

A 43 year Legacy of Protecting Taxpayers

2022
ANNUAL
REPORT

Florida TaxWatch
STATE OF THE TAXPAYER



Florida TaxWatch

About Florida TaxWatch

There is only one organization in Florida that can truly claim to be the eyes and ears of the Florida taxpayer. Florida TaxWatch, now in its 43rd year, is the only nonpartisan, independent think tank that produces relevant and timely research, puts a spotlight on spending slipped into the state budget with no public debate, recognizes and rewards both state employees and educational leaders for excellence, and promotes efficiencies that improve the lives of all Floridians.

It is the mission of Florida TaxWatch to provide the taxpayers of Florida and public officials with high quality, independent research and analysis of issues related to state and local government taxation, expenditures, policies, and programs. Its research recommends productivity enhancements and explains the statewide impact of fiscal and economic policies and practices on residents and businesses.

Florida TaxWatch is supported by voluntary, tax-deductible contributions and private grants. These contributions provide a solid, lasting foundation that has enabled Florida TaxWatch to bring about a more effective, responsive government that is more accountable to, and productive for, the residents it serves since 1979.

CONTACT US AT 850.222.5052 OR INFO@FLORIDATAXWATCH.ORG

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Chairman's Message



U.S. SENATOR GEORGE LE MIEUX

It has been my honor to serve as the Chairman of Florida TaxWatch over the past two years. Having served in state and federal office, I have long respected the valuable role TaxWatch plays as the champion of the Florida taxpayer. As Chairman, my priority has been to ensure the growth and long-term stability of the organization. It has been my pleasure to witness progress of our organization over the past two years. From our famous “Turkeys List,” to our policy research, to our uncovering of billions of dollars of costs associated with proposed legislation—and then watching leaders use that information to stop the proposals—Tax Watch is holding government accountable like no other institution in our state. The impact of Florida TaxWatch is now more impactful and far-reaching than ever, and because of you, we are in the best financial condition in the history of our organization.

With your support, Florida TaxWatch moved headlong past the pandemic, ready and able to help Florida do the same. The engagement and contributions of our members and Trustees

enabled Florida TaxWatch to pursue the right areas of research, stay one step ahead of the next major challenge, and preemptively offer policymakers recommendations that help inform the discussions in Tallahassee and throughout the state each year. I want to especially thank Dominic Calabro, and Tony Carvajal, and all the hardworking team members at TaxWatch that have made the last two years so productive.

I also want to thank each of you for the opportunity to lead this extraordinary institution. Thank you for your continued dedication to the work of Florida TaxWatch, and I encourage you to bring your colleagues to the table to continue the momentum as I pass the torch to our next Chairman, the very capable Piyush Patel.

Respectfully,

U.S. SENATOR
GEORGE S. LEMIEUX

Chairman of the Board of Trustees (2020-2022)

Chairman- Elect's Message



PIYUSH PATEL

I am honored to step into the role of Chairman of Florida TaxWatch. During my tenure, I intend to continue to build the growing momentum behind this great organization.

How does one develop lasting growth for an organization that touches the lives of every taxpayer, business, and visitor in Florida? The answer is simple: we must make sure that taxpayers and businesses know about this organization.

This process is two-fold. First, we must identify the things that impact you as a taxpayer. Florida TaxWatch already does an excellent job of this, as is evident by the breadth of their work.

The second part is effectively leveraging the great work of Florida TaxWatch by developing increased value for the members and partners and building out strategic relationships and engagement across the state.

As I step into the role of Chairman, I encourage you to double down on your engagement with this organization as it develops more opportunities for you to engage. Help us determine the priorities, get involved in the programs, become a sponsor, attend the events, and bring your colleagues with you. Your engagement has tangible effects across all spheres of Florida's economy, and Florida TaxWatch is the vehicle for this, a critically important force to ensure that your state and local governments serve your best long term interest always!

Respectfully,

PIYUSH PATEL
Incoming Chairman 2022-2024

President's Message



As the President & CEO of Florida TaxWatch for over 40 years, I, like you, am proud of the work that we have done. Looking back at our work helps us see how it grows in influence over time, but how does one connect this rich history and work to the upcoming generations? Amid the changes we've witnessed, it is clear that sharing the wisdom curated over these years and building up the infrastructure of Florida TaxWatch will become increasingly more important and valuable.

Through changes in Governors, Cabinets, legislators, changes to the judiciary branch, agency heads, and organizational structures, as well as the explosion of web-based access to the Capitol process, Florida TaxWatch has maintained a steady, influential presence, ensuring sound fiscal and public policy. That presence has meant that when a crisis arises—like a global pandemic or a hurricane—the Legislature and Governor know that they have a reliable fiscal watchdog and a reliable and trusted taxpayer advocate they can look to for guidance and practical solutions.

