

BUDGETWATCH

THE GOVERNOR'S FY 2022-23 BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

With Flush State Coffers, the Governor's Budget Would Make Significant Investments While Leaving Billions in the Bank

As the Florida TaxWatch Budget Watch series¹ has been detailing, the budget outlook for the state is extremely rosy. The current budget is record in size, as are budget reserves. Revenue collections are back above pre-pandemic levels, and actual collections have bested the estimate for 14 consecutive months. And then there are the billions of dollars in federal aid that Florida has received and is still coming.

Governor DeSantis's 2022-23 budget recommendations reflect the current fiscal environment. It totals \$99.7 billion and just like the current budget, the price tag does not fully account for all the spending it contains. There are billions of dollars in additional spending in the "back of the bill,"² including \$2.9 billion in new spending from the American Rescue Plan's (ARP) Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund, \$366.0 million from the ARP's Coronavirus Capital Project Grant Program, \$608.5 million from the federal Homeowners Assistance Funds, and \$324.2 million for the State Small Business Credit Initiative.

There is also millions in state spending in the proposed budget that is not counted because it is technically appropriated for the current fiscal year, including \$175.0 million for expedited Everglades restoration projects and \$50.0 million to track and manage all the federal aid.

The Governor's budget recommendations would increase General Revenue (GR) spending by \$580.6 million (1.6 percent) next year. He is proposing pay increases, including state employees, teachers, corrections officers, law enforcement officers, and another round of bonuses for first responders. He is also recommending a 2.4 percent per-student increase for public schools and nearly \$1 billion in funding for the Everglades and other water resources. This is coupled with more than \$1 billion in tax relief, while still leaving a record \$13.6 billion in GR reserves, including \$10.6 billion in unallocated GR (cash reserves).

¹ See the Florida TaxWatch Budget Hub at <https://floridatxwatch.org/Research/Budget-Hub>

² The last pages of the annual General Appropriations Act, following all the line-items making appropriations for the upcoming fiscal year. These additional sections include appropriations for prior fiscal years, reversions, reappropriations, trust fund sweeps, and other provisions. None of the dollars appropriated in the back of the bill are counted in the budget total.

BUDGET SNAPSHOT

Total Funding--\$99.677 billion. \$1.990 billion (2.0 percent) less than this year's record budget.

Federal Funding--\$36.293 billion. \$3.646 billion (10.0 percent) less than the current year. While this is less than is in the current budget, it understates the budget's spending of federal funds. There are billions more appropriated that are not included in the budget total, including \$2.9 billion from the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund.

General Revenue (GR) --\$37.049 billion. \$580.6 million (1.6 percent) more than the current year. The Governor's budget would spend \$1.9 billion less in recurring GR than is available.

State Employees - 14,007 state employee positions, 250 (1.8 percent) more than are currently funded. The Governor is also recommending several pay and benefit increases.

Taxes - The Governor proposes four tax holidays, including a five-month motor fuel tax holiday, reducing the tax by 25.3 cents per gallon to save \$1 billion. Back to School, Disaster Preparedness, and Freedom Week holidays are also proposed, saving consumers another \$141.9 million.

GR Reserves - An historic level of \$13.6 billion, including \$10.6 billion in unallocated General Revenue (cash) reserves. The Budget Stabilization Fund balance would add another \$3.0 billion. The Governor also claims \$1.7 billion in unallocated trust funds, which are normally not considered state reserves.

Trust Fund Sweeps - Even with an historic level of available GR, the Governor's budget sweeps (transfers) \$78.0 million from trust funds to general revenue.

Bonding - In recent history, new state bonding has largely been limited to transportation projects. After recommending additional bonding last year for Everglades restoration, state facilities, and his proposed Resilient Florida program, he is only recommending transportation bonding (\$859.3 million) this year. Again, there is no bonding for Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO).

