

A stylized graphic in the background featuring a yellow sun with rays and several green leaves of varying shades, all set against a white background.

Charlotte County 2026 State Legislative Session Review

June 9, 2026



CHARLOTTE COUNTY
FLORIDA

Guiding Principles

- State and Local Governments are partners in the promotion and protection of the health and welfare of the community. To preserve this partnership Charlotte County will:
 - Support state policies which benefit the economic development, environmental and social health of Charlotte County and its citizens.
 - Oppose legislative changes or fiscal decisions which impact County revenues such as unfunded mandates, revenue limitations, trust fund diversions or cost shifts.
 - Support local flexibility to address problems by honoring home rule and avoiding unnecessary preemptions of local authority.

Legislative Session Dates

Regular Session	January 13 – March 13
2026D Special Session	April 27 – April 29
2026E Special Session	May 12 – May 29
2026F Special Session	June 1 – June 3

Funding Highlights

- Community Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services: \$1.387 billion
- Resilient Florida Planning Grants & Projects: \$170 million
- Everglades Restoration: \$638.6 million
- State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP): \$165.7 million
- Affordable Housing Programs: \$70.8 million
- Florida Hometown Hero Housing Program: \$50 million
- Transportation Disadvantaged Grants and Aids: \$66.4 million
- Visit Florida: \$80 million
- Rural Infrastructure Fund: \$22 million
- Florida Job Growth Grant Fund: \$40 million
- Drones as First Responders Grant Program: Awards are capped at \$250,000 per agency and \$50,000 per drone.
- Cybersecurity: \$40 million carry-forward from previous year
- Florida Forever: reappropriation of unexpended land acquisition funds that provides \$225 million for rural land protection easements and directs remaining funds toward specified conservation acquisitions

From Florida Association of Counties

Appropriations Requests



Appropriations Issues

Project Title	Amount Requested	HB 5001 General Appropriations Act
Burnt Store Water Reclamation Facility - AWT (Oliver – 1939) (Albritton – 3676)	\$5,000,000	\$2,500,000
West Port Water Reclamation Facility - Advanced Wastewater Treatment (Nix – 3011) (Albritton – 3677)	\$5,000,000	\$500,000
Ackerman Septic-to-Sewer (Oliver – 1941) (Albritton – 3702)	\$2,000,000	\$500,000
Stormwater System Performance and Flood Resilience (Nix – 3008) (Albritton – 3667)	\$3,500,000	\$350,000

Appropriations Issues

Project Title	Amount Requested	HB 5001E General Appropriations Act
Fire Training Tower (Oliver – 1937) (Albritton – 3674)	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000
Sheriff’s Warehouse (Nix – 3010) (Albritton – 3675)	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000
Intersection Hardening / Resiliency (Nix – 3009) (Albritton – 3668)	\$800,000	\$800,000
CyberLock Security for Traffic Signal Cabinets (Oliver – 1938) (Albritton – 3669)	\$365,000	\$325,000

Appropriations Issues – Not Funded

Project Title	Amount Requested	Project Detail
Emergency Operations Center (Oliver – 1940) (Albritton – 3678)	\$10,000,000	Support funding for improvements and expansion of the Charlotte County Emergency Operations Center to ensure operational and tactical efficiency during emergency activation.

Support Requests



Appropriations Issues

Project Title	Amount Requested	HB 5001E General Appropriations Act
Charlotte County Schools Welding Workforce Development Program Applied Water Resource Technology Career Training Program	\$1,500,000 \$775,000	\$1,500,000 \$775,000
Charlotte County Airport Authority Industrial Park Connector	\$4,200,000	\$4,200,000
Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority surface water expansion transmission system expansion	\$7,000,000 \$3,000,000	\$3,500,000 \$1,500,000

Policy Issues

Public Health & Safety

- **Firefighter Cancer Benefits (SB 984):**
 - Provides that the \$75,000 death benefit for firefighters who die as a result of cancer is available for one year after the firefighter terminates employment
 - Counties may be required to provide one-time cancer benefit payments even after a firefighter separates from county employment, depending on the circumstances of the diagnosis and prior service
 - Removes the requirement for the Division of State Fire Marshal to adopt rules for employer cancer-prevention best practices, meaning prevention guidance is no longer tied to formal rulemaking
 - Effective 7/1/2026

Transportation

- **Electric Bicycles (SB 382):**
 - Enacts speed limits of 10 miles per hour when a pedestrian is within 50 feet
 - States riders on shared paths not adjacent to roadways must yield to pedestrians and provide an audible signal before passing
 - Creates a Micromobility Device Safety Task Force to examine the state's regulatory framework for e-bicycles and other micromobility devices and recommend policy improvements
 - Effective upon becoming law

Transportation

- **Transportation (SB 488):**
 - The most significant county impact appears in the bill's revisions to s. 337.401, F.S. further limiting county authority over communications-facility permitting in county rights of-way.
 - Counties may not require certain surveys or facility inventories, may not impose taxes, fees, costs, charges, or exactions for placement of communications facilities beyond what state law authorizes, may not require cash escrow or certain extra agreement terms, and may not impose landscaping or vegetation-management requirements except as specifically allowed.
 - Counties may still require certain bonds or financial instruments, but under tighter statutory limits.
 - Effective 10/1/2026

Utilities

- **Utility Services (HB 1451):**
 - Requires a written agreement before a municipality can begin, extend, renew, or materially amend utility service in another municipality or an unincorporated area
 - Requires public meetings in each affected jurisdiction before those agreements take effect
 - For water and sewer service, it caps outside-city rates at no more than 25% above inside-city rates
 - Effective 7/1/2027

Technology

- **Local Government Cyber Security (HB 1085):**
 - Establishes the Local Government Cybersecurity Protection Program within the Florida Digital Service
 - Designed to help eligible local governments mitigate and defend against cybersecurity threats, including ransomware
 - Gives preference to fiscally constrained counties, requires annual awards by December 1, allows local governments to buy from program contracts even without receiving a grant, and requires an annual implementation report beginning December 15, 2027
 - Effective 7/1/2026