This past year was a shining example of the intersection between building for the future and leveraging our influence for the taxpayers' long-

term well-being. Florida TaxWatch yet again saved the taxpayers untold millions, if not billions, of dollars by monitoring legislation with significant consequences, developing recommendations for another year of unprecedented growth in the state budget, and emphasizing the connections between all parts of our state economy.

While I am incredibly proud of the longevity and credibility of Florida TaxWatch, this year showed that when TaxWatch stakes its position, those in power take notice. When TaxWatch suggests a path, they are more likely to take it. And when hard-working Floridians need sensible, responsible reforms to get their state and communities back on their feet, they can turn to our unique and respected institution—time and time again.

Respectfully yours,

DOMINIC M. CALABRO
President & CEO



BROWARD COLLEGE PRESIDENT, GREGORY HAILE, CHATS WITH AMBASSADOR JOHN ROOD



FLORIDA STATE REPRESENTATIVE, CHUCK CLEMONS AND FORMER STATE REPRESENTATIVE, JENNIFER WEBB



BELINDA KEISER, VICE-CHANCELLOR, KEISER UNIVERSITY; MARY MAYEW PRESIDENT, & CEO OF THE FLORIDA HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION; AND CLAUDIA DAVANT, FOUNDER OF ADAMS STREET ADVOCATES



MICHAEL NACHEF, VICE PRESIDENT OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AT LEE HEALTH, TALKS ABOUT THE PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP AWARD PROGRAM



DAVID CASEY, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AT MAXIMUS, POSES WITH FLORIDA TAXWATCH PRESIDENT & CEO, DOMINIC CALABRO

Investing in Florida Taxpayers

MANY FLORIDA COMPANIES AND ORGANIZATIONS HAVE SHOWN THEIR SUPPORT OF FLORIDA TAXPAYERS THIS YEAR by being generous contributors to Florida TaxWatch programs and events. Thank you for supporting the programs of Florida TaxWatch and making our independence possible.

If your company is committed to the taxpayers of Florida, and you want to make a difference each and every day, call us at 850.222.5052 and become a partner today.





CINDY O'CONNELL, DIRECTOR OF THE FLORIDA PREPAID COLLEGE FOUNDATION WITH FLORIDA TAXWATCH PRESIDENT & CEO, DOMINIC CALABRO, AND JOE DAVIS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AT THE FLORIDA ALLIANCE OF BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS





FLORIDA TAXWATCH PRESIDENT & CEO, DOMINIC CALABRO, WELCOMES GUESTS TO THE 2022 STATE OF THE TAXPAYER EVENT

The State of the Taxpayer

2022 SPONSORS

ASSOCIATED INDUSTRIES OF FLORIDA
 CHARTER COMMUNICATIONS
 FICPA
 FIGGERS WIRELESS
 FLORIDA COALITION FOR CHILDREN
 FLORIDA POWER & LIGHT
 GUNSTER LAW

KEISER UNIVERSITY
 NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS
 RYAN
 TECO ENERGY
 THE DESOTO GROUP
 DOMINIC & DEBBIE CALABRO
 STEVE & LINDA EVANS

As the trusted eyes and ears of Florida taxpayers for more than 40 years, Florida TaxWatch embraces our responsibility to provide a forum for our state's elected leaders to speak directly to the interests of the taxpayers.

While the annual State of the State address and opening statements of each legislative chamber cover the accomplishments and future plans of our elected leadership, none specifically highlights the issues affecting taxpayers.

As the premier event each Session for Florida's elected leaders to discuss the issues that will impact taxpayers over the next year, the dinner presents an all-star lineup of some of Florida's top policymakers addressing a capacity crowd, ensuring that as the legislative session begins, **the attention of Florida's leaders is where it belongs: on the taxpayers.**

Become a partner and help us keep the focus on the taxpayers of Florida.
 Reach out to us at 850.222.5052 or email tcarvajal@floridataxwatch.org.

Principal Leadership Awards

Building on more than four decades of serving Florida's taxpayers by improving government efficiency and taxpayer value in all areas of public policy, the Principal Leadership Awards program uses data to identify Florida's most effective principals in at-risk K-12 public schools, recognizes and rewards their work, and promotes their transformational practices throughout the state, in areas where educational success can transform a community.

Unlike other awards programs, our annual winners are not nominated by colleagues, or school boards, or superintendents. They are, in fact, not nominated at all. This awards program is a purely data-driven initiative.

Additionally, through this program's Academic A+ Challenge Match Scholarship Program (a partnership with the Florida Prepaid College Foundation), a deserving student at each winner's school receives a two-year prepaid scholarship to attend the Florida college of their choice.

