

On Friday, June 2nd, the Governor, Senate President Negrón, and House Speaker Corcoran, held a joint press conference to announce a three-day special session, which began on June 7th and ended on June 9th. In the initial proclamation, reasons for the special session were to consider increasing K-12 education funding, transparency and accountability measures for VISIT Florida, and creation of a new \$85 million Florida Job Growth Grant Fund to promote public infrastructure projects and workforce training.

On June 7th, the Legislature came to an apparent agreement about carrying out the voter-approved constitutional amendment that broadly legalized medical marijuana for patients with debilitating illnesses. While the issue was not in the Governor's initial call for a special session, he nonetheless expanded it to include not only medical marijuana, but also funding for the Herbert Hoover Dike, and Higher Education funding. The Senate also attempted to include a hospital funding bill; however, special session was not expanded to include that subject. Below are brief summaries of the legislation passed pertaining to each of the issues approved during Special Session.

Medical Marijuana

[SB 8A – Relating to the Use of Medical Marijuana](#), implements the 2016 voter-approved constitutional amendment (Amendment 2). The bill establishes procedures for physicians to issue prescriptions to patients who have the following qualifying medical conditions: cancer, epilepsy, glaucoma, HIV, AIDS, PTSD, ALS, Crohn's disease, Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, or other debilitating medical condition of the same kind or class as, or comparable to, those listed above. The bill also includes chronic nonmalignant pain and a terminal condition as qualifying medical conditions. SB 8A also outlines the requirements physicians must meet prior to prescribe medical marijuana to patients.

SB 8A authorizes the taking of marijuana in vapor and edible forms but prohibits smoking marijuana. The bill also establishes requirements for Medical Marijuana Treatment Centers (MMTC). The Department of Health (DOH) will provide licenses to dispensing organizations originally licensed to distribute low-THC marijuana under §381.986, F.S. These organizations can begin dispensing marijuana on July 3, 2017. The DOH is required to license and additional 10 MMTC applicants that met certain criteria by August 1, 2017 or October 3, 2017; and within 6 months after the medical marijuana use registry contains 100,000 active qualified patients, an additional five dispensing facilities may be authorized for each licensed MMTC. Each MMTC is required to locate its dispensaries within five regions according to county population estimates for the counties within each region, and any MMTC that does not establish a dispensing facility within a region, may sell the regional slot to another MMTC.

Finally, the bill also preempts to the state the regulation of cultivation, processing, transporting, and dispensing of marijuana by MMTCs. The bill, however authorizes counties and municipalities to ban MMTC dispensing facilities within their borders. However, if a county or municipality does not ban dispensing facilities, it may not place any restrictions on the number of dispensing

facilities allowed within its jurisdiction. Also, it may not adopt any regulations or fees for dispensing facilities that are more restrictive than its ordinances regulating pharmacies.

VISIT Florida & Florida Job Growth Fund

The Governor and House Speaker Corcoran agreed to set aside their differences when it came to Florida's tourism and marketing industry. The passage of [HB 1A – Economic Programs](#), creates the Florida Job Growth Grant Fund within the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) to improve public infrastructure and enhance workforce training, by allowing the department and Enterprise Florida, Inc. (EFI) to identify projects, solicit proposals, and make funding recommendations to the Governor – who is authorized to approve:

- (1) State or local public infrastructure projects to promote economic recovery, economic diversification, or economic enhancement in a targeted industry;
- (2) Infrastructure funding to accelerate the rehabilitation of the Herbert Hoover Dike; and
- (3) Workforce training grants to support programs at state colleges and state technical centers.

The bill allocates \$16 million to DEO to contract with EFI, \$76 million to DEO to contract with VISIT Florida, and \$85 million to the Job Growth Grant Fund. In addition to providing funding at the levels the Governor had requested, additional transparency and good governance reforms specific to EFI and VISIT Florida, and the creation of a targeted marketing program to focus on statewide advertising efforts were included in HB 1A. The bill also includes \$50 million for the Herbert Hoover Dike rehabilitation and repairs in Lake Okeechobee.

Education

The Governor vetoed Florida Education Finance Program funding in the GAA passed during Regular Session. The Legislature approved [HB 3A – Relating to the Florida Education Finance Program \(FEFP\)](#), increasing the primary funds of K-12 public education by \$215 million. Specifically, the bill provides \$7,296.23 in total funds per student, which is a \$100 increase over total funds per student provided in FY 2016-17. The bill also establishes a base student allocation (BSA) of \$4,203.95 in the FEFP for FY 2017-18 which is a \$43.24 increase over the BSA for FY 2016-17.

While some Senators and Representatives felt, the amount was not sufficient to cover the costs associated with HB 7069, the Legislature passed HB 3A. The funding for FEFP represents the highest base funding per student in the state's history. Lastly, the bill provides \$60 million for 17 higher education facility projects that were originally included with the GAA, but vetoed by the Governor.

The Legislature approved all bills and timely ended ("sine die") Special Session on Friday, June 9, 2017.