



# 2019 Budget Turkey Watch Report

*An analysis of the transparency and  
accountability of the budget process*

JUNE 2019

**T**he 2019 Budget Turkey Watch Report: An Analysis of the Transparency and Accountability of the Budget Process is the result of an annual independent review of Florida's new budget by Florida TaxWatch. The report started in 1983, and having been published annually since 1986, promotes additional oversight and integrity in the state's budgeting process based on the principle that: because money appropriated by the Legislature belongs to the taxpayers of Florida, the process must be transparent and accountable, and every appropriation should receive deliberation and public debate. The budget review identifies appropriations that circumvent transparency and accountability standards in public budgeting.

Budget Turkeys are items, usually local member projects, placed in individual line-items or accompanying proviso language that are added to the final appropriations bill without being fully scrutinized and subjected to the budget process. **The Budget Turkey label does not signify judgment of a project's worthiness.** Instead, the review focuses on the Florida budget process, and the purpose of the Budget Turkey label is to ensure that all appropriations using public funds receive the deliberation, debate, and accountability they deserve. While a project may be worthwhile, Budget Turkeys tend to serve a limited (not statewide) area, are often not core functions of government, are more appropriately funded with local or private dollars, and can circumvent competitive bidding or selection and oversight and accountability.

The Florida governor's line-item veto authority is a protection afforded by the Florida Constitution as one of the checks and balances that allows for proper distribution of power in state government; however, another crucial element is the right and responsibility of Florida taxpayers to hold their elected officials accountable for budgeting decisions. Though all budget documents are available to the public, the complicated budget process creates a barrier that prevents all taxpayers from understanding this information. The Budget Turkey Report is intended to show taxpayers the result of this complicated process, where not all decisions are made in the sunshine.

The \$91.1 billion budget passed by the Florida House and Senate for FY2019-20 contains **109 appropriations items worth \$133.0 million qualifying as Budget Turkeys.** This year, Florida TaxWatch allowed for more legislative flexibility in hurricane recovery-related projects.

The appropriations project rules adopted two years ago have reduced the number of Budget Turkeys. Each House member project requires a bill to be approved by an appropriations subcommittee and the Senate requires a member request form. The House bill and Senate form numbers appear alongside the project in the budget, clearly identifying them as member projects. This has greatly reduced the number of items being added to the budget for

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*The annual Budget Turkey Report spotlights legislative projects placed in the budget without proper opportunity for public review and debate*

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the first time during the budget conference committee process, in fact the joint rules of the Legislature prohibit it. Projects added during the conference used to comprise a significant percentage of Budget Turkeys.

In this session, though, there were several instances of items being added in conference, including member projects. Florida TaxWatch hopes this is an aberration and not a sign of returning to old ways of budgeting.

The most disconcerting thing about this year's appropriations process—from a Budget Turkey perspective—was the increased use of the supplemental appropriations lists. These lists, which have come to be called “sprinkle lists,” are approved at virtually the last minute. Usually the very last thing the budget conference does, the House and Senate exchange their lists with no debate or explanation. The lists include additional funding, sometimes for significant statewide issues that had been thoroughly debated and sometimes for other issues, including member projects. In recent years, they have seldom included brand new issues.

This year's sprinkle lists were likely record in size. The Senate list contained 127 items worth \$153.5 million. The House funded 110 items with \$136.2 million. This means \$289.7 million in hard-earned taxpayer dollars were spent as almost an afterthought, after all the various budget areas had been “closed-out.”

Even more troubling than the sheer amount of supplemental funding was the fact that some projects that were not part of the House or Senate budget made their first appearance on those lists. Also, many projects that had been in one budget, but were removed during conference negotiations when one chamber accepted the other's offer to not fund it, reappeared on the sprinkle lists. Many other projects had their funding grow significantly, even rising from relatively very small funding amounts (\$50,000-\$100,000) to over \$1 million. These developments in the sprinkle lists are causing Florida TaxWatch to consider amending our criteria to highlight more projects.

