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Client Alert: Florida's Framework for Freedom: Governor Ron DeSantis Releases Budget Recommendations for FY 2023-2024

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Today, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis released his budget recommendations for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-2024. Dubbed the "Framework for Freedom," the \$114.8 billion spending plan reinforces the Governor's "commitment to Florida's K-12 students, parents and teachers, environmental resources, and law enforcement, all while maintaining healthy reserves." The budget allocates \$42.4 billion in General Revenue dollars, collected mainly from state sales taxes, and it recommends funding increases to 23 out of the 32 state agencies.

The budget also boasts a \$1.5 billion tax package, with several permanent and extended sales-tax holidays for Floridians, including items like gas stoves, household products under \$25, baby strollers, and more.

Governor DeSantis' Framework for Freedom includes sizable investments into Florida's future, placing nearly \$16 billion into state reserves and establishing the State Investment Fund, a trust fund which is for use in emergencies wherein the Budget Stabilization Fund has already been exhausted. Four hundred million dollars would also be immediately allocated to paying down the state's debt under the recommendations.

The Framework for Freedom also:

- Allocates a "historic" \$26 million to education through the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP), which includes a record \$8,453 per student investment and places \$14.1 million in Florida's public schools to serve approximately three million students.
- Provides \$3.5 billion to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to establish and continue initiatives to preserve and restore Florida's natural resources, \$614 million of which is specifically

earmarked toward the Everglades.

- Creates the *Moving Florida Forward Initiative*, funded at \$7 billion and aiming to fund 20 transportation projects that address congestion on Florida's highways, alongside another \$14.7 billion to the Department of Transportation (DOT) for job creation and economic development.
- Makes significant investments into hurricane recovery and preparedness, including a \$2.1 billion allocation to local and state efforts.
- Invests \$166 million in cancer research, alongside ample funding for health and human services initiatives like health care for women and children, child welfare, the opioid crisis, and homelessness.
- Includes further investments into public safety in Florida through funding for law enforcement salary increases and recruitment, among other efforts such as fentanyl education and programs to improve inmate health and well-being in state correctional facilities.
- Supports continued expansion of Florida's National Guard, investing \$98 million in the volunteer military force.

The Governor's budget recommendations for the current FY 2022-2023 totaled just under \$110 billion, and the final budget totaled the same after a record \$3.1 billion in vetoes from Governor DeSantis' desk.

With these recommendations in mind and the Governor's veto power looming, the Florida Legislature will work to craft a state spending plan for FY 2023-2024 during the upcoming Regular Legislative Session, which begins on March 7th.

Complete details on the Framework for Freedom Budget can be found [here](#).