

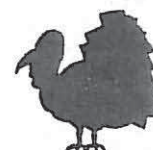
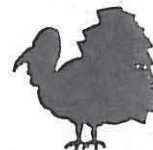
Government Performance Update: Florida Legislature

1986 Legislature Passes Budget with Thinned Flock of "Turkeys." Governor Vetoes Four Big Ticket Strays

The state's new \$16.5 billion spending plan allocates \$1.4 billion per month in FY 1986-87 to educate our children, build and maintain an adequate statewide transportation system, ensure public health and safety, provide social services and make available recreational and "quality of life" benefits to taxpayers that they might not otherwise enjoy. Spending to meet these goals is a legitimate use of the taxpayers' dollars if done prudently and wisely.

The public resources available to meet these service needs are limited by the revenue generating capacity of our tax system and the level of tolerance of our citizens. It is the responsibility of our elected officials who hold the public purse strings to spend within these limits to meet the objective of best serving the needs of all Floridians.

With this in mind, Florida TaxWatch scrutinizes the annual state budget to identify appropriations which appear unnecessary and do not serve the interest of the general public. These "turkeys" or "pork barrel" projects are a drain on limited resources, reducing the state's ability to meet legitimate needs, adding unnecessary pressure to raise taxes and diminishing citizens' confidence in their government. The listing of turkeys on the following pages is not intended to be all inclusive, but rather summarizes the most obvious examples of questionable spending.



Turkeys ...

...Crowd out government spending on citizens' legitimate needs;

...Undermine citizen confidence in the institution of government;

...Unnecessarily pump up demand for future spending on "pork barrel" projects.



What Is A Legislative Turkey???

• A turkey is a legislative appropriation to fund or subsidize questionable or unnecessary building construction (the edifice complex), local public works projects that should be funded locally and private sector events (such as the Miss U.S.A. Pageant) that should be funded with private resources. Many turkeys are tacked onto the state budget during the legislative session, circumventing the normal planning/budgeting process, ill serving the public interest.

Turkeys generally fall under one of five categories of expenditures:

1. Projects that have no empirically demonstrated public benefit, but likely help only some special interest.
2. Subsidies to private organizations,

councils or committees which can and should get their funding from private sources.

3. Local government projects of local benefit, which should be funded with local revenue.

4. Measures which allow legislators to sidestep public accountability.

5. Items which are included in the budget either outside the normal planning and budgeting process or by deliberately distorting that process.

Legislature Takes Positive Steps: Vetoes Show There's Still a Long Way To Go

Florida TaxWatch finds that - compared with past General Sessions - the 1986 Legislature reduced the number, size and past outrageousness of turkeys in this election year. Notably missing are the big gobblers of previous budgets such as a football stadium for a new state university with no football team or a civic center for a county whose elected officials did not want it. However, as evidenced by the Governor's vetoes of four big turkeys totaling over \$15 million, the "turkey count" is still too high.

Florida TaxWatch notes the following positive steps by the Florida Legislature:

- Most capital projects in the new state budget were scrutinized during the normal planning/budgeting process;
- The \$613 million Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO) bill mostly contains construction projects which have been reviewed and prioritized by the appropriate agencies.
- Over \$50 million was appropriated to repair existing state buildings and facilities, largely avoiding legislators' temptation to succumb to the "edifice complex", i.e. erecting new attention-getting structures rather than adapting existing facilities to current needs.

"A turkey is an unnecessary, costly, special interest project... in someone else's district"

Anonymous Legislator

What is wrong with spending on Turkeys?

What's wrong with spending our tax dollars on these items? It is not that they are all a waste of money, per se. Many of the projects listed on the following pages are quite worthwhile. However, spending state funds for these "turkeys" is simply unnecessary.

With many legitimate competing needs to be met with scarce resources, it is important that public expenditures for such items be kept to a minimum. For every dollar spent on a "turkey", one dollar less is available for needed public services that benefit a wider group of Floridians. As Florida's rapid growth continues and public service and infrastructure needs expand, our lawmakers will be required to make more hard choices about which programs and projects will be funded and which will not. In order to serve the best interests of all Florida taxpayers, it is important that these decisions be based not on the political expediency of "bringing home the bacon", but on rationally determined goals for making Florida a better place to live.