Finance, Tax, & Administration

- **Claims Against the Government (HB 145):**
 - Raises sovereign immunity tort caps from \$200,000 per person and \$300,000 per incident to \$350,000 and \$500,000
 - Judgments above those caps subject to further legislative action unless otherwise payable within insurance limits
 - Revises claim-processing and litigation rules, including claim presentment, when a claim is deemed denied, and the filing deadlines for certain tort actions
 - Applies to causes of action that accrue on or after October 1, 2026
 - Effective 10/1/2026

Finance, Tax, & Administration

- **Official Actions of Local Governments (SB 1134):**
 - Prohibits counties and municipalities from adopting, maintaining, or operating diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives, and voids any existing local ordinances, resolutions, or policies related to DEI
 - Prohibits the use of public funds to establish or support DEI offices, officers, or related activities
 - Requires government contractors and companies granted public funds to certify that public funds are not used for DEI-related materials or activities
 - Effective 1/1/2027
- **Local Government Spending (HB 1329):**
 - Requires local governments to post detailed budgets online for multiple years, publish budget development calendars, and provide quarterly public reports listing employee compensation
 - Requires counties and municipalities to hold a public budget reduction workshop identifying strategies to potentially reduce the next fiscal year's budget by 10% without cutting essential services
 - Establishes stricter requirements for adopting or increasing impact fees, including the use of updated, localized data and demonstrated-need studies, and sets procedures for refunds or credits if fees are overpaid
 - Effective 7/1/2026

Finance, Tax, & Administration

- **Electronic Payments Made to Units of Local Governments (HB 967):**
 - Require counties, cities, and other local government entities in Florida to accept certain electronic payment methods and provide an online payment option for fees, taxes, or other payments owed to the government.
 - Revises current law to make electronic payment acceptance mandatory rather than optional, meaning residents must be able to pay local government charges digitally instead of only in person or by mail.
 - The goal is to modernize payment systems, improve convenience for residents, and standardize payment access across local governments.
 - Effective 1/1/2027

Preemptions & Mandates

FAILED

- Term Limits for Members of County Commissioners and School Boards: HB 27
- Local Business Taxes: SB 122
- Prohibited Uses of Public Funds by Political Subdivisions: HB 605
- Local Government Land Development Regulations and Orders: SB 948 / HB 1143
- Public Safety: SB 1586 / HB 1427

Community Development

The 2026 Legislative Session continued the state's trend toward faster development approvals, expanded property rights, and reduced local government discretion, creating significant operational and procedural impacts for Community Development.



Community Development

- **Land Use and Development Regs (HB 399)**
 - Building permit and development fees cannot be based on construction value. Must be on direct and indirect costs of service.
 - Currently contracting with consultant to reevaluate fees. Expect most trade and remodel permit fees to go up.
 - Requires comprehensive plan amendments addressing residential compatibility.
 - “Neighborhood feel” and “community character” are no longer factors in compatibility for approving development.
 - Local government cannot deny residential development for compatibility if mitigation measures of developer are adequate.

Community Development

- **Land Use and Development Regs (HB 399) continued**
 - “Off site constructed residential dwellings” can be placed anywhere site-built homes can be built.
 - Includes container homes and HUD manufactured homes.
 - Local zoning preemption.
 - Local government can adopt design standards, exterior finish, roof pitch, etc.
 - Effective 1/1/2027

Community Development

- **Data Centers (SB 484):**
 - Confirms local government authority to regulate the location and compatibility of data centers through comprehensive planning and land development regulations.
 - Effective 7/1/2026
 - More details coming in June commission workshop.

Community Development

- **Onsite Sewage Permits (HB 589):**
 - Allows a building permit to be issued without an approved Department of Health (DOH) septic permit.
 - Contractor must provide local government proof of application to DOH.
 - Building permits may be issued faster.
 - May have issues later with home elevations and drainage because the septic system typically dictates the elevation of the home.
 - Contractor takes on all liability.
 - Effective upon becoming law

Community Development

- **Agricultural Enclaves (SB 686):**
 - Streamlined process for agricultural properties to be certified as "agricultural enclaves," with strict deadlines.
 - Allows certified agricultural enclaves to develop at densities and uses comparable to adjacent development, regardless of existing comprehensive plan or zoning designations.
 - Requires expedited review schedules, restricts additional hearings, and prohibiting more burdensome regulations than those applied to similar developments.
 - Effective 7/1/2026

Community Development

- **Building Permits and Inspections (HB 803):**
 - Building permits good for one year or the next change in the Florida Building Code, which ever is later.
 - Very complex and challenging to implement as well as explain to industry.
 - Wide range of expiration dates depending on the day of application.
 - Completion of buildings may take longer and hamper enforcement of abandoned projects.
 - Example
 - Permit applications applied for between July 1st through December 31, 2026- permits expire in one year.
 - If permit application comes in one day later January 1, 2027 – permit is valid until December 31, 2029. (almost three years)

Community Development

- **Building Permits and Inspections (HB 803) continued:**
 - Exempts single family permits for scopes of work less than \$7,500 that meet criteria.
 - The structure and property are totally outside the special flood hazard area.
 - There is no mechanical, electrical, plumbing or structural work in the scope.
 - Note: siding, soffit, roofing and windows regulated in structural design of the Florida Building Code, not exempt from permitting.
 - Work cannot be broken up into separate phases.
 - Meant for drywall, trim, and cabinetry work in homes located outside of a flood zone. The County already complies, as permits are not currently required for these activities outside of a flood zone.
 - County website will contain detailed information.

Community Development

- **Building Permits and Inspections (HB 803) continued:**
 - Florida Building Commission required to create statewide residential and commercial building permit applications compatible with all permitting software.
 - Local government must create and maintain a registry for private provide inspections companies.
 - Local governments cannot charge for staff time for registration applications or maintenance of license and insurance requirements.
 - Expands the use of private providers by limiting local requirements and reducing permit fees when private plan review and inspections are utilized.

