45 days to finish the budget. The new fiscal year begins on July 1st. It looks inevitable that we will have another overtime again this year. We presently have our proviso budget language in both the House and Senate versions, so we should be ok moving forward, but we don't know if they will start over or pick up where they left off?
- **House quietly changes rules on allowing fundraising during special sessions/extended sessions.** Being an election year, this may have been the strongest signal of another overtime and a budget stalemate to date, as the Senate made this change last year. The change allows any fundraiser that was already scheduled prior to an extended or special session.

- **Speaking of Special Sessions**, Governor DeSantis has already called a 5-day special session for congressional redistricting starting on April 20th. He also wants a homestead property tax constitutional amendment, which he said would also be in a special session. Will the budget also be in a special session or will they extend the existing session like last year? It could be a busy summer in Tallahassee.
- **Everything is dying in the open**. Most bills filed don't pass, but the ones that move normally have a chance with horse trading near the end of session. This session has been very different in that House and/or Senate senior members are openly asking their colleagues to continue their efforts after they are term-limited because they know the bills they are about to pass off their floor will surely die or were never heard in the other chamber. With one week to go in session, only 40 bills have passed both chambers! The AI Bill of Rights, the Rural Renaissance bill, Property Taxes, Property Insurance, Growth Management, School Voucher financing, gun liability and age limits and E-Verify for all businesses all look dead for the session. We will see what happens during the last week.
- **The Senate goes on the floor at 10** and there are several bills we are watching/lobbying. The first creates a Medicaid panel to make recommendations to the legislature, tightens up affiliate transfers, has data review and PBM regulations. Another bill would create work requirements for Medicaid recipients, even though Florida has not expanded Medicaid, which we opposed. And finally, the "medical freedom" bill which creates a new "conscientious" objection for vaccine requirements and other things, which we strongly opposed. Hopefully the final two bills will die in the House after passing the Senate today.

The 2026 FRA legislative agenda update:

- **Social workers licensure compact** (HB 13 / SB 74) – we passed HB 13 off the House floor 113-0, but it was never heard in the Senate. We also amended the language into the big House healthcare bill, HB 697 to pass it on another vehicle.
 - **Living organ donor time off bill** (HB 493 / SB 390) – we passed HB 493 off the House floor 112-0, but it was never heard in the Senate. We watched the below 10-minute video on the House floor debate. It starts at 4:20:17 and goes until 4:30:37, in addition to sponsor Rep. Kim Berfield, Rep.s Tant, Harris, Bartleman and LaMarca all spoke. Additionally, we have 32 co-sponsors!!! (CO-SPONSORS) Abbott; Barnaby; Bartleman; Basabe; Blanco; Chaney; Cobb; Conerly; Cross; Daniels; Franklin; Gentry; Gonzalez Pittman; Griffiths; Grow; Harris; Hodggers; LaMarca; López, J.; Mooney; Partington; Rizo; Rosenwald; Salzman; Sapp; Shoaf; Snyder; Stark; Steele; Tant; Valdés; Weinberger
- <https://www.flhouse.gov/VideoPlayer.aspx?eventID=11201>
- **Oppose ending vaccine mandates** (HB 917 and SB 1756) – As mentioned above, the SB is about to pass off the Senate floor today, but it does NOT include removal of any mandates. It does however make it much easier to opt out. The HB was never heard but that also included a requirement that healthcare practitioners could not refuse to treat unvaccinated patients.
 - **Food is medicine** (HB 1315 / SB 1470) – Unfortunately, neither bill was heard this session, but we did speak a lot about the importance of proper nutrition for our patient population.

We will see what happens in the next week and possibly in the next few special sessions!