FY2022-23 Governor's Budget Recommendations

Compared to Current Year (\$ millions)

Department/Agency	General Revenue	Trust Funds	Total	Current Year Total	+ / (-) Current Year	Positions (FTEs)	+ / - Current Year
Administered Funds (Statewide)	\$64.56	\$57.76	\$122.32	\$251.06	(\$128.73)	0	0
Agency for Health Care Admin.	\$9,492.59	\$27,309.79	\$36,802.37	\$35,442.03	\$1,360.34	1,545.50	16
Agency for Persons with Disabilities	\$712.26	\$1,007.58	\$1,719.84	\$1,658.82	\$61.02	2,698.50	-2
Agriculture and Consumer Services	\$87.63	\$1,643.31	\$1,730.94	\$1,774.32	(\$43.39)	3,778.25	52
Business and Professional Regulation	\$1.45	\$156.52	\$157.97	\$167.36	(\$9.39)	1,547.25	-106
Children and Families	\$2,078.41	\$1,531.81	\$3,610.22	\$3,765.33	(\$155.12)	12,231.75	1
Citrus	\$5.50	\$21.21	\$26.71	\$38.63	(\$11.91)	28	1
Corrections	\$2,894.42	\$89.02	\$2,983.44	\$2,913.43	\$70.01	25,220.00	-198
Economic Opportunity	\$64.65	\$1,100.13	\$1,164.78	\$1,105.38	\$59.40	1,518.00	9
Education	\$17,771.11	\$9,963.68	\$27,734.79	\$30,093.21	(\$2,358.41)	2,270.75	0
Elder Affairs	\$174.84	\$141.93	\$316.78	\$404.81	(\$88.03)	408	1
Environmental Protection	\$66.65	\$2,189.08	\$2,255.74	\$2,214.95	\$40.79	3,047.50	58
Executive Office of The Governor	\$184.51	\$643.07	\$827.58	\$1,696.19	(\$868.62)	541	88
Financial Services	\$23.59	\$393.59	\$417.18	\$414.27	\$2.92	2,584.50	17
Fish and Wildlife Conservation Comm.	\$66.08	\$367.64	\$433.71	\$431.25	\$2.46	2,153.50	39
Florida Commission on Offender Rev.	\$12.31	\$0.12	\$12.43	\$12.47	(\$0.04)	132	0
Health	\$557.06	\$2,660.36	\$3,217.42	\$3,168.77	\$48.64	12,681	0
Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles	\$0.00	\$515.47	\$515.47	\$508.49	\$6.98	4,338.00	4
Justice Administration	\$879.71	\$174.88	\$1,054.59	\$1,054.33	\$0.26	10,685.00	91.5
Juvenile Justice	\$449.03	\$146.08	\$595.12	\$587.76	\$7.36	3,247.50	8
Law Enforcement	\$144.27	\$158.47	\$302.73	\$314.68	(\$11.95)	1,953.00	21
Legal Affairs	\$71.72	\$295.67	\$367.39	\$370.92	(\$3.53)	1,473.50	189
Legislative Branch	\$216.75	\$2.59	\$219.35	\$219.31	\$0.04	0	0
Lottery	\$0.00	\$202.04	\$202.04	\$198.35	\$3.68	418.5	0
Management Services	\$87.35	\$691.56	\$778.91	\$946.19	(\$167.28)	1,191.50	-105
Military Affairs	\$35.61	\$43.49	\$79.10	\$70.36	\$8.75	462	9
Public Service Commission	\$0.00	\$27.82	\$27.82	\$28.01	(\$0.19)	274	0
Revenue	\$229.45	\$400.97	\$630.42	\$614.68	\$15.74	4,991.75	-28
State	\$83.07	\$50.78	\$133.85	\$119.44	\$14.41	467	53
State Court System	\$517.37	\$101.15	\$618.53	\$671.97	(\$53.45)	4,431.50	1
Transportation	\$0.00	\$10,443.37	\$10,443.37	\$10,252.62	\$190.75	6,175.00	0
Veterans' Affairs	\$76.58	\$97.39	\$173.97	\$157.44	\$16.52	1,513.50	31
Totals	\$37,048.56	\$62,628.32	\$99,676.87	\$101,666.83	(\$1,989.95)	114,007.25	250.5

Source: Florida TaxWatch, compiled using the Governor's Budget Recommendations, December 2021

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

CORONAVIRUS STATE FISCAL RECOVERY FUND (CSFRF)

Florida has received the first half of its allocation (\$4.4 billion) from the American Rescue Plan's CSFRF. This money was already appropriated by the 2021 Legislature, but no budget amendments to allocate the money were posted by June 30, 2021, so the money reverted and was reappropriated for FY 2021-22. Only three budget amendments have been posted: Payments to Pandemic First Responders (\$208.4 million); Transfer to the State Transportation Trust Fund (\$1,634.8 million); and Deferred Building Maintenance (286.1 million).