Community Development

- **Local Land Planning and Development (HB 927):**
 - Local governments must establish a new program and registry that allows qualified private vendors to conduct preapplication meetings on behalf of the County.
 - Must have at least four vendors to choose from.
 - Vendors must be engineers, architects, landscape architects, surveyors or planners.
 - Loosens bonding requirements for developments and waives them in some cases.
 - Changes vested rights of preliminary plats to at least 5 years.
 - Currently limited to two years.
 - Effective 7/1/2026



Community Development

- **Regulation of Chickees (HB 929):**
 - Expands the definition of chickee hut and preempts local zoning, fire prevention and permitting requirements if siting criteria are met.
 - Permits still required for any work not fitting the definition of a chickee hut including electrical or plumbing.
 - Effective 7/1/2026

Community Development

- **Affordable Housing (SB 962):**
 - Explicitly excludes farms and farm operations from qualifying as commercial, industrial, and mix-use categories under the Live Local Act.
 - Effective upon becoming law

Community Development

- **Enforcement of the Florida Building Code (SB 1614):**
 - Removes the ability for local governments to use building permit reserves to construct buildings to house building code enforcement staff.
 - The County currently has \$15 million earmarked for a future building.
 - Can only be used for building code training and education, technology upgrades in the building division, or permit discounts.
 - Effective 7/1/2026

Bill Status

<i>*as of 5/27</i>	Total	Percentage
Bills Passed Both Chambers	237	
Awaiting Presentation	97	40.93%
Approved by Governor	122	51.48%
Vetoed by Governor	0	0.00%
Pending in Governor's Office	17	7.17%

Special Session 2026D

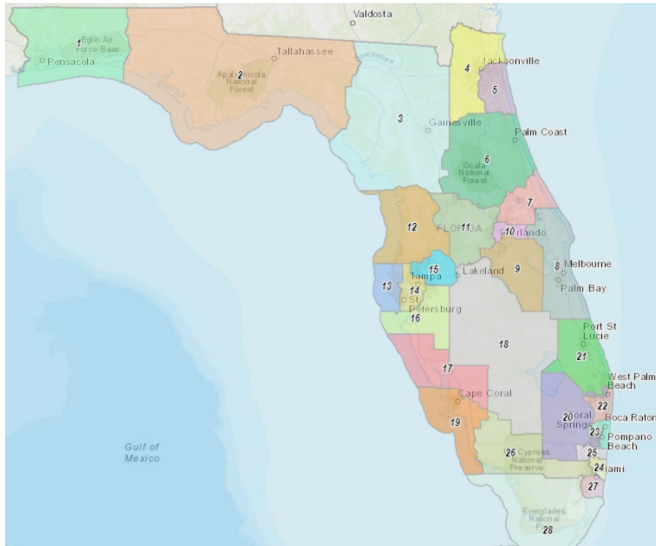
- Congressional Redistricting
- Artificial Intelligence
- Medical Freedom



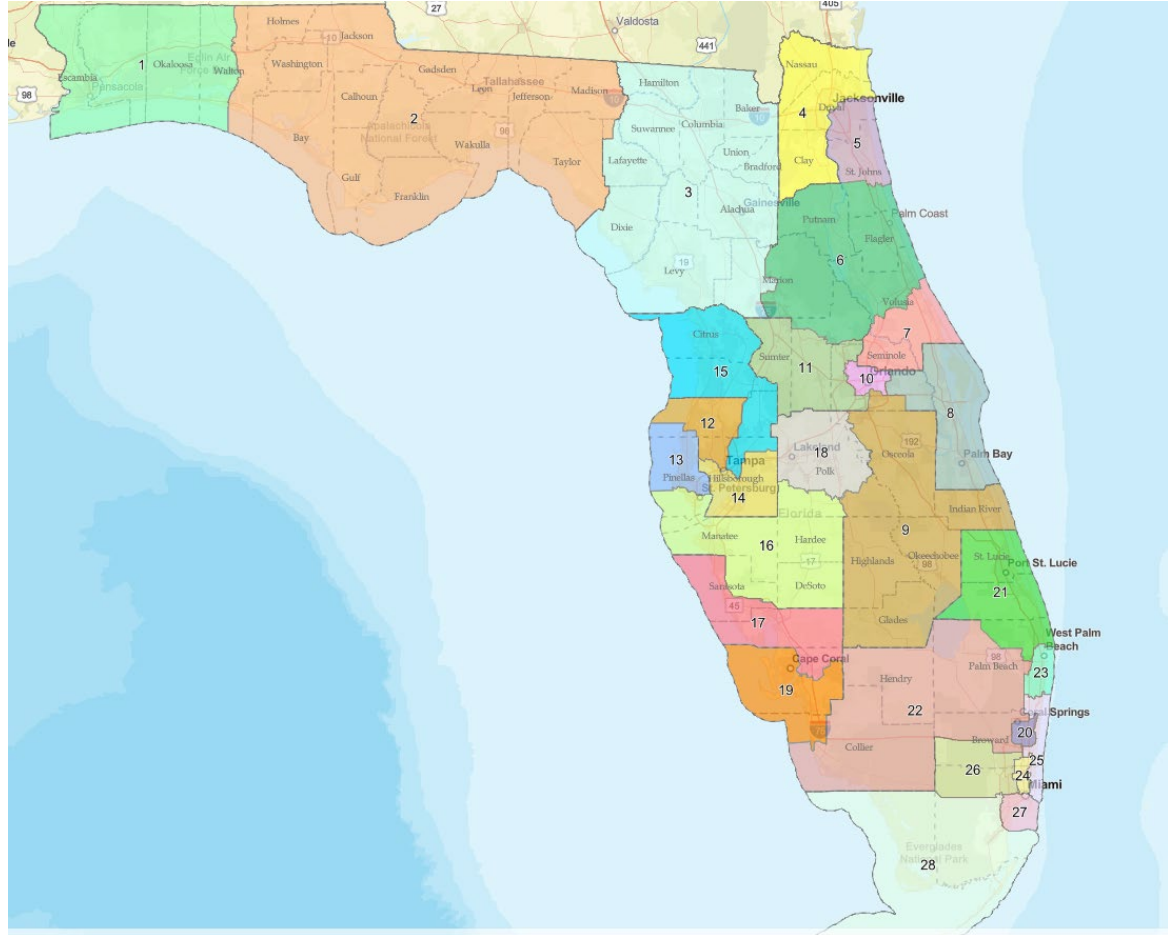
Special Session 2026D Congressional Redistricting

