



2020 Legislative Agenda

WELCOMING COMMUNITIES

Priority

SUPPORT State financial aid for college students

OPPOSE Verification of Employment Eligibility (E-Verify)

Support

SUPPORT Reversal of SB168 “anti-sanctuary” bill

SUPPORT: Driver license access regardless of immigration status

SUPPORT: Florida’s Anti-Hate legislation

FINANCIAL WELLBEING

Support

SUPPORT State Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

SUPPORT Protecting the Sadowski Affordable Housing Trust Fund

Oppose

OPPOSE Policies that undermine TANF and SNAP

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE

Priority

SUPPORT Native Language Assessments

IMPLEMENT a coordinated child assessment system for VPK and kindergarten

Support

ESTABLISH English Language Learner Advisory Council

EXPAND Apprenticeships

HEALTH

Priority

SUPPORT Increasing access to school-based health services

OPPOSE Cutting and/or restricting access to Medicaid

Support

SUPPORT Protecting Floridian’s pre-existing conditions for future price increase



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Legislative Agenda Goal

Support the wellbeing of Florida families and children through public policy that ensures everyone can reach their full potential which in turn helps our communities thrive economically and socially.

Legislative Priorities

- Welcoming Communities
 - Financial Wellbeing
 - Education / Workforce
 - Health
-

Welcoming Communities

Key HUF 2020 Legislative Priority

SUPPORT: State financial aid DREAMERS. Twelve states and D.C. offer state financial aid to students who are undocumented (also known as DREAMers). Florida already extended in-state tuition to Florida's DREAMers. HUF supports opening eligibility to both merit and need-based financial aid to these students, which would help boost college completion rates and the skills and wages of the state workforce.

SB 188/Taddeo; HB 693 Smith, C. (CO-SPONSORS) Polo

Key HUF 2020 Legislative Priority

OPPOSE: Verification of Employment Eligibility. E-Verify mandates all employers use the error-prone E-Verify system for all new hires. The error rate cannot and does not accurately reflect employer discrimination of workers based on false errors. External reviews found that eligible foreign-born workers, women who have married/remarried, and workers of Hispanic and Arab descent have a higher likelihood of false rejections (erroneous temporary non-confirmations). And naturalized citizens are 30 times more likely to receive a TNC (Temporary Non-Confirmation) than those born in U.S. Costly and harmful for small businesses & farms.

SB 664, Lee/Gruters; HB 1265 Byrd and Fitzenhagen



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SUPPORT: Reversal of SB168 “anti-sanctuary” bill. The Bill SB168 currently requires Florida jails to hold individuals for 48 hours and turn them over to ICE for deportation.

SUPPORT: Allowing access to driver’s licenses regardless of immigration status.

Fourteen states and D.C. already allow immigrants who are undocumented to get driver’s licenses, which can help them get better jobs, make roads safer and modestly reduce insurance premiums. Not only would the fees from new driver’s licenses generate much-needed state revenue, but when workers can get better-paying jobs, they spend more, further boosting Florida’s economy. Support a bill which would keep driver license information private and secure.

SUPPORT: Florida’s Anti-Hate legislation to include gender, gender-identity, coverage for “association with” hate crimes, more expansive definition of disability and allow for prosecution of mixed-motive crimes.

HB 655/Toledo & Geller; SB 940/Rader

Financial Wellbeing

SUPPORT: State Earned Income Tax Credit. The federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a crucial anti-poverty tool for low- and moderate-income working people. In 2017, the EITC lifted about 5.7 million people out of poverty, including about 3 million children. During the 2017 tax year the average EITC was \$3,191 for a family with children, which boosted wages by about \$266 a month, according to the nonpartisan Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Thirty states have their own version of the EITC. During the 2019 session legislation a bill was introduced that would have created a “working families tax rebate,” which would provide families with up to 10 percent of their federal EITC. HUF supports legislation that would establish a state EITC or working family’s tax rebate.

OPPOSE: Policies that undermine TANF and SNAP In 2018, the Florida Legislature conducted a study of TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) Employment & Training (E&T) requirements and found that TANF recipients subject to work requirements face many barriers to compliance that result in sanctions. Those barriers include lack of transportation, no childcare, and health problems. HUF opposes legislation that would significantly lengthen the sanction period for people unable to comply with work requirements in the TANF E&T program. HUF also opposes federal-level efforts to gut SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) Broad Based Categorical Eligibility, which would reduce the SNAP



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eligibility income limit from 200 percent to 130 percent of the federal poverty level, ending food assistance for 325,000 Floridians.

SUPPORT: Protecting the Sadowski Affordable Housing Trust Fund from budget sweeps
Established in 1992, the Sadowski Housing Trust Fund provides critical funding for the production and preservation of affordable housing, as well as the construction and rehabilitation of multi-family rental housing. It is funded through the state documentary stamp tax on deeds. Over the past two decades, however, lawmakers have "swept" \$2.2 billion in revenue slated for the Sadowski Housing Trust Fund into the General Revenue Fund for other purposes. Florida ranks 44th in the nation for its availability of affordable housing and as the cost of living increases, more working families are struggling to afford a decent place to live. HUF supports protecting the Sadowski Housing Trust Fund from annual funding sweeps.