It is not certain when Florida will receive the other half of its allocation, but it is expected in Spring 2022. Of the \$4.4 billion still to come, \$3.5 billion has yet to be appropriated by the Legislature. The Governor proposes to appropriate \$2.9 billion of that amount for the items listed below.

- Teacher and Principal Retention Payments - \$238.0 million
- Payments To Pandemic First Responders - \$220.0 million
- Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program Stipends - \$40.0 million to provide a \$300 stipend for each fall and spring semester for Florida Academic Scholars to cover the costs of textbooks and college-related expenses.
- Workforce Development Capitalization Incentive Grants - \$100.0 million
- Resilient Florida Grant Program - \$500.0 million to assist with planning and implementation of projects focused on adaption to sea level rise, flooding and increasingly extreme weather events
- Florida Job Growth Grant - \$100.0 million
- Citrus Promotion Funding - \$15.0 million to expand the eCommerce and digital marketing program.
- Piney Point - \$100.0 million to continue the stabilization, water treatment, and closure of the Piney Point facility.
- Florida National Guard Armories - \$87.5 million to construct new readiness centers in Homestead, Malabar, and Gainesville and to expand the existing readiness center in Miramar.
- Mental Health Forensic Beds - \$36.1 million
- Workforce Information System - \$100.0 million
- State Emergency Operations Center - \$80.0 million to complete the construction of a new State Emergency Operations Center in Leon County
- Emergency Storage Facilities - \$75.0 million
- Rural Infrastructure Fund - \$100.0 million
- Florida Motor Fuel Tax Relief - \$1.120 billion to reimburse transportation funds (see Tax Cuts section)
- Alzheimer's Disease Research - \$10.0 million

These funds are appropriated in the "back of the bill," technically for the current fiscal year (2021-22), so the \$2.9 billion is not counted in the Governor's \$99.7 billion budget total. Any unexpended funds on June 30, 2022, will be reappropriated for FY 2022-23.

For more information on the many billions of dollars in federal aid allocated to Florida from the various COVID-19 recovery and stimulus acts, see the Florida TaxWatch report *Navigating Federal Pandemic Relief: Following billions in stimulus dollars, where do we go from here?*

TAX RELIEF

The Governor is recommending significant tax relief, totaling \$1.2 billion. Most of the tax savings are one-time, with the exception of the elimination of the \$25 fee for obtaining a Florida I.D. Card (non-driver's license), which will save \$14.7 million annually.

The rest of the proposed tax relief comes from four tax holidays, including one for the gas tax.

Motor Fuel Sales Tax Holiday - A five-month period (July-November 2022) during which the state gas tax will be reduced by 25.3 cents per gallon.³ This will cut taxes by an estimated \$1.016 billion (including \$80.4 million in local tax revenue). The legislation states that "It is the intent of the Legislature that the tax reduction set forth in this act be passed on to the ultimate consumer."⁴ This may not be easy to do, but the proposal makes violations a third-degree felony and directs the Attorney General to investigate violations.

The Governor proposes paying for this tax cut with money from the American Rescue Plan's (ARP) Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund. His budget appropriates \$1.120 billion (contingent on receipt from the U.S. Treasury) to reimburse the State Transportation Trust Fund and the Fuel Tax Collection Trust Fund.

The ARP prohibited states from using the funds to cut taxes but that provision was recently blocked by a federal judge in Alabama.⁵

Back to School Sales Tax Holiday - A ten-day period (July 30 to August 8, 2022) when clothing priced at \$60 or less, school supplies priced at \$15 or less, and the first \$1,000 of the sales price of computers and accessories purchased for noncommercial use would be exempt from sales taxes. This would provide \$56.0 million in state tax savings and \$16.9 million in local sales taxes.

Disaster Preparedness Sales Tax Holidays - A ten-day period (May 27 to June 5, 2022) when items such as flashlights, batteries, coolers and reusable ice, portable radios, generators, fuel tanks, tarps, and tie-down kits would be exempt from state and local sales taxes. This would provide \$8.5 million in state tax savings and \$2.5 million in local sales taxes.