Charlotte County remains
entirely in District 17

2022 Congressional Map

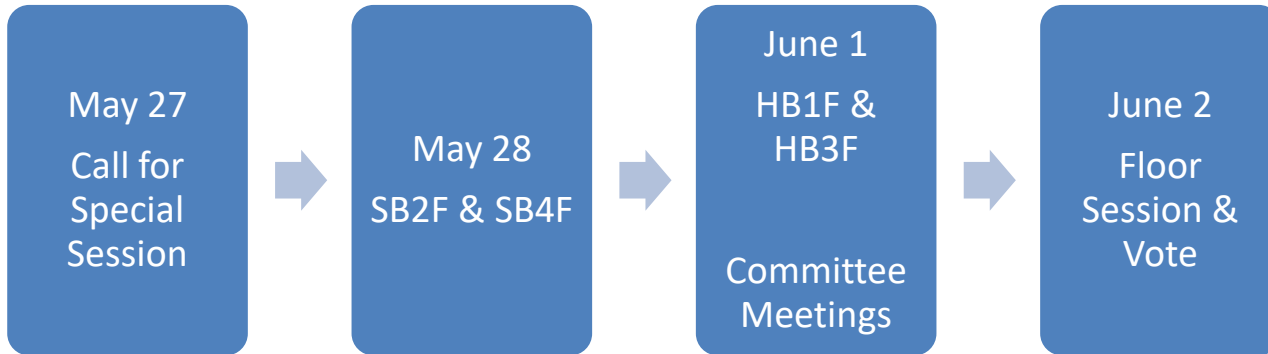


2026 Congressional Map



Special Session 2026F

Property tax reform



Property Tax HB 1F

- Creates a new homestead exemption of \$150,000 in 2027 and \$250,000 in 2028, with a planned phase-out
- Indexes to inflation annually beginning in 2029
- Reduces the non-homestead property assessment cap (e.g. second homes and commercial property) from 10% to 5% beginning in 2027
- Requires a 5-year Florida residency before new residents qualify for the expanded exemption

Property Tax HB 1F

Ad valorem taxes levied by counties and municipalities shall be used only to:

- Provide for public safety, including law enforcement, fire service and emergency medical service
- Provide funding for education and public schools
- Finance or refinance infrastructure, including road and bridge construction and maintenance and stormwater control
- Finance or refinance natural resource projects, including flood control measures
- Issue local bonds for uses consistent with the above and make debt service payments for existing obligations
- Meet obligations for retirement benefits of employees
- Fund the operations and administration of county officer and commissioners established under Article VIII and municipalities, and the expenditures approved by county officers or county or municipal governing bodies, except those expenditures prohibited by general law

Property Tax SB 4F

- Lowers the default maximum millage rate by tying it to the rolled-back rate
- Allows a ballot summary for a proposed constitutional amendment to exceed the usual word limit in specified circumstances.

Property Tax HB 1F

Ballot Language:

SAVE OUR HOMES FROM EXCESSIVE PROPERTY TAXES.—

- This amendment benefits Florida taxpayers by: Exempting homestead properties from taxation. Exempts the first \$250,000 of a homestead's value from taxation for all levies other than school district levies and requires, through general law, a schedule for full elimination. Ensuring funding for core services. Requires local governments to use remaining property taxes solely for core public needs, including public safety, education and schools, infrastructure, and natural resources. Protecting small businesses. Limits future property tax assessments on businesses. Ensuring fairness for Florida residents. Requires any person who establishes Florida residency after January 1, 2027, to maintain Florida residency for five years prior to receiving the increased homestead exemption. If approved, the amendment would take effect on January 1, 2027.

% of Total County Levy

Charlotte County

FY 2027-28 · \$150k exemption (Year 1)

-\$42,790,530 -16.28% of levy

FY 2028-29 · \$250k exemption (Year 2)