2021-22 SPONSORS

THE JM RUBIN FOUNDATION
BRIGHTSTAR CREDIT UNION
FLORIDA PREPAID COLLEGE FOUNDATION
THE FLORIDA LOTTERY
FLORIDA POWER & LIGHT
CHARTER COMMUNICATIONS
FBMC BENEFITS MANAGEMENT
HELIOS EDUCATION FOUNDATION
FLORIDA TREND
FLORIDA PRESS ASSOCIATION
DOMINIC & DEBBIE CALABRO
STEVE & LINDA EVANS



US AMBASSADOR JOHN ROOD IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN OF THE FLORIDA PREPAID COLLEGE BOARD WELCOMES GUESTS TO THE 2022 PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP AWARDS

2021-22 WINNERS

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Ms. Hollie Wilkins
MONTCLAIR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (ESCAMBIA)

Ms. Rachel Roberts
COLUMBIA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (BREVARD)

Mr. Lewis Jackson
DANIA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (BROWARD)

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Mr. Delbert Smallridge
DUNELLON MIDDLE SCHOOL (MARION)

Ms. Bonnie Brett
MANATEE CHARTER SCHOOL (MANATEE)

Mr. Jose Rubio
OAK CREEK CHARTER SCHOOL (LEE)

HIGH SCHOOL

Ms. Laura Touchstone
PINE FOREST HIGH SCHOOL (ESCAMBIA)

Mr. Jake Russell
TAMPA CHAMBERLAIN HIGH SCHOOL (HILLSBOROUGH)

Mr. Tiger Nunez
MATER ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL (MIAMI-DADE)

Supporting this program can transform the lives of students and their schools.
Reach out to us at 850.222.5052 or email tcarvajal@floridataxwatch.org.



GOVERNOR BOB & MARY JANE MARTINEZ AT THE CITIZENSHIP INSTITUTE RENAMING CEREMONY

Participants in the Governor Bob and Mary Jane Martinez Citizenship Institute at Florida TaxWatch (Citizenship Institute) learn firsthand from Florida's most influential policy leaders and business executives about how state and local government policies impact their business and community, and how to make sure their voice is heard and respected.

The Citizenship Institute is an applied learning program that prepares participants to better understand how government actions affect their businesses.

Participants receive 3-4 days of intensive instruction from current or former agency heads, legislators, distinguished university professors, and other state and local officials, designed and implemented under the guidance of Florida's 40th Governor, Bob Martinez.

By limiting the class size to 15-20 of Florida's up-and-coming business and community leaders, the Citizenship Institute is far more instructive and hands-on than other "leadership" programs.

By providing participants the unique opportunity to discuss relevant policy issues with government and political leaders who have extensive real-world experience, participants gain a better understanding of how to engage government officials and have their voices heard; how their tax dollars are appropriated and used by government; and how to navigate through the myriad licensing and permitting requirements and government regulations that can strangle businesses.

GOVERNOR BOB & MARY JANE MARTINEZ CITIZENSHIP INSTITUTE

AT

Florida  TaxWatch

Do you know an up-and-coming executive that would be a great candidate for the Institute?

Apply today at
[FloridaTaxWatch.org/
Citizenship-Institute](https://FloridaTaxWatch.org/Citizenship-Institute)



GOVERNOR BOB & MARY JANE MARTINEZ CITIZENSHIP INSTITUTE AT FLORIDA TAXWATCH CLASS OF 2022 WITH FORMER GOVERNOR BOB MARTINEZ, FLORIDA CFO JIMMY PATRONIS, FLORIDA TAXWATCH PRESIDENT & CEO, DOMINIC CALABRO, AND FLORIDA TAXWATCH SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF RESEARCH AND CITIZENSHIP INSTITUTE DIRECTOR, BOB NAVE.



RYAN PATEL, CHIEF OF STAFF, KYRA SOLUTIONS AT A CITIZENSHIP INSTITUTE EVENT



CITIZENSHIP INSTITUTE CLASS LEARNS ABOUT PLANNING AND ZONING

Tax Watch Productivity Awards

Presented by **Kyra Solutions, Inc.**

Even though the co-founders of the program, J.E. Davis and A.D. Davis, are no longer with us, they would be proud to know that, since 1989, more than 16,000 nominations have been submitted totaling nearly \$11 billion in cost-savings, cost-avoidances, and added value to the lives of Florida's residents and visitors, including this year's total of more than \$500 million.

This year's winners come from nearly every state agency in Florida, and include everything from university professors to transportation safety workers, to environmental engineers. Thirty-three years of this awards program has shown that Florida truly has the nation's best public employees, and we are excited to see what groundbreaking ideas and actions are still to come.

