

A tall, white, neoclassical building with a central dome and many windows, set against a clear blue sky. The building is the Florida State Capitol.

THE PEOPLE'S AGENDA

VS.


THE CORPORATE AGENDA

Florida's 2023 Legislative Session Preview



**PEOPLE'S
BUDGET**

FLORIDA



No matter what we look like or where we come from, most of us believe in caring for our families and leaving things better for those to come. We Floridians give our all as teachers, delivery drivers, or nurses, volunteering at the local food bank or neighborhood cleanup.

But for too long, a handful of politicians have let greedy corporations rig the rules to favor their campaign contributions over our contributions for each other. Then they have tried to divide us, fueling fears based on our skin color, accent, or faith.

Our state government works very efficiently, just not for the people of this great state. Over the past four years, we, the people of Florida, have watched Gov. Ron DeSantis and the Florida Legislature run our state not for the people, but in tandem with greedy corporations and self-interested billionaire donors.

Gov. DeSantis and the Legislature have handed out billions in tax breaks to big corporations, delivered no-bid contracts and multimillion-dollar infrastructure projects to donors, and gutted regulations meant to protect workers and consumers.

They have worked to deny health care to millions, privatize and profiteer off of our education system, and allow corporate influence to run rampant in our elections. They have trampled on cities and counties that try to hold corporations accountable, and left everyday Floridians at the mercy of insurance companies, monopoly power companies and corporate landlords.

They have seized control of independent

institutions, from local prosecutor's offices to public universities, and used the power of the state to not only punish opponents—but to appoint the Governor's political allies into high-paying taxpayer funded jobs.

Ron DeSantis and top lawmakers are *Protectors of the Corporate Class*, using their government powers to distract and divide everyday Floridians while further enriching the deep-pocketed donors who bankroll their campaigns— with our tax dollars.

As Florida lawmakers convene for the 2023 legislative session, we, the people of Florida, believe our elected leaders have a choice. They can choose the people's agenda or the corporate agenda. The people are watching, and the choice is clear.

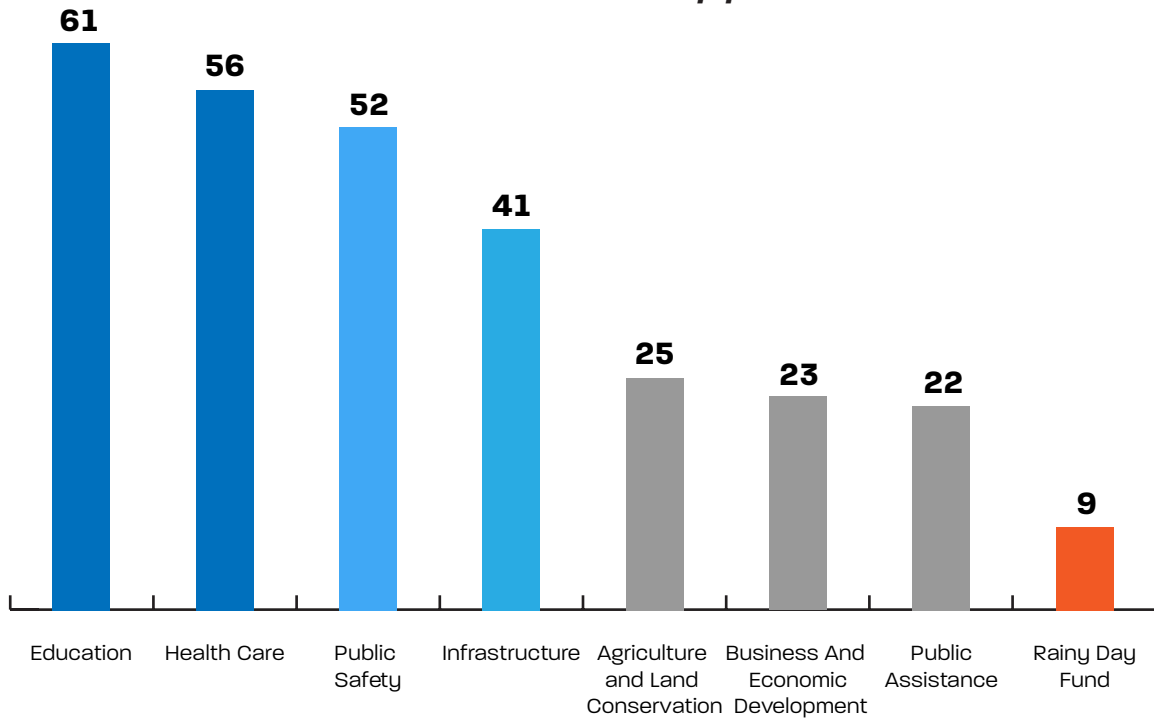
RESEARCH

The state of Florida is facing an affordability crisis, and Floridians want relief now. When it comes to financial stress in their personal lives, Floridians cite the cost of everyday items, home and auto insurance, and housing as the leading perpetrators. Aside from rising costs, Floridians believe the state government should prioritize spending on education, health care, public safety, and infrastructure. Floridians do not believe money should be put into the Rainy Day Fund: it is already raining in Florida and people are prioritizing spending on issues that concern them.