-\$71,677,751 -25.56% of levy

FY 2029-30 · CPI/growth

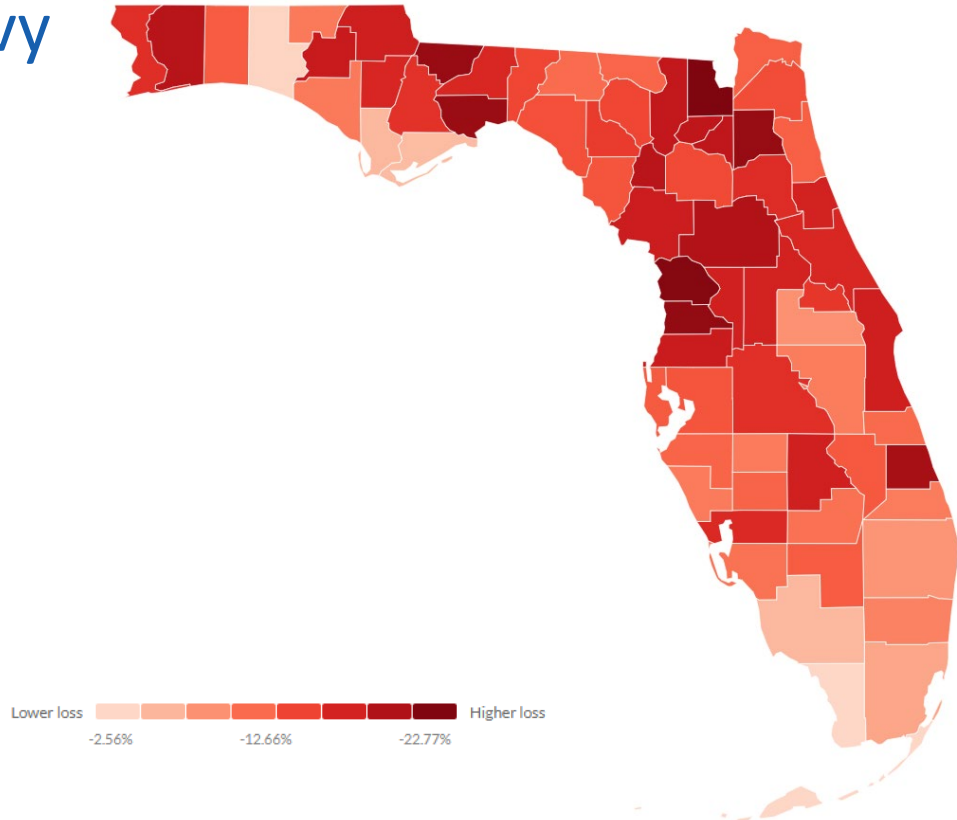
-\$73,492,155 -23.42% of levy

FY 2030-31 · CPI/growth

-\$75,344,801 -21.15% of levy

FY 2031-32 · CPI/growth

-\$77,326,617 -19.20% of levy



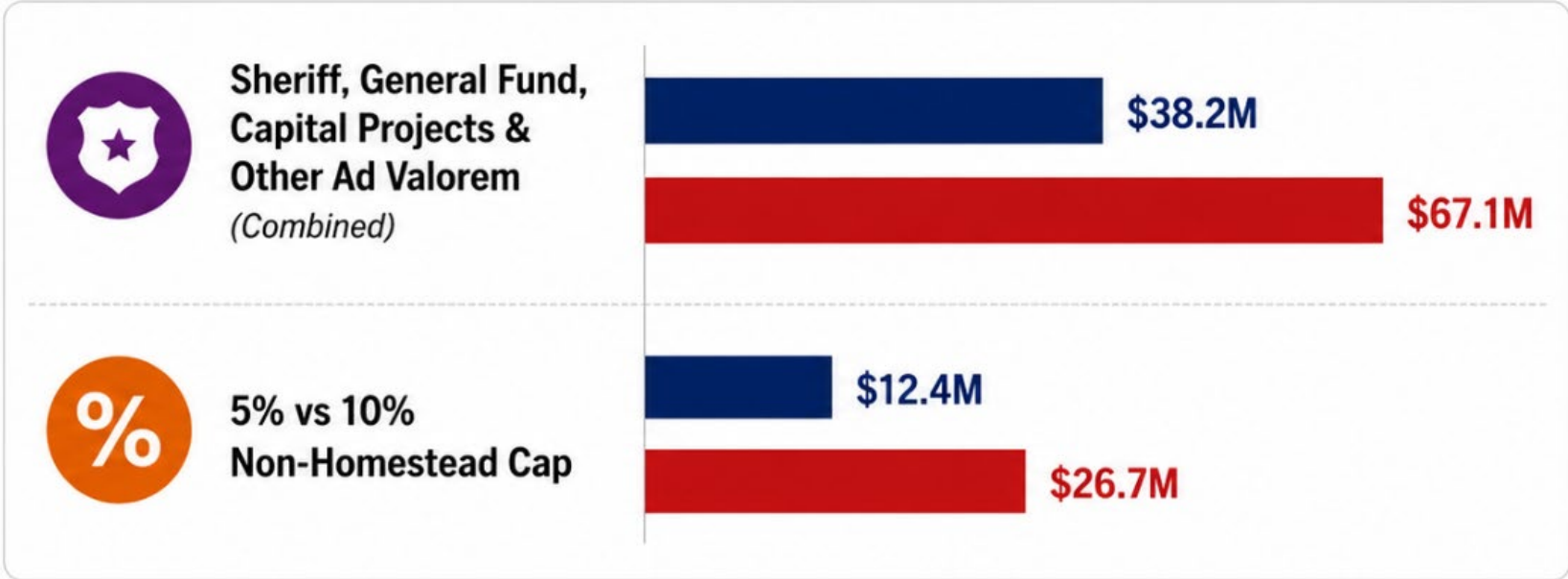
Color scale is linear. Darker counties bear a higher proportional revenue loss. Note the inversion from the dollar view: large urban/coastal counties (Monroe, Walton, Collier, Miami-Dade) carry the lowest proportional burden, while small-to-medium counties with high homestead concentration (St. Lucie, Clay, Baker, Citrus, Hernando) carry the highest.

Source: Florida Association of Counties. Dollar estimates derived from inflation-adjusted analysis of \$150k (Year 1) and \$250k (Year 2+) homestead exemption expansion. Percent-of-levy estimates derived from DOR effective millage rates applied to county taxable value projections. Special Session F joint resolution.

