

2026

FLORIDA LEGISLATIVE SESSION SUMMARY

The 2026 Florida Legislative Session started on January 13 and ran through March 13 with 237 bills passing (including 44 local bills) out of the 1,896 bills filed. However, the session did not officially adjourn until May 29 due to significant differences held up in budget negotiations. The governor signed the budget officially on June 29. Two other special sessions were held in the spring/summer dealing with redistricting (April 28–29) and property taxes (June 1–3). The governor attempted to get the Florida House and Senate to revisit the medical freedom legislation addressing vaccines, but was denied. FAFP President Dr. Danielle Carter traveled to Tallahassee to testify against this legislation on April 28, but thankfully no hearing was ever held due to the unwillingness of the House to take the issue up. The FAFP continues to work with its political consultants at Metz, Husband, and Daughton and contracted legal team strongly oppose any further legislative or regulatory effort to remove the mandates until the new governor is elected in November. In addition to the vaccine legislation, the main issues facing family physicians during the 2026 session were as follows:

BILLS THAT PASSED

- ✓ **Naturopathy** (HB 223 and SB 688)
 ✗ The naturopathy bill passed the House and Senate, but Governor DeSantis vetoed the bill on June 26 by stating it would establish unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles and licensing fees as well as negatively impact access to naturopathic therapies. This legislation was strenuously opposed by the FAFP and organized medicine due to scope of practice implications.
- ✓ **Sickle Cell Disease Education** (HB 353 and SB 844)
 Ultimately this legislation passed, but, as originally filed, this bill would have required all physicians to take a mandatory CME course on sickle cell disease care management.

While sickle cell disease is a serious disorder that deserves attention and education, the FAFP opposes any legislation that mandates additional mandatory CME for Florida's family physicians. Heavy lobbying efforts convinced the bill sponsors to include the topic of sickle cell disease education into the existing two-hour mandatory controlled substance CME statute (passed in 2018). The bill was signed by the governor and the FAFP has already included the topic into all live and enduring education.

✓ **Florida Birth-Related Neurological Injury Compensation Association (NICA)** (HB 1291 and SB 1668)

This legislation passed with the intention to revise the statutory provisions relating to the financial oversight of NICA. The FAFP worked hard to ensure any additional financial assessments to family physicians who perform deliveries are not negatively impacted. Of course, the concern extends to family medicine residencies who are required to provide obstetrics care as part of training.

BILLS THAT FAILED

- ✗ **Medical Freedom:** Would have created a statutory nonmedical exemption from immunization requirements for a child attending a K-12 school if the administration of a vaccine conflicts with the parent's conscience. The bill also would have authorized pharmacists to provide ivermectin as a behind-the-counter medication without a prescription to a person 18 years of age or older.

The FAFP opposed this legislation strenuously throughout the 2026 legislative session, despite SB 1756 passing the Senate, and was pleased to see it not even be heard in the House. As noted above, the governor attempted to bring this legislation back during a special session but was denied by both the Senate and the House.

Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Autonomous Practice: Would have authorized certain advanced practice registered nurses to engage in autonomous mental health practice.

Autonomous Practice by a Certified Nurse Anesthesiologist: Would have authorized certified nurse anesthesiologists to practice anesthesia services autonomously.

Acupuncture: Would have modernized Florida's acupuncture statutes by updating definitions, licensure qualifications, and continuing education requirements while removing outdated references.

Parental Rights: Would have expanded parental rights in minors' healthcare and school-related decision-making by requiring explicit parental consent including having STDs treated, which can have problematic consequences for the health and well-being of the child.

Physician Assistants: Would have expanded physician assistants' authority by allowing them to practice without physician supervision.

Prescribing Authority for Physician Assistants: Would have expanded prescribing authority for physician assistants and advanced practice registered nurses while allowing them to practice without direct physician supervision during certain declared emergencies.

Practice of Chiropractic Medicine: Would have expanded the scope of practice to allow prescribing and administration of certain substances.

A special thanks to FAFP's political consultants Jim Daughton, Esq., and Aimee Diaz Lyon, Esq., along with their entire team at Metz, Husband, and Daughton, for their expertise and support in representing the interests of Florida's Family Physicians in Tallahassee and beyond!



1) Dr. Michael Swartzon and Senator Ana Maria Rodriguez, **2)** Dr. Thomas Clem, Senator Danny Burgess and Dr. Cristian Perez Monsalve, **3)** Dr. Danielle Carter and resident, Dr. Elise Gonzalez, **4)** Dr. Markeeta Belmar, Senator Nick DiCeglie and Dr. Michael Cromer, **5)** Dr. Michael Allison and Senator Ed Hooper, **6)** Resident, Dr. Steven Paul and Dr. Christy Cavanagh, **7)** Resident, Dr. Alexis Flynn-Hanlon, Senator Tom Leek and Dr. Carrie Vey, **8)** Resident, Dr. Elijah Ibadlit and Dr. Michael Allison, **9)** Resident, Dr. Nicole Mignot, Senator Jason Brodeur and Dr. Kamini Geer, **10)** Dr. Michael Swartzon, **11)** Jim Daughton (MHD), student, Alexandria Tolbert, Aimee Diaz Lyon (MHD) and Dr. Diane Day, **12)** Dr. Daniel Montero, resident, Dr. Jason Willis and Senator Jennifer Bradley, **13)** Resident, Dr. Cynthia Maza Perez and Dr. Alfred Gitu, **14)** Dr. Julia Jenkins and resident, Dr. Zach Harrison.