Freedom Week Sales Tax Holiday - A seven-day period (July 1-7, 2022) when certain outdoor recreation purchases would be exempt. This includes the first \$100 of the sales price of sunglasses, the first \$200 of the sales price of tents, and the first \$500 of the sales price of kayaks or canoes, as well as tickets for events, museums, the arts, and more. This would provide \$44.1 million in state tax savings and \$13.3 million in local sales taxes. The 2021 Legislature enacted the first Freedom Week Sales Tax Holiday.

³ There are several different levies that make up motor fuel taxes in Florida. In 2022, the total state and local tax rate range from 33.425 to 39.425 cents per gallon, depending on the amount of local option taxes levied. Two of the levies, totaling 23.3 cents per gallon are indexed and increase automatically. The two cents per gallon constitutional gas tax and local taxes ranging from 6 to 12 cents per gallon will continue to be levied through the tax holiday. There is also a 18.3 cent federal tax on gasoline, 24.3 cents on diesel.

⁴ Governor's Budget Recommendation Conforming Bill - Fuel Tax Holiday.

⁵ Thirteen states, including Florida, filed suit over this provision. Associated Press, from U.S. News & World Report, Judge Blocks Tax Cut Rule in American Rescue Plan, November 16, 2021. <https://www.usnews.com/news/politics/articles/2021-11-16/judge-blocks-tax-cut-rule-in-american-rescue-plan>

SALARY AND BENEFITS ENHANCEMENTS

The Governor's budget recommendations make compensation increases a priority.

STATE EMPLOYEES

The Governor recommends:

- Providing \$225.0 million to give state employees (except OPS) an increase of up to four percent, at the agencies' discretion, to address pay inequities and wage compression as a result of the \$13 per hour minimum wage;
- Providing \$124.2 million to increase the base rate to \$20 per hour for Correctional Officers, Probation Officers, and Inspectors;
- Providing \$75.4 million to give the 4,500 state sworn law enforcement officers a 25 percent increase. Entry level officers will get a 20 percent increase, raising the base rate to \$61,200;
- Providing \$11.2 million to increase Department of Juvenile Justice Detention and Probation Officers pay to \$17 and \$19 per hour;
- Providing \$3 million for a \$6,000 pay increase to over 400 attorneys at the Department of Legal Affairs; and
- Providing \$1.4 million to increase the salaries of 580 state firefighters.

TEACHERS

The Teacher Salary Increase Allocation in the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) would be increased by \$50 million to \$600 million to continue to raise the minimum K-12 teacher salary to \$47,500, as well as salary increases for veteran teachers and other eligible instructional personnel.

Eligible teachers and principals would also receive a \$1,000 retention bonus (after taxes). These bonuses would be paid for with \$238.0 million in American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding.

FIRST RESPONDERS

The Governor also wants to use \$220.0 million in ARP funds to give state and local first responders another \$1,000 retention bonus. Last session, the Legislature appropriated \$208.4 million in ARP funds for a \$1,000 first responder bonus.

DIRECT CARE STAFF

The Governor is recommending \$226.5 million through increased provider rates to support higher pay for direct care staff in Home and Community Based Settings in the Agency for Health Care Administration and the Agency for Persons with Disabilities.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

The employer contribution to the accounts of employees participating in the Florida Retirement System Investment Plan would be increased by three percent of the member's salary. This would increase annual contributions to employee retirement accounts by \$250 million.

EDUCATION

K-12 Education – The Governor is recommending a \$189 (2.4 percent) increase in per student funding, raising it to an even \$8,000 per student. Total funding for the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) is \$23.893 billion, a \$1.488 billion increase. Most of the increased funding comes from state revenues (\$918.2 million), with the rest coming from local property taxes. The Governor is recommending keeping the same millage rate, as opposed to the rolled-back rate, for Required Local Effort school property taxes. This allows property tax revenue to grow by new construction and the increase in property values. Exceeding the rolled-back rate is considered by many to be a tax increase, although the Governor’s Office has stated they do not view it that way⁶.

The proposed increase in FEFP funding includes \$473.0 million (3.5 percent) in the base student allocation.⁷ The Teacher Salary Increase Allocation would be increased by \$50.0 million (10.0 percent) to continue raising the minimum teacher salary to \$47,500. The Mental Health Assistance Allocation would also be increase by \$20 million (16.7 percent) and the Safe Schools Allocation would increase by \$30.0 million (16.7 percent).