How Your Tax Dollar is Spent



Financial Impacts



FY 2028

FY 2029

\$50.6M
TOTAL REVENUE LOSS

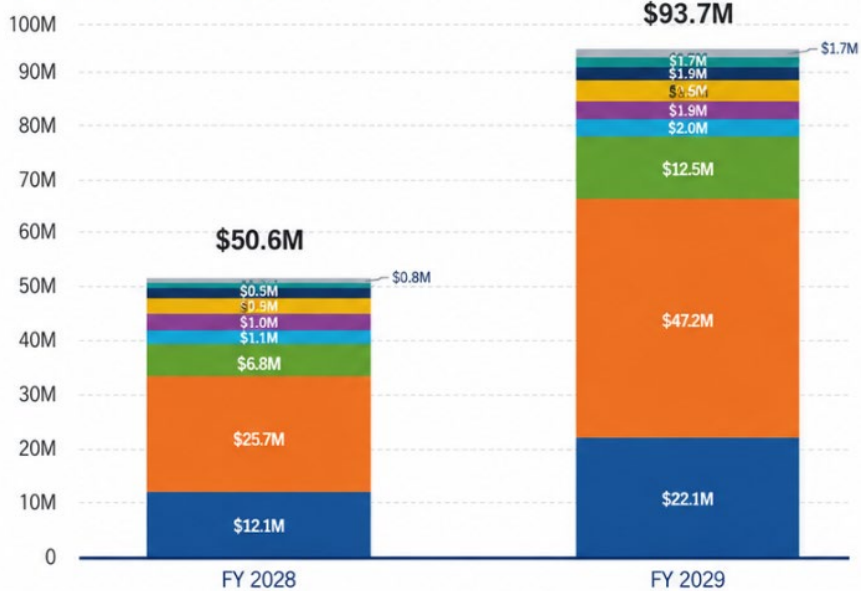


\$93.7M
TOTAL REVENUE LOSS







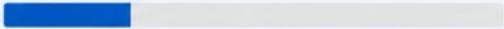


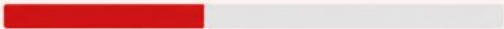
Impact by Taxing Authority

TOTAL LOSS (IN MILLIONS)

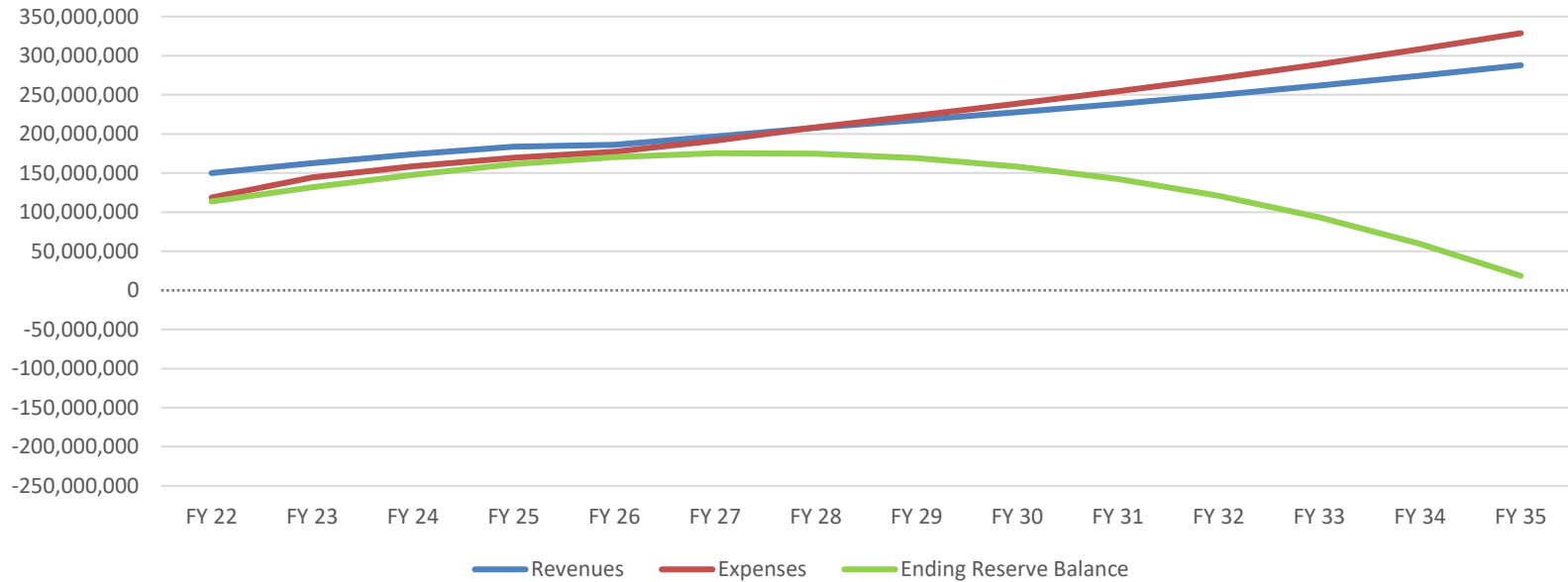


AREA	FY 2028	FY 2029	CHANGE (IN MILLIONS)
General Fund	\$12.1M	\$22.1M	\$10.0M ↓
Sheriff Operations (Total)	\$25.7M	\$47.2M	\$21.5M ↓
Capital Projects Fund	\$6.8M	\$12.5M	\$5.7M ↓
Environmentally Sensitive Land Program	\$1.1M	\$2.0M	\$0.9M ↓
Greater Charlotte Street Lighting District	\$1.0M	\$1.9M	\$0.9M ↓
Don Pedro/Knight Island Street/Drainage	\$1.6M	\$3.5M	\$1.9M ↓
Manasota Key Street & Drainage Unit	\$0.9M	\$1.9M	\$1.0M ↓
Stump Pass Dredging Unit	\$0.5M	\$1.7M	\$1.2M ↓
Sandhill Municipal Service Taxing Unit	\$0.8M	\$1.7M	\$0.9M ↓
TOTAL	\$50.6M	\$93.7M	\$43.1M ↓