The distinguished members of the **Panel of Judges** donate their time for a thorough review and spirited discussion of the best of this year's achievements. A special thank you to this year's judges:

Mr. David Clark ALLEGIANT STRATEGIES GROUP
Mr. David DiSalvo KPMG
Mr. Freddie Figgers FIGGERS ENTERPRISES
Mr. Robby Holroyd TRIPP SCOTT ATTORNEYS AT LAW
Mr. David Hulse BANK OF AMERICA
Mrs. Sonya Montgomery THE DESOTO GROUP
Mr. David Nicholson FOUNDATION FOR FLORIDA'S FUTURE

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CAPITAL HEALTH PLAN
FLORIDA INSTITUTE OF CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS
FLORIDA NETWORK OF YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES

FLORIDA TREND
PUBLIX SUPERMARKET CHARITIES
TALLAHASSEE MEMORIAL HEALTHCARE
THE FLORIDA COUNCIL OF 100
WASTE MANAGEMENT
DOMINIC & DEBBIE CALABRO
STEVE & LINDA EVANS

2022 WINNING AGENCIES

Agency for Persons with Disabilities
Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Dept. of Business and Prof. Regulation
Dept. of Corrections
Dept. of Economic Opportunity
Dept. of Environmental Protection
Dept. of Financial Services
Dept. of Health
Dept. of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles
Dept. of Juvenile Justice
Dept. of Management Services
Dept. of Revenue
Dept. of Transportation
Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Florida Courts
Florida International University
Florida State University
Guardian ad Litem Program
Justice Administrative Commission
Office of the Attorney General
University of Central Florida
University of Florida
Volunteer Florida

Our partners allow us to promote & recognize efficiencies and innovation among dozens of state agencies



FLORIDA TAXWATCH PRESIDENT & CEO, DOMINIC CALABRO, AND KYRA SOLUTIONS PRESIDENT, REBEKAH DORWORTH, PRESENT ATTORNEY GENERAL ASHLEY MOODY WITH THE TAXWATCH PRODUCTIVITY AWARDS AGENCY OF THE YEAR AWARD



KYRA SOLUTIONS FOUNDER & CEO, PIYUSH PATEL, ADDRESSES FSU TAXWATCH PRODUCTIVITY AWARDS WINNERS



FLORIDA TAXWATCH PRESIDENT & CEO WITH TAXWATCH PRODUCTIVITY AWARDS WINNERS AND JIM CLARK, PROVOST, FSU

TaxWatch has helped taxpayers to **BECOME BETTER INFORMED** about unnecessary government spending—and to make themselves, and government **BETTER ABLE TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.**

— PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN

What we've got in Florida TaxWatch is an **OLYMPIC-SIZED EFFORT** to make sure that public policy in the state of Florida is **SECOND TO NONE.**

— GOVERNOR BOB MARTINEZ

HEED TAXWATCH

— MIAMI HERALD EDITORIAL HEADLINE

The state is undoubtedly more healthy and prosperous because TaxWatch has been on the job. It has been **AN HONEST WATCHDOG** in warning of abuses, **A CREDIBLE GUIDE DOG** in finding thrifty solutions to problems, and **A TIRELESS BIRD DOG** in making sure taxpayers get their money's worth.

— TAMPA TRIBUNE

This is the first time in the history of the state of Florida that **ALL THREE MAJOR CREDIT RATING AGENCIES** have given us a **“AAA” BOND RATING...** it's because of being fiscal stewards of our resources...it's also **ATTRIBUTED TO THE GOOD FOLKS AT TAXWATCH HOLDING US ACCOUNTABLE.**

— FLORIDA CFO JIMMY PATRONIS

I cannot think of a more important time to have an organization like TaxWatch...an **INTELLIGENT WATCHDOG** that is **PAYING ATTENTION TO THE DETAILS** and **HOLDING OFFICIALS ACCOUNTABLE** to taxpayers.
– ATTORNEY GENERAL ASHLEY MOODY

The contribution of Florida TaxWatch is **UNPARALLELED IN THE HISTORY OF FLORIDA GOVERNMENT**, and deserves the thanks of all the taxpayers of Florida.
– US SENATOR & GOVERNOR BOB GRAHAM

...Fortunately for the legislators, **TAXWATCH** already has done much of **THEIR WORK FOR THEM.**
– ORLANDO SENTINEL

Florida TaxWatch **NEVER FORGETS OUR TAXPAYERS**...It's so important for government to have access to **TIMELY RESEARCH TO HELP MAKE SOUND DECISIONS**...TaxWatch is helping keep taxpayers informed.
– AGRICULTURE COMMISSIONER NIKKI FRIED

Florida TaxWatch is a testament to democracy in action...bringing a **VALUE-ADDED DIFFERENCE TO THE LIVES, HEALTH, AND PROSPERITY OF ALL FLORIDIANS** because of your constructive ideas and vision.

Thank you for your **UNRELENTING EFFORTS** to safeguard the long and short-term interests of the citizens of Florida.
– GOVERNOR JEB BUSH

Florida TaxWatch is **HELPING TO ENSURE THAT FLORIDA TAXPAYERS ARE WELL SERVED.**
– PRESIDENT GEORGE H. W. BUSH

Volunteer Leadership

Florida TaxWatch has been fortunate over the past 43 years to have a remarkable group of volunteer leaders guide the organization.