Teacher and Principal Bonuses – In addition to the FEFP salary funding, the Governor proposes using \$238 million in ARP funds to give \$1,000 bonuses.

Early Learning – Funding is down almost \$500 million from last year’s federal funds infused level. School readiness services is funding is level, and funding for VPK is down slightly, due to fewer students (per student funding is the same).

Higher Education – Florida colleges and universities, as well as private colleges and universities, would both see small decreases in total funding. No tuition increase is recommended.

Education Fixed Capital Outlay – The Governor recommends \$190.9 million for charter schools and \$69.3 million for colleges for maintenance, repair, and renovation. No maintenance funding is provided for traditional public schools or universities. Six rural counties (Baker, Bradford, Calhoun, Jackson, Levy, and Okeechobee) would receive \$85.0 million for public school construction projects. No college or university construction projects are funded⁸, with the exception of the Freedom Tower at Miami-Dade College (\$25.0 million).

ENVIRONMENT

One of the Governor’s top priorities has been restoring and protecting Florida’s water resources—especially expediting Everglades restoration and preventing harmful algal blooms in waterbodies such as Lake Okeechobee and the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee estuaries. In 2019, he issued an executive order calling for \$2.5 billion in water investments over four years.⁹ The Governor says the \$980 million in his new budget recommendations would push the total four-year investment to \$3.0 billion.

⁶ Governor’s Budget Director Chris Spencer, answering a question from Rep. Randy Fine after a presentation to the House Appropriations Committee on the Governor’s budget recommendations, February 3, 2021.

⁷ The BSA is the portion of FEFP funding that school districts can use at their discretion.

⁸ The 2021 Legislature appropriated \$191.0 million in Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Funds from the American Rescue plan for college and university construction projects. However, a budget amendment to release those funds has yet to be adopted.

⁹ This investment is supported by Florida TaxWatch research. For more info see We Can’t Wait on Water: The Restoration and Protection of Florida’s Water Resources is an Essential Taxpayer Investment, January 2020.

Everglades Restoration (\$660 million), including \$372 million for Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan projects and \$83.3 million for Northern Everglades and Estuaries protection. The budget also includes \$69.0 million for the Everglades Agricultural Area reservoir project created by the Legislature in 2017 and \$50.0 million for specific project components designed to achieve the greatest reductions in harmful discharges to the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie Estuaries.

Targeted Water Quality Improvements (\$195 million), including: \$125 million wastewater grants and \$50 million to accelerate projects to meet scientific nutrient reduction goals (Total Maximum Daily Loads).

The package also funds **springs restoration** (\$50 million), **beach restoration** (\$50 million), an **alternative water supply grant program** (\$40 million), and \$35 million to combat **harmful algal blooms** (including the Blue-Green Algae Task Force).

In addition, the Governor recommends \$90 million for the **Florida Forever** land acquisition program which would focus on land that protect water resources.

Resilient Florida Grant Program - This program, created last year, would receive over \$550 million, including \$500 million in CSFRF funds for statewide resiliency projects and \$50 million for planning and coral reef protection.

Manatee Protection - The proposed budget includes \$3.8 million, mostly to expand the network of specialized acute care facilities to treat injured and distressed manatees. Florida has experienced unprecedented manatee deaths this year.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Medicaid - The Governor budget contains \$37.3 billion in Medicaid/TANF expenditures. This includes \$15.0 billion in state funds (\$9.9 billion in GR). Caseloads are expected to fall slightly next year (-2.0 percent) but are still significantly higher than pre-pandemic. There are expected to be 1.1 million (29.5 percent) more enrollees than in FY 2019-10. Further, the increased federal match instituted during the pandemic is expected to expire. One bit of good news, that increase match has been extended through March 2022, which frees up \$404 million in state funds expected to be spent in the current year to be spent next year.

Persons with Disabilities - The budget includes \$25.5 million in funding to include an additional 480 individuals in the Medicaid iBudget program, which helps people with developmental disabilities live at home or in their communities.

Elder Affairs - An additional \$10 million is provided for 1,000 seniors to receive services through the Alzheimer's Disease Initiative and the Community Care for Elderly Program and \$15 million (increase of \$10 million) support Alzheimer's Disease Research.

