LEGISLATIVE SESSION UPDATE - WEEK 2

The second week of the 2021 Legislative Session closed on Friday, March 12. Highlights from the week included a few hints on the outlook of the State Budget - including a proposal to use the recently passed federal stimulus package to fund one-time projects. Additionally, in a letter to Governor Ron DeSantis, CFHLA advocated for hospitality and lodging workers to be included in prioritized vaccine distribution.

CFHLA continues to monitor the progression of several bills addressing our industry; including COVID-19 Liability Protections, the long-term continuation of VISIT FLORIDA, and expansions to the Tourist Development Tax (TDT).

COVID-19 LIABILITY PROTECTIONS

A bill in each chamber to provide minimum requirements for civil action based on COVID-19 related claims including providing a statute of limitations and burden of proof.

**HB 7 - Representative McClure** - Approved on the House Floor on March 5th.

**SB 72 - Senator Brandes** - Passed through its Final Committee and awaits a vote on the Senate Floor.
CFHLA SUPPORTS

VISIT FLORIDA

A bill in each chamber to authorize the Florida Tourism Industry Marketing Corporation (VISIT FLORIDA) to roll-over unspent appropriations into succeeding fiscal years. The bill would also remove the sunset date in VISIT FLORIDA's enabling statute.

SB 778 - Senator Hooper - Passed unanimously by the Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Tourism, and Economic Development last week. Awaiting hearing in its final committee assignment.

HB 675 - Representative Plasencia - No action taken in the house last week.

CFHLA SUPPORTS

IN-STATE TOURISM MARKETING

A proposed appropriations project of $2 million to be used for an In-State Tourism Marketing Campaign to drive visitation to the State of Florida.

HB 3645 - Representative Williamson - Approved unanimously by the State Administration & Technology Appropriations Committee. Currently awaiting a hearing in its final committee assignment.

CFHLA SUPPORTS

TOURIST DEVELOPMENT TAX (TDT)

A bill in each chamber proposing changes to the Tourist Development Tax (TDT) statute that would require a county to renew its existing TDT via referendum every five years. Additionally, any new pennies levied would also be required to be approved by referendum.

HB 1429 - Representative Avila - scheduled for hearing on Monday, March 15th in the Environment, Agriculture & Flooding Subcommittee.

SB 2008 - Senator Diaz - No action taken in the Senate last week.

CFHLA OPPOSES

VACATION RENTALS

A bill in each chamber to require advertising platforms, such as AirBnB and VRBO, to remit specified taxes imposed on some transactions. It also requires all licenses issued by the Division of Hotels & Restaurants of DBPR to be displayed conspicuously. Additionally, these bills would preempt regulation of vacation rentals to the State of Florida, which would prohibit local law, ordinance, or regulation from allowing or requiring inspections or licensing of public lodging establishments.

SB 522 - Senator Diaz - An amendment to the bill was proposed to
remove provisions preempting regulations to the state and allow current local laws to remain in place.

**HB 219 - Representative Fischer - No action taken** in the House last week

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**CFHLA MONITORING**

**IN THE NEWS**

- [Tourism industry to Ron DeSantis: Prioritize Hospitality Workers for vaccines](#)
- [Hospitality Leaders Ask DeSantis to Get Their Workers Vaccine Next](#)

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Erin Sims • erin@landforminc.com

p: 407-298-3036 • c: 407.468.0561 • www.landforminc.com

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