From former Governors, to United States Senators, to leaders of both chambers of the Florida Legislature, to the state's most influential and well-known private sector leaders, few organizations can boast the leadership roster of Florida TaxWatch.

Co-Founders

Mr. James E. Davis (1907-1993)
CO-FOUNDER, WINN-DIXIE STORES, INC.

Mr. T. Wayne Davis (1914-1980)
TINE W. DAVIS FAMILY FOUNDATION

Mr. Mark C. Hollis (1934-2012)
PRESIDENT, PUBLIX SUPER MARKETS, INC.

Mr. George Jenkins (1907-1996)
CO-FOUNDER, PUBLIX SUPER MARKETS, INC.

Sen. Philip D. Lewis (1929-2012)
FORMER PRESIDENT, FLORIDA SENATE

Sen. Kenneth A. Plante (1939-2015)
FORMER MIN. LEADER, FLORIDA SENATE

Past Chairmen

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2018-2020

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2016-2018

Ms. Michelle Robinson
2014-2016

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2012-2014

Mr. Marshall Criser, III
2010-2012

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2007-2010

Mr. Michael A. Jennings
2005-2007

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2003-2005

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2001-2003

Mr. T. O'Neal Douglas
1999-2001

Mr. Joseph P. Lacher
1997-1999

Mr. David McIntosh
1995-1997

Mr. Byron E. Hodnett
1994-1995

Mr. L. Charles Hilton, Jr.
1993-1994

Mr. Buell G. Duncan
1992-1993

Mr. Michael Zagorac, Jr.
1990-1992

Mr. T. Wayne Davis
1981-1982, 1988-1990

Mr. Tom L. Rankin
1986-1988

Sen. Philip D. Lewis
1984-1986

Sen. Kenneth A. Plante
1982-1984

Mr. Mark C. Hollis
1979-1981

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PRESIDENT & CEO
DOMINIC M. CALABRO



CHAIRMAN-ELECT
PIYUSH PATEL



TREASURER
JAMES REPP



SECRETARY
MARVA BROWN JOHNSON



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SENATOR PAT NEAL

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HOPE HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Mr. Tom Hoban
KITSON & PARTNERS

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PUBLIX SUPER MARKETS, INC

Mr. Colin W. Brown
JM FAMILY ENTERPRISES, INC.

Ms. Belinda Keiser
KEISER UNIVERSITY

Ms. Michelle Robinson*
VERIZON

Mr. David Casey
MAXIMUS

Ms. Natalie King
RSA CONSULTING

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FLORIDA POWER & LIGHT

Mr. Steve Evans*
IBM (RETIRED)

Governor Bob Martinez
HOLLAND & KNIGHT

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FLORIDA BLUE

Bill Barker
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Carl Bauman
LYKES BROTHERS

Samira Beckwith
HOPE HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Richard Berkowitz
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JEFF KOTTKAMP P.A.

Karen Lake
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Gov. Bob Martinez
HOLLAND & KNIGHT

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TRUIST

Michael Minton, Esq
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NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

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MOORE COMMUNICATIONS GROUP

Peter Moore
CHEN MOORE AND ASSOCIATES

Dr. Tim Moore
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LEE HEALTH

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NEAL COMMUNITIES

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VISITORS BUREAU

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BAPTIST HEALTH SOUTH FLORIDA

Lady Dhyana Ziegler
Z CREATORS

Research Snapshot

In 2022 Florida TaxWatch doubled down on guiding one of the world's biggest economies through recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. Each step of the way, Florida TaxWatch was at the forefront of Florida's Recovery, monitoring developments in another year of unprecedented state budget growth.

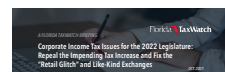
Last year, **The TaxWatch COVID-19 Taxpayer Task Force** recommendations became the blueprint for a legislative session that saw a number of long-term Taxwatch issues handled in one bill: E-Fairness, the Business Rent Tax, and unemployment compensation fund restoration.

A significant amount of Florida TaxWatch research in 2022 focused on the every day lives of Floridians, tackling issues in data privacy, workforce development, tax administration, education, and manufacturing.

2022 Budget Turkey Watch

THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 2022

The \$112.1 billion budget passed by the Florida Legislature for FY2022-23 contains 166 appropriations items worth \$281.0 million qualifying as Budget Turkeys.



Florida Workforce Update

THURSDAY, AUGUST 25, 2022

A robust economy is a staple for securing high tax revenue and boosting the well-being of taxpayers. Although Florida's economy enjoys a strong rebound with historically low unemployment, the dynamic of its workforce has changed since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, shuffling where opportunities lie and surfacing new challenges.