Cancer Research - Florida's National Cancer Institute Program is provided \$100 million (an increase of \$37 million).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORTATION

VISIT FLORIDA - Florida TaxWatch research has shown the value in funding tourism marketing and strongly cautioned against elimination and those programs.¹⁰ With the potential sunset of VISIT Florida in 2023 still looming, the Governor is recommending \$50.0 million for VISIT Florida (level funding).¹¹

Strategic Business Development

- Enterprise Florida - \$12.0 million, a \$2.4 million decrease.
- Economic Development Tools - \$33.5 million (\$13 million increase) to continue incentives for business that are meeting their contractual commitments to create jobs and capital investment.
- Florida Job Growth Fund - \$100.0 million (\$50 million increase) in CSFRF funds for grants for job training and local infrastructure projects with a proven return on investment. The 2021 Legislature appropriated \$50 million from the federal aid for the job fund, but a budget amendment to release the funds has yet to be adopted.
- Space Florida - \$18.5 million (level funding).

Affordable Housing - The Governor fully funds affordable housing at \$355.5 million, as recommended by Florida TaxWatch.¹² This includes \$40.0 million to create a revolving loan program for workforce housing that provides support for homeownership, including down payment assistance and closing costs.

The budget also includes \$608.5 million in federal Homeowner Assistance Funds from the American Rescue Plan to help mitigate some of the COVID-19 financial hardships experienced by Florida homeowners. This includes funds to help prevent mortgage delinquencies, defaults, foreclosures, loss of utilities or home energy services, and displacement through payment of qualified expenses related to mortgages and housing.

Rural Economic Development - The budget includes \$105 million (\$100 million increase from the CSFRF) for the Rural Infrastructure Fund to support local rural infrastructure projects such as roads, storm and wastewater systems, and telecommunications facilities. There is also \$1.17 million for the Rural Community Development Revolving Loan Program and \$8.5 million for Technical Assistance, Planning, and Site Development Grants.

Transportation - The Governor proposes using federal aid funds to replace the \$1 billion in gas tax revenue lost through his Motor Fuel Tax Holiday (see Tax Cuts section). His budget funds the Department of Transportation's work program at \$9.3 billion, including:

- \$3.6 billion for highway construction to include 138 new lane miles;
- \$1.2 billion for resurfacing 2,637 lane miles;
- \$297 million for aviation improvements;
- \$598 million for rail/transit program improvements;
- \$185 million for repair of 52 bridges and replacement of 17 bridges;
- \$155 million for safety initiatives; and
- \$117 million in seaport infrastructure improvements.

¹⁰ Florida TaxWatch, "Investing in Tourism: Analyzing the Economic Impact of Expanding Florida Tourism," January 2013.

¹¹ There is legislation before the 2021 Legislature (HB 489 and SB 434) to extend the sunset date to October 2031.

¹² Florida TaxWatch, "The Legislature Must Stop Diverting Affordable Housing Funding," April 2019.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND THE COURTS

Under the Governor's plan, the **Department of Corrections'** budget would increase by \$70.0 million (2.4 percent). Several appropriations attempt to address the severe staffing shortages at Florida's prisons. Increasing the base rate of pay to \$20 per hour for specified positions will cost \$124.2 million. The budget provides \$15.9 million to continue implementing a retention step plan for Correctional and Probation Officers and Inspector series that will provide pay increase of \$1,000 to \$2,500, depending on length of service. Another \$47.1 million is provided to address wage compression issues resulting from the \$13 minimum wage. The budget provides \$1.9 million and 12 positions to hire statewide recruitment staffing and contract with a marketing firm for a campaign to broaden the reach of recruitment efforts.

Funding is provided (\$5.0 million) for an outside firm to conduct an analysis to define the economic and demographic trends facing Florida and make recommendations for the most efficient and cost-effective approach to meeting the Department's staffing and aging infrastructure challenges.

Another \$11.3 million would be provided for repairs and renovations to correctional facilities.

Private prisons would receive \$14 million in price level increases. Five of the seven private prison contracts call for increased per diem payments next year.

Juvenile Justice would also receive \$15.9 million to address pay issues.

State Court System - \$12.6 million for problem solving courts such as drug courts, mental health courts, and veterans' courts. This includes \$2.0 million for early childhood courts. Florida TaxWatch supports the increased use of these problem solving courts.

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