Policies of the People's Agenda are very popular:

- 87% of Floridians support raising teacher pay and increasing public education spending.
- 87% of Floridians support capping utility rate increases.

When it comes to state government spending on public services, which of the following areas do you believe should be the top priorities?



- 79% of Floridians support protecting workers' choice to join their union and collectively bargain for wages and benefits and a majority of Floridians view unions favorably (55% favorable / 34% unfavorable).
- 76% of Floridians support expanding access to Medicaid to more Florida workers and children.
- 70% of Floridians support capping rent increases.
- 58% of Floridians support a right to abortion.

On the other hand, Floridians oppose the Corporate Agenda:

- There is broad support for combined reporting: 87% of Floridians support ensuring multinational corporations pay in-state corporate taxes on their profits

in Florida (87% support / 6% oppose / 7% unsure).

- Floridians favor taxes on businesses (54% favorable / 37% unfavorable).
- 48% of Floridians oppose removing the option to request a Vote By Mail ballot over the phone (44% support / 48% oppose).

The People's Agenda is integral to protecting the freedoms of all Floridians. Floridians note these as the top policies that protect their freedom:

- Capping utility rate increases (32%).
- Protecting workers' choice to join their union and collectively bargain for wages and benefits (31%).
- Capping rent increases (30%).

DEMOCRACY

The People's Agenda: A representative democracy is critical to our economic security. It means we, the people, have a say in who represents us and how our tax dollars are spent. How do we do that? It's simple. Get corporate money out of our politics, so we can elect people not beholden to corporate interests. Defend the freedom to vote for all eligible Floridians. Protect Floridians' sacred right to direct democracy and ballot initiatives. And support local freedom, empowering Floridians to pass local laws addressing the unique needs of our communities.

The Corporate Agenda: Florida's leaders want economic security for the elite few. Scared of the power of the people, they hope to divide and distract us so they can keep ruling for the billionaires and wealthy corporations instead. It's why they've erected new barriers to voting that primarily silence the voices of Black, brown, young, working class, and new Americans. And it's why they continue to allow corporate money to rein unchecked in our politics, with corporate monopolies like Florida Power & Light propping up ghost candidates to effectively fool voters and steal elections, and allow multinational corporations to funnel dark money in our politics through various PACs. Greedy corporations want to undermine Floridians' ability to pass ballot initiatives via citizen initiative, pass more preemptive state mandates that end local freedoms for our communities, and stand by as leaders spend our tax dollars on voter intimidation tactics reminiscent of the Jim Crow era.

LOCAL FREEDOMS


The People's Agenda: We, the people of Florida, want to restore the power of communities to make decisions for

ourselves and want our elected leaders to respect the will of local voters. We want strong and vibrant cities, counties and towns who are unafraid to stand up to corporate polluters and who support workers with policies like living wages, earned sick time, and protections against wage theft. We want school districts free from extreme partisan intrusion such as erasing Black history, targeting LGBTQ+ youth, and state-mandated book bans. We want locally elected prosecutors to do their jobs without fear of state interference.

The Corporate Agenda: Local freedoms remain one of the key ways Floridians can circumvent the corporate grip of state government, and create local communities that thrive. That's why Ron DeSantis and the Florida Legislature have removed independently elected officials who disagree with them, stripped local freedoms away from our communities, and helped wealthy donors thwart the will of local voters. Now, they want to strip communities of even more power to govern themselves – and to make it easier than ever for businesses to block local lawmaking. They even want to prevent local cities and counties from trying to solve the affordable housing crisis through policies such as rent stabilization and inclusionary zoning.

TAX & SPENDING

The People's Agenda: It is time to end the regressive tax system in Florida that is reliant on sales tax and consumers. We, the people of Florida, want to close corporate tax loopholes exploited by the world's largest corporations, to make these giant companies pay the taxes they owe and to level the competitive playing field for our smaller, Florida-based businesses. We want to cut regressive taxes that are paid directly by working people like sales tax, not more tax cuts for businesses. We want to invest



in programs that ensure opportunity for all Floridians, like universal pre-kindergarten, health insurance, housing, and a stronger unemployment safety net.