The Impacts of Consumer Data Privacy on Florida's Economy

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2022

The 2022 Florida Legislature is considered two pieces of consumer data privacy legislation that would represent significant changes to how certain businesses collect, sell, and share consumer personal information, subject to certain exemptions and threshold requirements.



2022 How Florida Counties Compare

WEDNESDAY, MAY 11, 2022

To complement our How Florida Compares series, which compares our state to the rest of the nation, this report looks at the myriad local governments within the state. While property taxes get most of the public attention, they only provide about one-fifth of city and county revenue. The tables, charts, and graphs in this report provide comprehensive information on local tax rates, tax collections, other revenue sources, and government expenditures.

Closing the Digital Divide-The Expansion of Broadband Internet Service to Unserved Areas of the State

MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2022

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the importance of access to reliable and affordable high-quality broadband Internet service to our daily lives. Communities that currently lack access to the affordable, reliable, high-quality broadband Internet that is necessary for full participation in education, health care, employment, social services and government programs, and civic life, are at a marked disadvantage without that access.



Florida TaxWatch 42ND ANNUAL MEETING

OCTOBER 27 & 28, 2021 THE RITZ CARLTON, SARASOTA

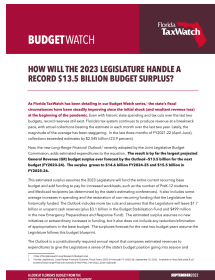
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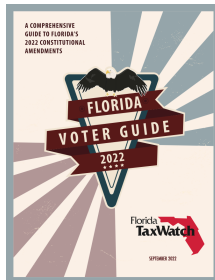
Select Research



Budget Watch – How Will the 2023 Legislature Handle a Record \$13.5 Billion Budget Surplus?

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2022

As Florida TaxWatch has been detailing in our Budget Watch series, the state’s fiscal circumstances have been steadily improving since the initial shock (and resultant revenue loss) at the beginning of the pandemic. Even with historic state spending and tax cuts over the last two budgets, record reserves still exist. Florida’s tax system continues to produce revenue at a breakneck pace, with actual collections beating the estimate in each month over the last two years.



A Comprehensive Guide to Florida’s 2022 Constitutional Amendments

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2022

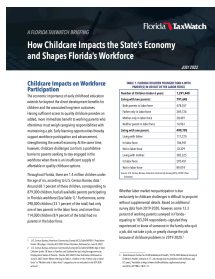
On November 8, 2022, Floridians will vote on three legislatively referred proposed amendments to the Florida Constitution. At least 60 percent of the voters must vote in the affirmative for a proposed amendment to pass. This Florida TaxWatch Voter Guide is designed to provide Florida voters with information about each of the proposed amendments to help them cast well-informed votes.



Building a Culture of Success: What Effective Principals Do *The 2022 Florida TaxWatch Principal Leadership Awards Roundtable Discussion Summary and Findings*

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2022

Among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school, leadership is perhaps second only to classroom instruction. Furthermore, the impact of leadership tends to be the greatest in schools where the learning needs of students are most acute.

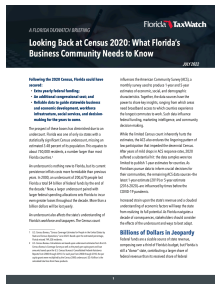


How Childcare Impacts the State’s Economy and Shapes Florida’s Workforce

THURSDAY, JULY 21, 2022

The economic importance of early childhood education extends far beyond the direct development benefits for children and the associated long-term outcomes.

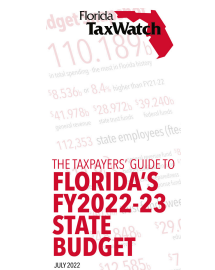
TO READ THE REPORTS VISIT FLORIDATAXWATCH.ORG/RESEARCH/FULL-LIBRARY



Looking Back at Census 2020: What Florida's Business and Community Leaders Need to Know

TUESDAY, JULY 19, 2022

An undercount is nothing new to Florida, but its current persistence inflicts costs more formidable than in previous years. Throughout the decade, Floridians can expect to lose between \$11 billion and \$21 billion. The decennial Census count and American Community Survey (ACS) help communities understand local patterns of population growth, specialized workers, income, employment statuses, and transportation needs.



Florida's FY2022-23 State Budget Guide

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 29, 2022

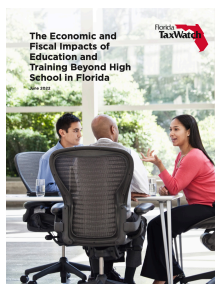
Florida TaxWatch is pleased to present taxpayers with a guide to the FY2022-23 state budget, which went into effect July 1, 2022. The report includes all appropriations for the new fiscal year—the General Appropriations Act (GAA), “back-of-bill” spending, and general bills—net of the Governor’s vetoes.