Education & Workforce

Key HUF 2020 Legislative Priority

SUPPORT: Native language assessments - Florida is one of only a handful of states, and the state with the largest immigrant population, that forces students to take tests in English even if the subject is unrelated (like math). This causes many students to be held back unnecessarily. HUF supports proposals that would offer exams to students in their native language.

HB515/Rodriguez & Aloupi: SB 678 Taddeo

Key HUF 2020 Legislative Priority

SUPPORT: IMPLEMENT a coordinated child assessment system for VPK and kindergarten. Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program (VPK) - Florida's VPK is a free educational program that prepares 4- year-olds for kindergarten and beyond. Improving accountability by utilizing coordinated and developmentally appropriate assessments through kindergarten will improve quality and reduce the readiness gap. And align investments in Florida's VPK to quality benchmarks to improve kindergarten readiness and later school success. **Recognize learning gains in the calculation of readiness rates using the current VPK assessment administered during the VPK program year.**

HB1013/Grall; SB1688/ Harrell



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SUPPORT: English Language Learner Advisory Council: Engage stakeholders in improving the quality of education for ELs (English Learners) by establishing a state EL advisory council composed of key policy makers and of members selected by the commissioner of education, the leaders of Florida’s legislative chambers, and the governor from candidates for appointment nominated by their peers in parent, educator, community, and professional education organizations.

SUPPORT: Continue Apprenticeship Expansion: The 2019 Legislature took bold steps to increase workforce competitiveness with changes to FS 446 to expand Apprenticeship Training. We believe additional changes would continue that expansion and would be in line with Gubernatorial and legislative intent. These changes are: a.) Have pre-apprentices covered by state worker compensation coverage similar to that which is provided to work experience participants. This would be for pre-apprentices 18 and under. b.) Develop a method to allow for real time funding of apprenticeships and post-secondary programs similar to the FTE system used in secondary education. c.) Allow Bright Futures scholarships to be used to fund apprenticeships and career and technical education. d.) Industry Recognized Apprenticeship Programs are a recent expansion of the path to apprenticeships by the US Department of Labor. We recommend no further restrictions at the legislative or administrative level. Please allow all the flexibility allowed under the new rules from the US Department of Labor.

Health Access

Key HUF 2020 Legislative Priority

SUPPORT: Increasing access to school-based health services (HB 81/SB 190). More than 1 million of the 2.7 million students enrolled in public schools are covered under Medicaid. Although recent federal policy changes allow schools to receive matching federal dollars for school-based health services provided to any Medicaid-eligible child, these changes are not automatic, as pointed out in a [recent Florida Policy Institute report](#). Current state law — which limits the federal match to those services provided to children with disabilities who have an individualized education plan — must be updated. HUF supports legislation that would update state law and allow schools to access more than \$50 million in additional federal dollars for school-based health services, including mental health screenings, diagnoses and treatment.

HB 81 Andrade (Co-Sponsors) Duran; Geller; Gottlieb; Grieco; Toledo; **SB 190** – Identical by Montford (CO-SPONSORS) Harrell



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Key HUF 2020 Legislative Priority

OPPOSE: Cutting and/or restricting access to Medicaid

HUF will oppose policies that seek to undermine and restrict access to Medicaid, including:

- Future cuts to Retroactive Medicaid Eligibility (RME). The FY 2019-2020 budget included a drastic cut to retroactive Medicaid eligibility. However, a 2019 bill was defeated that would have made this cut permanent. RME provides a crucial three-month window of retroactive coverage for people facing unexpected, dire illnesses or severe disabilities, or those needing nursing home care. HUF opposes efforts to extend cuts to RME or to make them permanent.
- Medicaid “work” requirements. HUF opposes adding overly onerous “work” requirements — also known as paperwork requirements — to Medicaid. Proposed in 2019, these policies create arbitrary barriers that are often impossible to overcome for many people on Medicaid. More than 80 percent of Florida Medicaid enrollees are children, seniors and people with disabilities. The remainder are mostly very low-income parents/caretaker relatives of minor children and young adults, including those aging out of foster care. More than 60 percent of adult Florida Medicaid enrollees are already working. Those who don’t work are primarily people with illnesses or disabilities, students or caretakers for a family member.
- Block granting Medicaid. The idea of a federal block grant for Medicaid has been floated for many years as a cost containment strategy. However, block granting Medicaid would significantly curtail the federal funds Florida receives in the future — a harmful prospect considering the state’s growing population. HUF will continue to oppose and push back against block granting Medicaid.

SUPPORT: Protecting Floridians with pre-existing conditions from future price increases. In 2019 the Florida Legislature passed a bill that would allow health insurance companies to sell plans that do not cover pre-existing conditions if they also sell plans that do offer these protections. This would only go into effect if the federal Affordable Care Act was repealed. However, that same bill did not include limits on plan costs for consumers with pre-existing conditions, setting up the potential for plans that are completely out of reach financially for the 7.8 million Floridians with pre-existing conditions. HUF supports policy proposals in the 2020 session that will ensure Floridians with pre-existing conditions, regardless of the future of the ACA, are protected from future health plan price increases.