



2024 FLORIDA LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UP :

Florida's 2024 Legislative Session ended on March 8, leaving Governor Ron DeSantis until June 30 to sign bills into law. This year, 1,487 bills were filed, with 325 of those bills passing in both chambers. The FPSC's Legislative Affairs team monitored key bills, as well as the State of Florida's budget for the next fiscal year, which is waiting for the Governor's pen. Below are the Commission's key Legislative takeaways.

FPSC TAKEAWAYS :

BILLS

SB 364 - Public Service Commission Rules by Senator Collins was approved by the legislature and sent to the Governor for signature. In 2023, the Legislature saw fit to include language in the Implementing Bill (SB 2502) which exempts the FPSC RAF rules from legislative ratification for one year (expiring July 1, 2024). SB 364 continues that exemption for FPSC RAF rules from legislative ratification until July 1, 2028. Under this bill, the PSC will continue to provide Statements of Estimated Regulatory Costs (SERCs). Effective upon becoming a law.

SB 366 - Civil Penalties Under the Gas Safety Law of 1967 by Senator Yarborough was approved by the legislature and sent to the Governor for signature. The legislation raises the per-violation civil penalty to \$266,015 until June 30, 2025, with a maximum penalty of \$2,660,135 for related series of violations during this period. After July 1, 2025, the legislation assigns the FPSC the responsibility to establish maximum penalties based on the Consumer Price Index, federal pipeline safety penalties, and legislative intent to maintain certification with the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration. Requires the Commission to annually review and, if necessary, revise these penalties and adopt rules for implementing these provisions. Effective, July 1, 2024.

SB 478 - Designation of Eligible Telecommunications Carriers by Senator Rodriguez was approved by the legislature and sent to the Governor for signature. The legislation amends section 364.10, F.S., modifying the definition of "eligible telecommunications carrier" to include a broader range of entities. Authorizes the FPSC to designate entities, upon petition, as eligible telecommunications carriers for Lifeline service, provided they are telecommunications companies or commercial mobile radio service providers. Confirms the legislative intention to empower the Commission to approve various types of entities for Lifeline service provision. Effective upon becoming a law.

HB 1645 - Energy Resources by Representative Payne was approved by the legislature and sent to the Governor for signature. This omnibus bill contains numerous provisions related to energy:

- Provides an updated statement of legislative intent concerning the state's energy policy and establishes a list of specific, fundamental policy goals to guide the state's energy policy.
- Updates energy policy statements in current law and the duties of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to be consistent with the state's energy policy goals.
- Requires the FPSC to determine, upon notice by a public utility, whether an off-schedule power plant

retirement is prudent and consistent with the state's energy policy goals.

- Requires rural electric cooperatives and municipal electric utilities to have at least one mutual aid agreement with another electric utility for purposes of restoring power after a natural disaster.
- Increases the minimum length of an intrastate natural gas pipeline that requires certification under the Natural Gas Transmission Pipeline Siting Act from 15 miles to 100 miles.
- Defines the term "gross capacity" for purposes of the Florida Electrical Power Plant Siting Act.
- Provides that certain "resiliency facilities" owned and operated by a public utility that deploy natural gas reserves for temporary use during a system outage or natural disaster are a permitted use in certain land use categories and districts, subject to setback and landscape criteria for other similar uses.
- Provides for the recovery of certain facility relocation costs incurred by a natural gas utility through a charge separate from the utility's base rates.
- Prohibits the construction or expansion of offshore wind energy facilities and certain wind turbines located on real property within a mile of the state's coastline or intracoastal waterways or on waters of the state.
- Requires the FPSC to develop a plan to conduct an assessment of the security and resiliency of the state's electric grid and natural gas facilities against both physical threats and cyber threats.
- Allows the FPSC to approve utility programs for electric vehicle charging under certain conditions.
- Repeals the Renewable Energy and Energy-Efficient Technologies Grant Program, Florida Green Government Grants, the Energy Economic Zone Pilot Program, and Qualified Energy Conservation Bonds provisions.
- Prohibits community development districts and homeowners' associations from prohibiting certain types or fuel sources of energy production and appliances that use such fuels.
- Requires the FPSC to study and evaluate the technical and economic feasibility of using advanced nuclear power technologies and to submit a report of its findings and recommendations.
- Requires the Department of Transportation to study and evaluate the potential development of hydrogen fueling infrastructure to support hydrogen-powered vehicles on the state highway system. Effective, July 1, 2024.

BUDGET

In total, the budget came out to \$117.5 billion. Florida's reserves total \$10 billion, more than 8.51 percent of the total budget for Fiscal Year 2024-2025.

The FPSC Legislative Affairs team is gearing up for the 2025 Legislative Session, which will convene from March 4-May 2, 2025.