Built For Success: Manufacturing's Role In Florida's Economy

THURSDAY, JUNE 16, 2022

Advancing Florida's standing on the global stage requires a state economy conducive to innovation, capable of withstanding disruptions, and constantly cultivating talent. A robust manufacturing sector stands at the crossroads of these priorities and, as the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated, the sector's importance cannot be overstated.



The Economic and Fiscal Impacts of Education and Training Beyond High School in Florida

FRIDAY, JUNE 10, 2022

In 2019, with the SAIL to 60 Initiative, Florida aimed for 60 percent of working-age Floridians to hold a workforce specialization, whether from a certificate, credential, training, or degree. Currently, Florida has yet to reach this goal, falling 791,000 people short, and its individual populations are working toward the goal at incomparable rates.



International Trade As A Catalyst For Florida's Economy

WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, 2022

Critical for Florida's continued innovation, growth, and diversification, international trade must be a key priority in the dynamic post-pandemic economy.

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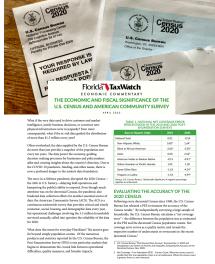


Benefits Cliffs—At the Cliff’s Edge

How reducing benefits cliffs can stimulate workforce participation and economic growth

TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 2022

This report analyzes public safety net programs and benefits cliffs, a scenario in which a small increase in wages results in the partial or total loss of public benefits. Benefits cliffs occur when a marginal wage increase results in the partial or total loss of public benefits for different public assistance programs.



The Economic and Fiscal Significance of the U.S. Census and American Community Survey

THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 2022

The once-in-a-lifetime pandemic disrupted the 2020 Census— the 24th in U.S. history—delaying field operations and hampering the public’s ability to respond. This report underscores the COVID-19 pandemic’s impact on 2020 Census data collection efforts, including disruptions to the American Community Survey, and highlights how this impacts federal funding and critical decision-making among policymakers and business leaders alike.



Too Expensive To Rent: Florida’s Rental Market & Eviction Moratorium

THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 2022

Rising food and gas prices are a daily reminder that even though Florida’s economy is in a much better place than it was in March 2020, the economy is decidedly more expensive two years later in March 2022.



2022 Florida Legislative Session Wrap-Up

SATURDAY, MARCH 19, 2022

The 2022 legislative session is over, even if it ran a little long. Florida TaxWatch and the state’s taxpayers had a number of successes. Many bills and budget issues supported by our research and recommendations passed. Our research and input that raised concerns with legislation, helped to improve them or fail passage, including changes to the tax audit system and a very costly approach to improving data privacy.



Wage Growth and Talent Attraction in the Pandemic Labor Market

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2022

Amid a tight labor market and the ongoing “great resignation,” companies are pursuing creative and concerted efforts to attract and retain talent. Especially for service industries wrestling with existing labor shortages, recruitment methods have included sign-up bonuses, tuition reimbursement, free coding classes, and of course, higher wages. These strategies have produced higher pay for many workers and signaled a reversal from the lackluster wage growth in the years leading up to the pandemic.

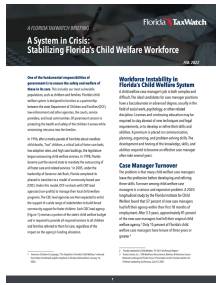
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A River (No Longer) Runs Through It

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2022

This timely public policy debate centers on whether the Kirkpatrick Dam and reservoir should remain in place or whether the dam should be breached to restore the natural flow of the Ocklawaha River. The “full retention” alternative would essentially maintain the status quo, while the “partial restoration” alternative would restore the river flow to near preconstruction conditions with limited removal of existing structures at the lowest cost. For each of these two alternatives, Florida TaxWatch examines the recreational, economic, and environmental impacts.



A System in Crisis: Stabilizing Florida's Child Welfare Workforce

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2022

One of the fundamental responsibilities of government is to ensure the safety and welfare of those in its care. This includes our most vulnerable populations, such as children and families.



Manufacturing a Transformational Shift

A Summary of the 2021 MakeMore Manufacturing Summit

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2022

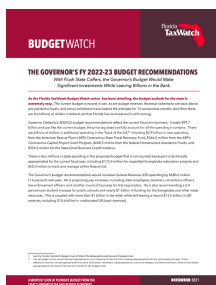
FloridaMakes is a statewide, industry-led, public-private partnership operated by an alliance of Florida's regional manufacturers' associations. Since its inception in 2016, FloridaMakes has had an economic impact of \$2.6 billion with almost 17,000 jobs created and/or retained. The pandemic underscored the important role Florida's Manufacturing sector plays in providing products that are crucial to public health and safety, national security, and the continuity of many other industries.