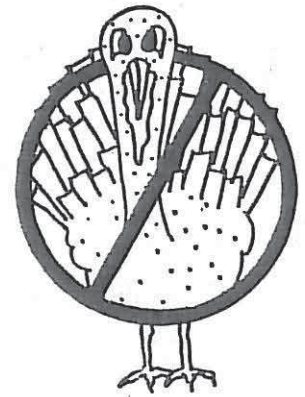
While this year's turkey crop is thinner than in the past, watch out for 1987 - which could well turn out to be "the year

of the Tax". Many projects which legislators may have wanted this year will likely be considered again in 1987 when lawmakers will not be facing election year scrutiny and pressures.

Spending on turkeys by state government results in that much less money for legitimate public service needs. The following is a partial listing of health and human service programs identified as priorities in the state's established planning and budgeting process - which received less funding than recommended.

	<u>Deficit</u>
• Community Care for the Elderly	\$2.4 million
• Child Care	2.3 million
• Employment Training	2.0 million
• Home Care for the Elderly	2.8 million
• Children's Services	3.0 million

Appropriations of Dubious Distinction 1986 "Turkey Watch"



Trade Missions for Orlando Chamber of Commerce. Orlando is one of the fastest growing areas in the country. Why do we need to allocate state funds to help support its promotional campaigns? Orlando can and will thrive without subsidies from taxpayers throughout the state.

.1 million



Orlando International Affairs Council. Ditto above.

.1 million



Miss U.S.A. Subsidy. We've seen Miss U.S.A. and don't think she or the pageant need any extra assistance from Florida taxpayers.

.3 million



Orange Bowl Game. Does a major college bowl game attracting over 70,000 fans and network television coverage really need assistance from the taxpayers of Florida? Surely there are better ways to spend this \$100,000.

.1 million



Orange Blossom Classic. Why is a subsidy needed if admission is charged, as in any college football game?

.2 million

\$\$\$\$



Miami Film Festival Subsidy. The film festival is a privately sponsored, local event. It should be locally funded.

.1 million



Inter American Development Bank Conference. At \$200,000 it sounds like a pretty expensive convention. The bank is not a state institution and therefore should throw its own party.

.2 million



Tampa Trade Fair. If Tampa needs a trade fair badly enough, surely it can afford to pay for one.

.125 million



Miami Grand Prix Subsidy. The Miami Grand Prix is a privately sponsored road race. It should be self supporting through private fund raising like other races and sporting events.

.5 million



American International Exhibition. Supposedly to promote economic development, this exhibition may well do so. But surely the firms involved could cover the cost.

.1 million



Vision Committee; Visions of the Future in Gainesville. These impressive sounding names are for planning committees for small, fast growing counties and the city of Gainesville, respectively. These projects could be funded in those areas targeted if the need for such planning is truly a priority. In any case, why aren't the funds being administered by the State Land Planning Agency (Department of Community Affairs) rather than the Department of State?

.25 & .07 million



Port Market Research Study. This study analyzes what goods are coming in and out of which Florida ports. It is likely that many companies engaged in shipping goods to and from our ports do their own market studies.

.25 million



Ft. Lauderdale Jewish Community Center. The appropriation is to purchase vans for the center. This center is a private community organization, no different from hundreds of others in Florida. Most such organizations are able to raise sufficient funds from private, community sources.

.06 million

Turkey Watch, Cont'd



Fern Protection Study. We didn't know our ferns need protecting.

.025 million



Valiant Air Command. This is a private group of airplane enthusiasts who stage exhibitions at air shows throughout the state. There is no real public benefit to justify expenditure of these funds.

.25 million

Statutory Turkeys



Legislators' Automatic Annual Pay Raise. This is not an act of this year's legislature, but it certainly meets the criteria of sidestepping public accountability - and will continue to year after year until repealed. Florida's legislators are the only people we can think of who have a guaranteed raise every year, and they can set their own rate!



License plate full reflectorization. The Legislature failed to enact a bill by Representative Bo Johnson to delete the requirement for "fully" reflectorized state license tags. This requirement unnecessarily stifles competition, driving up the cost to taxpayers by \$10 million over five years.

2.0 million



Lakeland Parking Garage. Strangely enough, the Department of General Services (which handles construction of state parking facilities) did not request any additional spaces at this site.

1.6 million



Performing Arts Center for Santa Fe Community College and University of Florida. Probably would have been a nice facility. The Commissioner of Education never requested funding for it.

5.0 million



FAU Broward Campus. This is the first installment of a \$30 million project which was not subjected to the normal planning and budgeting process.

6.0 million



Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). Additional funding is to expand the list of eligible recipients to specifically include the City of Milton, Florida

2.7 million

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