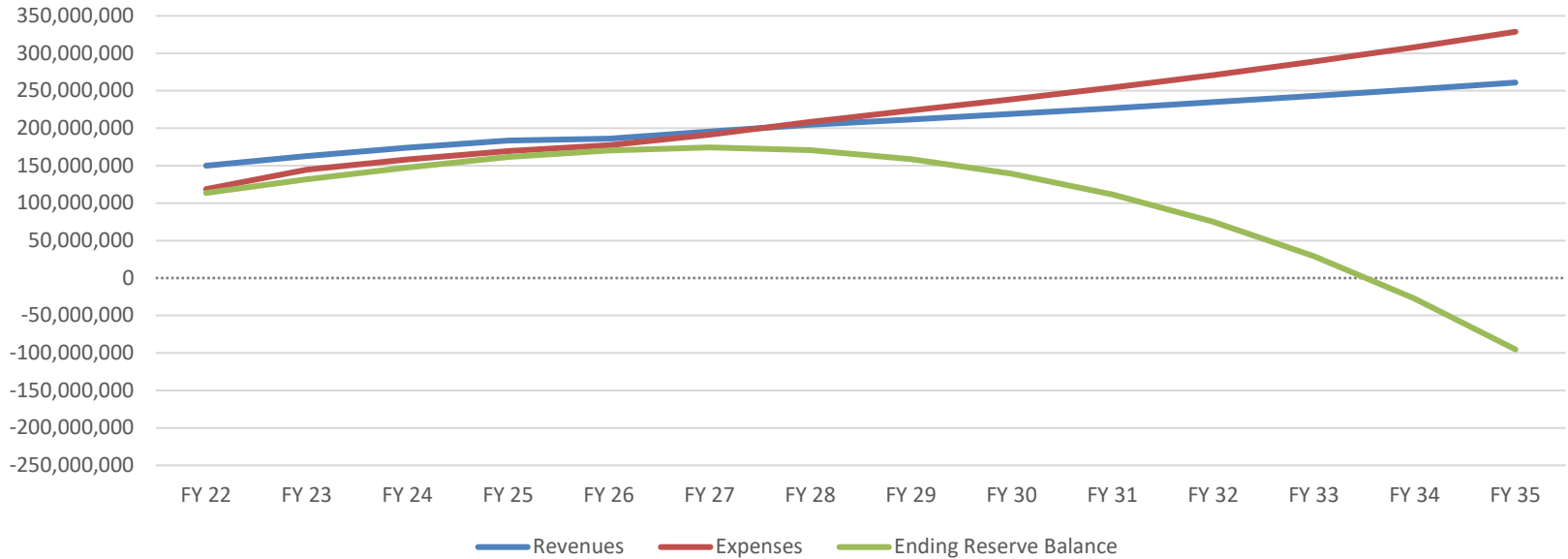
Loss of Valuation

FISCAL YEAR	 LOSS OF HOMESTEAD VALUE	 LOSS OF TOTAL VALUE
 FY 2028	51.11% 	25.00% 
 FY 2029	70.85% 	34.66% 

General Fund Projection

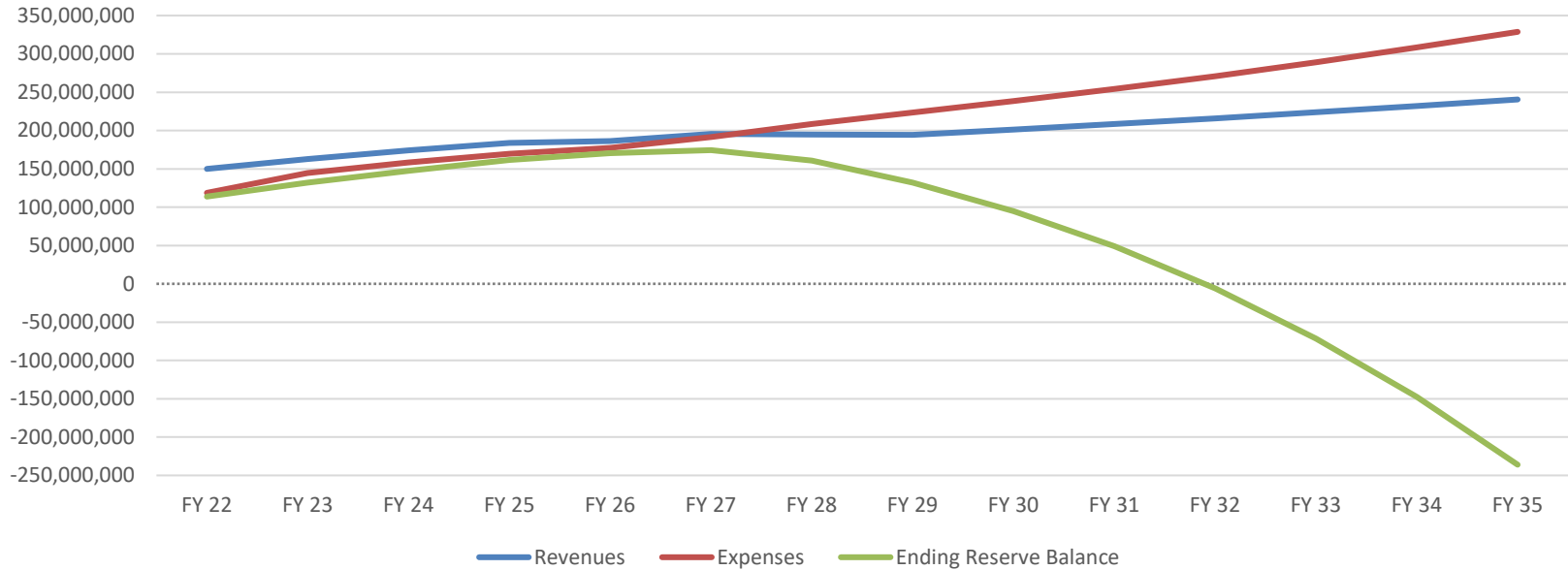


General Fund Updated Projection



*Assumes Valuation Increase of 2.4% FY27, 3% FY28, 3.5% Future Years

General Fund Compounded Exemption Projection

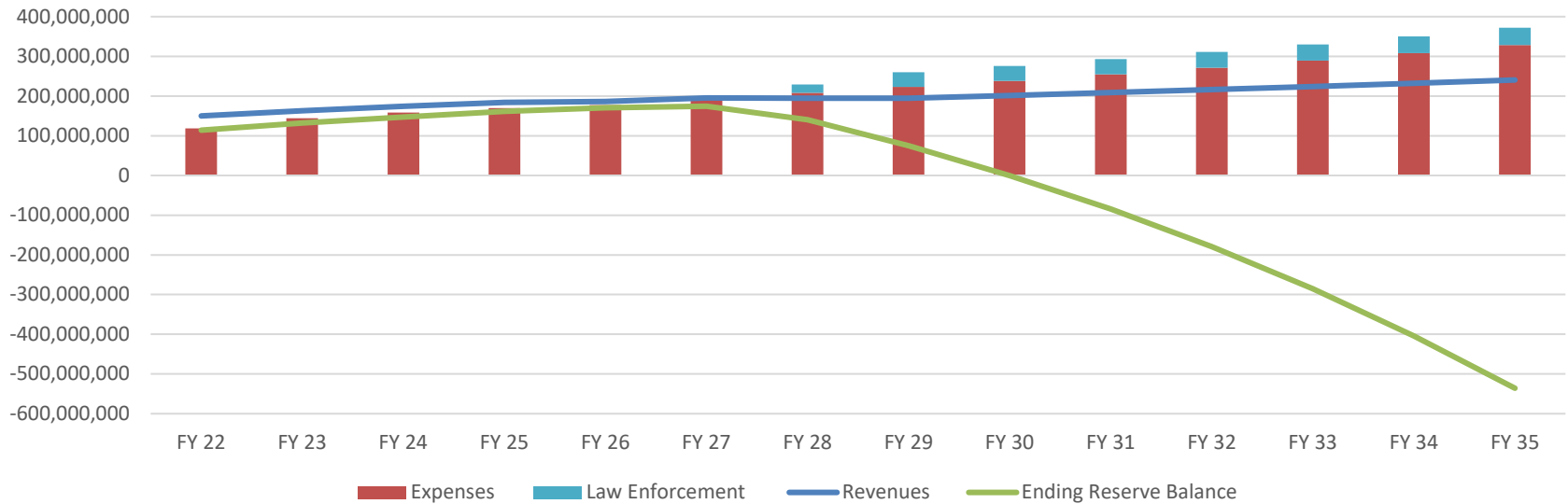


*Assumes Exemption Inflationary Increase of 3% in Future Years



General Fund

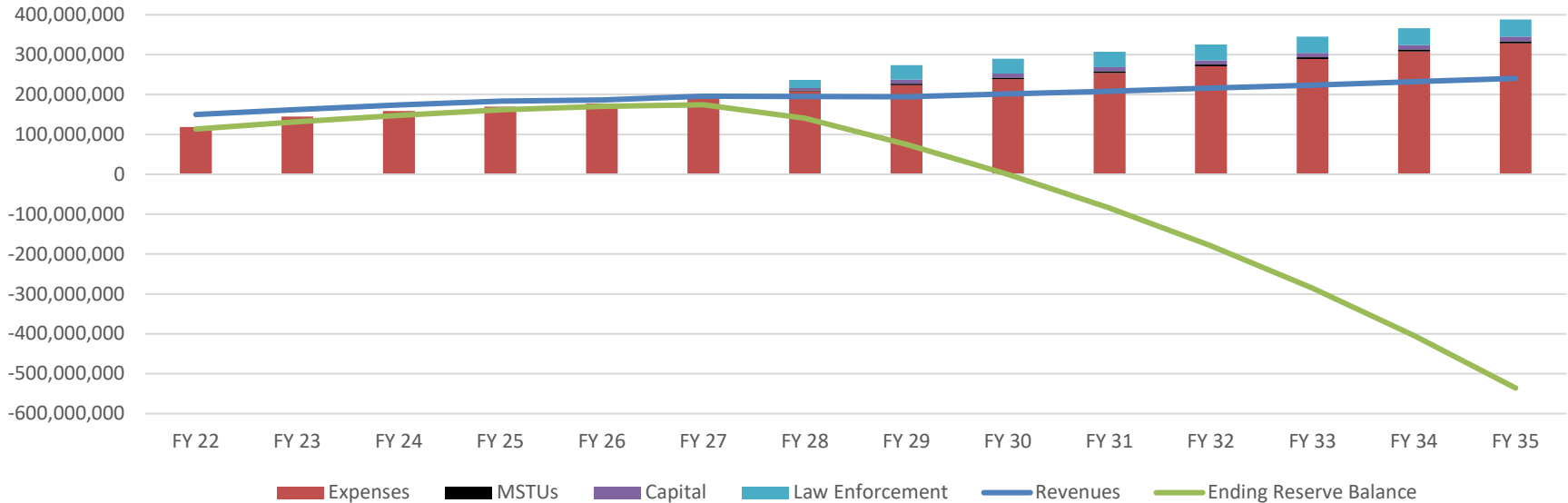
Compounded Exemption Projection (including Sheriff)



*Assumes Exemption Inflationary Increase of 3% in Future Years

General Fund

Compounded Exemption Projection (including all Ad Valorem)



*Assumes Exemption Inflationary Increase of 3% in Future Years



Additional Impacts



POTENTIAL PRESSURE ON CREDIT RATINGS

- Potential negative impacts to bond ratings
- Increased scrutiny from credit rating agencies and lenders
- Potential effects on financing costs for future capital projects



LOWER EMERGENCY READINESS

- Reduced reserves may hinder response to future hurricanes



SERVICE IMPACTS

- Potential reduction in levels of service



LESS LOCAL CONTROL OVER FUTURE TAX RATES

- Limits future millage-setting options

Millage Rate Implications



Higher Millage Rates Require Higher Levels of Approval



**AT OR BELOW
ROLLBACK RATE**



STANDARD APPROVAL

May be adopted through the normal budget process.



**ABOVE ROLLBACK RATE
UP TO 110%**

2/3

**TWO-THIRDS
BOARD VOTE**

Requires a two-thirds vote of the governing body.



**ABOVE 110%
OF ROLLBACK RATE**



UNANIMOUS BOARD VOTE
(or 3/4 vote if 9+ members)

OR



VOTER REFERENDUM
Approval

Future Considerations