The Corporate Agenda: Ron DeSantis and the Florida Legislature have given billions of dollars of tax breaks to the world's wealthiest corporations, plus millions more in special-interest handouts to corporate interests like Disney, Florida Power & Light and Big Sugar. They have helped billionaire donors, like the Walmart heirs, avoid taxes and given tax breaks to billionaire donors like the owner of the Miami Dolphins. They have even raised taxes on working Floridians in order to pay for even bigger tax cuts for businesses. They want to preserve one of the most upside-down tax structures in the country, one that allows the super rich to escape most taxation while forcing the poor and middle class to shoulder the load. Corporate tax giveaways cost Floridians billions of dollars that could instead provide healthcare for people with disabilities, world-class education for our kids, and attainable housing. Instead, these programs are underfunded, while corporations and billionaires profit off the people's tax dollars.

HOUSING AND AFFORDABILITY


The People's Agenda: We want every Floridian to find, and retain, safe and affordable housing. We want local solutions like rent stabilization that allows landlords to earn fair profits without forcing working Floridians out of their homes, and basic protections for tenants, like the right to working air-conditioning, fair warning of rent increases, and legal representation in eviction proceedings. We want to foster the development of increased, varied housing that is truly attainable for low- and middle-income Floridians. Floridians need secure and stable housing without having to worry about rising property insurance

costs or getting dropped last minute by the property insurance companies. We want choice in housing and energy, not public subsidies and monopolies for the politically connected. We want to support ALL working Floridians who wish to buy a home, not just narrow groups of politically favored people.

The Corporate Agenda: Ron DeSantis and this Florida Legislature have publicly subsidized wealthy developers with tax breaks, grants and loans. They have let homebuilders run roughshod over our local freedoms. They have let monopoly power companies raise utility rates by record amounts while allowing them to pocket some of the fattest profit margins in the country. And they have let insurance companies double and triple their premiums, while denying more claims and escaping any accountability in court. They want to protect the profits of corporate landlords by allowing them to raise rents by unlimited amounts, helping them flip affordable housing into luxury apartments and allowing them to charge unlimited, perpetual junk fees instead of security deposits.

EDUCATION

The People's Agenda: We, the people of Florida, want a strong and healthy system of public schools that gives every child in Florida, regardless of where they are from, what they look like or how much money their family has, the opportunity to receive a world-class education that sets them up for future economic success. We want to increase salaries for all public school teachers, college professors and education support staff, in order to retain our best educators and attract more people to the profession. And we want to give them the freedom to teach accurately and truthfully, without interference from politicians. We want quality pre-kindergarten for all, wrap-around services in public schools to



support children with special needs and other vulnerable kids, and to restore the full value of Bright Futures college scholarships so that more Floridians can afford college.

The Corporate Agenda: Ron DeSantis and the Florida Legislature have put their unqualified cronies in charge of our public schools and universities, making huge salaries at taxpayers' expense. They have underfunded public schools, wanting to spend our tax dollars by subsidizing wealthy families who want to hire personal tutors and send their children to elite private academies. They have targeted and endangered the lives of children based on who they are, where they come from, what they look like and how much money their parents make. They want to undermine our teachers' right to organize and they want to force out more veteran teachers from the profession entirely, while ousting established faculty and academic experts at universities and replacing them with unqualified conservative ideologues, all on the taxpayers' dime. They want to cut funding for Bright Futures so they can pay bigger Lottery ticket commissions to gas stations and grocery stores. Ultimately, they want to outsource public education entirely, to for-profit voucher schools and religious private schools that can continue to discriminate against LGBTQ+ families, erase Black history, and ignore children with disabilities. And they are doing this with our tax dollars.

HEALTHCARE


The People's Agenda: We want to expand healthcare coverage in Florida towards a goal of ensuring all parents and kids have healthcare. We can do this by expanding Medicaid just like 40 other states around the country, both red states and blue states, have done. We want to protect bodily autonomy for all Floridians, including

for people who are pregnant and for LGBTQ+ Floridians. We want to ensure every single Floridian with a disability has the support and care they need to thrive. We want to ensure our Seniors can thrive, and that our caretakers are paid a living wage and have the support needed to do their job and care for our loved ones. We want to solve the critical staffing and patient care crisis in Florida hospitals and nursing homes by making sure caregivers are properly respected, protected, paid and staffed. And we want elected leaders who put patients' rights before the profits of the health insurance industry.

