

To: FWEA Utility Council
From: David Childs
Date: June 17, 2025
Re: 2025 Legislative Session Summary

The 2025 Legislative Session was marred by political acrimony and Republican Party infighting. As of the writing of this summary on the final day of the regularly scheduled session, the House and Senate still have not agreed to a state budget. Indeed, they have not yet initiated the formal budget conference process. Notwithstanding Republican supermajorities in the House and Senate, disagreements over competing tax relief proposals and spending priorities persist. Lawmakers will return to Tallahassee in mid-May to complete the state budget.

Despite the general rancor, it was a remarkably quiet legislative session for the domestic wastewater utility sector. There was no comprehensive water resource legislation, such as the Clean Waterways Act of 2020, nor was there a new utility mandate, such as the Senate Bill 64 surface water discharge elimination legislation. Several bills of interest, however, did pass and will be sent to the Governor:

- **SB 700 (Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services)** – The comprehensive Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services bill prohibits the introduction of any chemical, additive, or substance that is used in a public water system that is not used for the purpose of: (a) meeting or surpassing primary or secondary drinking water standards; (b) preventing, reducing, or removing contaminants; or (c) improving water quality. The intended effect of this provision is to prohibit the introduction of fluoride into Florida public drinking water.
- **SB 108 (Administrative Procedures)** – The Legislature passed a comprehensive update to laws governing agency rulemaking and regulatory planning. These modifications include a new requirement for agencies to report annually on their permit review and issuance timeframes, so the Legislature can identify programs that need reform or additional funding support. FDEP and water management district permitting programs will be subject to this new Legislative oversight.

- **SB 1228 (Spring Restoration)** – This legislation harmonizes and extends the schedules in Florida’s surface water discharge elimination statute and the springs flow restoration statute to facilitate a large and technically complex reclaimed water recharge project to restore Ichetucknee Springs and Santa Fe Springs. Several north central Florida utilities, FDEP, and the SJRWMD are involved in the project.
- **SB 1386 (Assault or Battery on a Utility Worker)** – This legislation reclassifies offenses that occur when a person knowingly commits an assault or battery against a utility worker while such utility worker is engaged in work on critical infrastructure, as defined in s. 812.141(1), F.S. This critical infrastructure definition includes “a water intake structure, water treatment facility, wastewater treatment plant, pump station, or lift station.” Notably, the definition does not include water or sewer pipes.
- **HB 11 (Municipal Water and Sewer Rates)** – This narrowly crafted legislation provides that a municipality which operates a water or sewer utility outside its municipal boundaries must charge consumers outside its boundaries the same rates, fees, and charges as it charges consumers within its boundaries if: (1) the consumers are located in a separate municipality, and (2) the municipality providing service uses a water or sewer treatment plant located in the separate municipality to serve those consumers. Given these two parameters, this bill will likely only affect Miami Gardens.
- **HB 1123 (Sewer Collection Systems)** – This legislation clarifies that a municipality that operates a sewer utility can use revenue generated by the municipality’s operation of a central sewage system to expand the central sewage system.

In addition to engaging on legislative initiatives that passed the Legislature, the Utility Council also engaged on items that did not cross the finish. For instance, overly prescriptive sanitary sewer lateral assessment and rehabilitation bills ([SB 1208](#) / [HB 1187](#)) were introduced and again failed to cross the finish line. Also, overly burdensome and prescriptive utility relocation language was stripped from the transportation package ([SB 462](#)) before it passed the Legislature.

Lastly, House and Senate resolutions in support of the “One Water Approaches to Water Resource Management” were introduced but only received one hearing in the House. The resolutions encouraged “One Water” methods to water resource management and the use of collaborative, integrated, resilience systems approaches to planning for and funding water resource projects.