The Impacts of Lawsuits Against Local Governments for Business Damages

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2022

The 2022 Florida Legislature is debated two pieces of legislation that add to the process of passing local ordinances and provides additional rights to businesses and residents who wish to challenge those ordinances. This Session Spotlight takes a detailed look at SB620/CS/HB569 & CS/SB280/HB403.

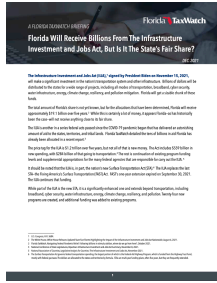


The Governor's FY2022-23 Budget Recommendations

TUESDAY, JANUARY 4, 2022

As the Florida TaxWatch Budget Watch series has been detailing, the budget outlook for the state is extremely rosy. 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.

TO READ THE REPORTS VISIT FLORIDATAXWATCH.ORG/RESEARCH/FULL-LIBRARY



Florida Will Receive Billions From The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, But Is It The State's Fair Share?

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2021

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), signed by President Biden on November 15, 2021, will make a significant investment in the nation's transportation system and other infrastructure. Billions of dollars will be distributed to the states for a wide range of projects, including all modes of transportation, broadband, cyber security, water infrastructure, energy, climate change, resiliency, and pollution mitigation. Florida will get a sizable chunk of these funds



2022 Economic Preview - Settling Into the New Normal

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2021

It was not long ago that Florida was turning the page from a tumultuous 2020 and preparing for a much-awaited economic rebound throughout 2021. As COVID-19 enters its third year, Florida's economic outlook is settling into a new normal—one defined by advancing job growth, punctuated by lingering challenges with labor shortages, supply chains, and inflation.



Beyond the Pandemic: Long-Term Changes and Challenges for Supply Chains and the Customer Experience in Florida

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2021

For more than a year, Floridians have experienced first-hand the changes, challenges and, in many cases, the frustrations that arise when a pandemic affects global trade.



A New Durbin Amendment Would Spell Trouble for U.S. Credit Card Customers

Congress Should Learn Its Lesson and Leave Well Enough Alone

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2021

There are times when we are uncertain what will happen if a particular public policy is implemented. A proposal in Congress about cuts in interchange fees on credit cards is not one of them.

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FLORIDA LOTTERY SECRETARY, JOHN DAVIS, ADDRESSES THE AUDIENCE AT THE 2022 PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP AWARDS



INCOMING SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE, REPRESENTATIVE PAUL RENNER, GREETES FLORIDA TAXWATCH MEMBERS

Treasurer's Report

Dear Members,

Florida TaxWatch further expanded its statewide representation of taxpayer concerns in Florida during the fiscal year that ended September 30, 2022. This widening support demonstrates the recognized quality and enhanced public value of the institution's mission and research program accomplishments. During this fiscal year, Florida TaxWatch continued to adhere to the sound fiscal standards required of such a respected research institute.

According to the year-end record of expenses, all expenditures went to prepare, conduct, publish, disseminate, and properly communicate the research program's findings, conclusions, and recommendations about Florida government tax and spending policies and practices.

No funds were expended on lobbying activities, as specifically restricted by the Institute's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws.

The Treasurer's Report for FY2022 demonstrates the sound management practices and proper financial controls applied by the institute which ensure effective and productive operations with direct accountability.

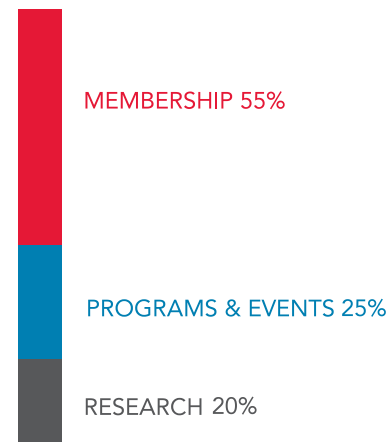
According to the financial statement and Treasurer's Report, total non-audited expenses were slightly more than \$2,294,000 while total revenue slightly exceeded \$2,728,000, generating a net positive for the fiscal year.*

Respectfully,



JIM REPP
Treasurer

FY2022 INCOME



FY2022 EXPENSES



*Unaudited

Professional Staff



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ENGAGEMENT**
CHRIS KLENA



**RESEARCH
ECONOMIST**
JONATHAN GUARINE

We Believe

You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift

You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong

You cannot help small men by tearing down big men

You cannot help the poor by destroying the rich

You cannot lift the wage earner by pulling down the wage payer

You cannot keep out of trouble by spending more than your income

You cannot further the brotherhood of men by inciting class hatreds

You cannot establish security on borrowed money

You cannot establish character and courage by taking away a man's initiative and independence

You cannot help men permanently by doing for them what they could and should do for themselves

*– From the pen of Reverend William John Henry Boetcker (1873-1962)
& often attributed to Abraham Lincoln*

Florida TaxWatch

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