



# FLORIDA RESTAURANT & LODGING ASSOCIATION

## 2026 Legislative Agenda





# FRLA Government Relations Team



Carol Dover  
***FRLA, President/CEO***



Samantha Padgett  
***FRLA, VP Government Relations & General Counsel***



Heather Campbell  
***FRLA, Government Relations Manager***



Andie Levings  
***FRLA, Executive Assistant to President/CEO***



Warren Husband  
***Metz, Husband & Daughton, PA***



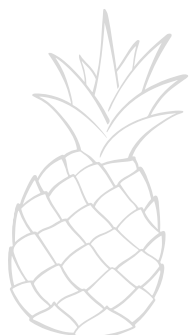
Andy Palmer  
***Metz, Husband & Daughton, PA***



Alli Liby-Schoonover  
***Metz, Husband & Daughton, PA***

## QUESTIONS? PLEASE CONTACT:

Vice President of Government Relations & General Counsel,  
Samantha Padgett at [spadgett@frla.org](mailto:spadgett@frla.org)  
Government Relations Manager,  
Heather Campbell at [hcampbell@frla.org](mailto:hcampbell@frla.org)



FRLA.ORG

# FRLA 2026 Legislative Agenda

## Tourist Development Tax

The Tourist Development Tax (TDT) is Florida's designated source of revenue for the promotion and marketing of tourism. Tourism is Florida's largest industry and the biggest driver of our economy. Promoting and marketing tourism in Florida is vital for the long-term prosperity of our residents and communities.

TDT needs to be preserved for the promotion and marketing of tourism. We do not support eliminating, redirecting, sweeping, or swapping these funds. We do support transparency, accountability, and clarification of administration and use.

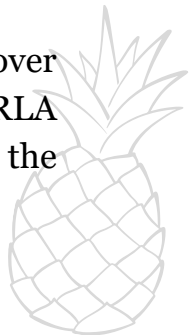
There are many different entities involved in this issue. We support bringing the impacted parties to the table to find realistic and practical solutions that address concerns while also facilitating the promotion and marketing of Florida's tourism industry.

## Property Taxes

We applaud the work of Florida's Legislature and Governor to examine the issue of property taxes and make home ownership more affordable for Floridians. As solutions are being considered, we urge our policymakers to ensure that reductions in residential property taxes do not lead to increases in commercial property taxes. Though commercial property tax increases may not be paid directly by individuals, they result in cost increases that impact all Floridians and Florida's overall economy. Property taxes should be affordable for all of Florida's citizens, both residential and corporate.

## VISIT FLORIDA Funding

VISIT FLORIDA plays a vital role in attracting visitors to our beautiful state from all over the world, and the good work of VISIT FLORIDA has never been more necessary. FRLA supports continued funding for VISIT FLORIDA. FRLA further supports removing the sunset date to facilitate continued strategic planning and marketing.



# FRLA 2026 Legislative Agenda

## Special Food Service Liquor License

**HB 87 by Representative Brackett (R- Vero Beach)**

**SB 0392 by Senator Leek (R- Ormond Beach)**

In 2023, FRLA was successful in reducing the requirements of the Special Food Service liquor license (SFS) to 2000 sq. ft. and 120 seats. This created opportunities for restaurants with a smaller footprint. If adopted in 2026, Senate Bill 392/House Bill 87 will further reduce these requirements to 1200 sq. ft. and 80 seats. Designed to accommodate historical downtown buildings and smaller dining spaces, this bill will create new possibilities for successful restaurant ventures throughout Florida.

FRLA supports this bill.

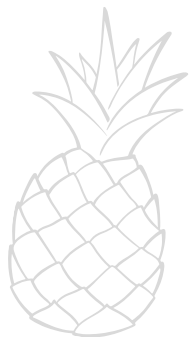
## Pennies

**HB 951 by Representative McFarland (R- Sarasota)**

**SB 1074 by Senator Gaetz (R- Crestview)**

Following the decision to stop minting pennies in the US, there are now considerably fewer pennies in circulation. It is expected that this number will continue to decrease. This creates challenges for Florida merchants who need to issue exact change to customers during cash transactions. If the change due does not end in a '5' or '0', customers and merchants need specific and clear guidance regarding how rounding should occur in order to issue the correct change to a customer. The proposed legislation provides this much-needed guidance.

FRLA supports this bill.



# FRLA 2026 Legislative Agenda

## Hemp Beverages

Hemp beverages have been gaining popularity in the marketplace. If the state chooses to make such sales lawful, the existing licensing and regulatory system for alcohol should be adapted and expanded to include these intoxicating beverages. Just as restaurateurs and hoteliers have been licensed to lawfully sell alcoholic beverages for decades in compliance with Florida statutes and regulations, they should also be permitted to sell these intoxicating beverages in compliance with the laws and regulations set forth by the state.

## Smoking in Public Places

**HB 389 by Representative Andrade (R- Pensacola)**

**SB 0986 by Senator Gruters (R- Sarasota)**

Florida statutes contain clear provisions regarding the prohibition of tobacco smoke in indoor spaces and places of employment. Similar provisions do not currently exist in regard to marijuana smoke. FRLA supports expanding the provisions of Florida's Indoor Clean Air Act to include a prohibition of marijuana smoke in places of employment.

## Food Additives and Labeling

Adopting state-specific standards for food additives and food labeling will create difficulties in sourcing, supply, and compliance. Complying with standards different than those of neighboring states will make it challenging and expensive to produce or acquire compliant products. The federal government is hard at work evaluating and assessing these same challenging issues.

We support compliance with a consistent federal standard. If it is determined that a Florida-specific standard is needed, food suppliers, retailers, and merchants need a VERY long runway in order to serve the needs of its customers and comply with new regulations in this space.



# FRLA 2026 Legislative Agenda

## Water Quality

Florida's beaches, rivers, and lakes attract millions to our beautiful state annually. Poor water quality negatively affects Florida's tourism-based economy, as well as its residents and communities.

FRLA supports sound and sustainable water quality policies that balance the needs of various groups and industries while also seeking to protect health of our water supply long into the future and the beauty of our state.

## Arts and Culture Funding

Unique cultural experiences, museums, and art-focused offerings draw citizens and visitors to communities throughout Florida. Be it music, theater, art, history, or world-renowned festivals, these cultural offerings play a key role in the success of Florida's tourism industry.

FRLA encourages the legislature to fund Florida's meaningful and impactful artistic and cultural endeavors.