The Corporate Agenda: Health care access is essential to economic success. But Ron DeSantis and the Florida Legislature want to take health care coverage away from more than one million Floridians – working Floridians who have health care coverage now because of the pandemic and could continue to have coverage if the Governor and the Legislature would simply expand access to Medicaid. They have forced thousands of families with children with disabilities to wait years for support, and to the benefit of the nursing home industry, have put the lives of our Seniors at risk by allowing nursing homes to cut corners. They have allowed Big Sugar to poison local communities with toxic ash and soot. Now, they want to ban abortion, and take away the rights of parents of transgender youth to make healthcare decisions for their own children. They want to protect doctors who spread misleading claims about vaccines and discriminate against patients based on the care they need.

ENVIRONMENT

The People's Agenda: We want clean air and clean water for all, and we want to hold corporate polluters accountable. We want to treat climate change like the



existential threat to our planet that it is, and do far more to promote renewable fuels and energy conservation. We want to help homeowners afford solar panels, allow commercial landlords to sell solar power to their tenants, and equip schools with solar panels and electric buses. We want to respect the will of voters who want to clean up our waterways, protect our springs and save our coral reefs. We want local communities to be able to address the climate crisis with innovative local solutions, and we want the state to correct the systematic racism that leads to low-income communities of color disproportionately impacted by corporate polluters and high energy costs.

The Corporate Agenda: Ron DeSantis and the Florida Legislature have crushed efforts to combat climate change, both in Tallahassee and in cities around the state. They have made it easier for developers to destroy wetlands, and thwarted local voters who have tried to beef up environmental protections. They sided with coral-reef destroying cruise ships and the businesses who profit from them over the people of Key West. They have refused to follow through on pledges to clean up toxic algae. Now, they want to give more subsidies to the fossil fuel industry and free rein to developers who pave over untouched natural lands.

PUBLIC SAFETY


The People's Agenda: Not political stunts, but data-driven policies that actually keep us safe. This means ending over-incarceration and racial disparities in Florida's criminal justice system through data-driven, proven approaches that will save taxpayer money, keep our families intact, ensure victims feel whole, and make our communities safer by maintaining human dignity, and prioritizing rehabilitation,

treatment, and alternatives to incarceration. We need to repeal outdated mandatory minimums that are proven not to work. We need to fund our court system not on criminal fees and fines that keep people in poverty, but by dedicated state funding. This also means paying our State Attorneys and Public Defenders fair salaries, so we can ensure all Floridians have access to justice. We need to separate federal immigration enforcement from local law enforcement, so that all communities feel safe to report crimes. And we need to invest in education, housing, and health care in this state, so that every Floridian has the opportunity to succeed.

The Corporate Agenda: We have a state government that leverages fear to keep Floridians divided, while doing nothing to keep us safe. Instead, they pass laws that criminalize poverty, mental health crises, and addiction. They spend millions tricking and trafficking immigrants, for political stunts. They even pass laws that allow vigilantes to run over peaceful protestors, and want to make it easier for criminals to have access to firearms. They want to criminalize accessing an abortion and gender affirming care. Floridians are not safer under these mandates, but corporations are wealthier, from our taxpayer dollars. Private prisons, detention facilities, private contractors, and profiteering systems like JPay all profit from a racist, xenophobic, and classist criminal justice system in Florida.

WORKER POWER

The People's Agenda: We want to ensure that all workers are paid a living wage, have affordable and quality health care, and can collectively bargain for better pay and benefits. We want a stronger safety net that doesn't force laid-off workers to try and survive on some of the worst



unemployment benefits in the country. We want a state that investigates and punishes employers who steal their workers' wages. We want guaranteed sick time for all workers so they can afford to take a day off from work if they are sick or must care for a loved one who is sick. We want basic protections of water, rest and shade for our farmworkers, roofers and outdoor workers who labor outside in the brutal Florida heat.

The Corporate Agenda: Housing, health care, education, all of these policy areas are fundamental to working families' success in Florida. But Ron DeSantis and the Florida Legislature have fought efforts to raise the state minimum wage and implement local living wages. They have blocked efforts to make employers provide better benefits and safer workplaces. They have failed to pursue wage theft cases across the state, and have consistently worked to undermine workers' constitutional right to organize and collectively bargain. They refuse to modernize Florida's unemployment insurance benefits, which provides some of the lowest benefits in the nation. They want to let predatory lenders charge their customers more, and they want to cut off any future efforts to lift worker wages via the ballot, by making it even harder for citizens to amend the state Constitution.

JOIN US

It's time for a people's agenda in our great state of Florida. An agenda that promises freedom for all Floridians. From Pensacola to Key West, all Floridians deserve a government that puts people first, not greedy corporations. A government that works for us, and who cares for all of us.

JOIN US: TEXT PBF TO 787753.



FLORIDA

PEOPLESBUDGETFL.COM

The People's Budget is a project of Florida For All, sponsored by Florida Rising, Inc.