In addition, while the new rules have (relatively) limited the number of turkeys, it has not limited member projects. This year's budget contains approximately 600 member projects worth \$450 million. **This brings the three-year total (since the rules were adopted) to more than 1,800 members projects worth \$1.7 billion.**

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*BUDGETING WITHOUT DISCIPLINE*

*Just as the Rule of Law is critically essential in a civil society, so is the integrity, transparency and accountability of the budget process to ensure the highest and best use of the taxpayers' hard earned money.*

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## MORE CHANGES ARE NEEDED TO REIN IN MEMBER PROJECTS

Many member projects are worthwhile and some serve a regional or statewide interest, but most of them benefit a limited number of Floridians and should be a local community or local government responsibility.

Two years ago, with the Speaker pronouncing that something needed to be done about the “epidemic level” of member projects, the House adopted new rules governing them and a pledge of an open and transparent budget process. The rule change was significant, and Florida TaxWatch applauded the announcement, as the new rules promoted the same goals of transparency and accountability as the Budget Turkey Watch report. In practice, however, very little has happened to stem the tide of member projects.

The House rules require members to file a separate bill containing his or her member project request, as well as an informational form. For that appropriation to be eligible for inclusion in the House budget, the bill has to be approved by a House committee or subcommittee, but committee approval does not guarantee inclusion. The Senate does not require a bill, but does require a request form be filled out. Senate requests do not have to be heard in committee but are often presented by the requester.

With a few exceptions, the House subcommittee hearings on member projects are simply pro forma events, with very little discussion or debate on any bill. Overall, House committees in 2019 approved 1,103 appropriations project bills (up from 702 last year) and no bills were voted down. In reality, this is understandable. Voting against another member’s spending project may do nothing more than endanger your own.

There is simply not enough time during session to thoroughly debate each project when there are so many individual items requested. Therefore, most of the real decisions on what gets funded are made behind closed doors. Taxpayers have the right to see and question how their money is being spent, and lawmakers have a responsibility to ask many of those questions on their behalf to ensure that statewide dollars are being distributed in a way that benefits the most people possible.

While the new rules certainly increased the transparency of member projects, in that taxpayers could at least see what was being proposed, it certainly didn’t limit them— they were just added sooner. House members in 2019 filed 1,631 bills (nearly 14 per member and 300 more than last year) requesting appropriations projects, totaling **\$3.7 billion** (\$31 million per member).

Similarly, the 40-member Senate requested 1,673 projects, totaling **\$3.5 billion**. That’s 42 projects and \$88 million per Senator. Most of the projects were requested in both the House and Senate, so there were likely around 2,000 unique projects requested, and almost one third of them made it into the final budget.

It must be remembered that the state shares approximately \$5 billion of state revenue directly with local governments and school districts and billions of dollars more are sent down to the local level every year through the state budget. Adding more through budget earmarks is done at the expense of statewide priorities, core functions, and accountable programs.

In total, this year’s budget contains approximately 600 member projects worth more than \$450 million. In the three sessions since the new rules for member projects were adopted with the goals of increased

accountability and limiting projects, **there has been a total of more than 1,800 member projects worth \$1.0 billion funded in the state budget.**

This highlights the need for the establishment of more competitive review and selection processes that take place before the Legislature decides what to fund.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

To further promote the integrity of Florida's budget process, and to get a handle on the proliferation of member projects, Florida TaxWatch offers these recommendations:

**Legislative Appropriations Project Rules** - The member project rules that were put in place two years ago should become permanent and continue to be improved upon. The new practice of detailing the recurring projects in the base budget should also be continued.

**Competitive Selection Processes** - The lack of a systematic review and selection process in some areas of the budget has become a glaring problem. Member projects are peppered throughout the budget, but there are several line-items where you can count on numerous projects ending up.

Three line-items in the Department of Economic Opportunity are an example. Economic Development Projects, Workforce Projects, and Housing and Community Development Projects are not recommended by the agency or the governor but are added to the budget each year simply as a place to put member projects. In addition to funding some projects that likely will have very positive economic development impacts, these line-items have become catch-all places for all sorts of projects, many of which have a tenuous connection to their line-item. Many projects are funded here instead of other areas of the budget which fund similar projects, some of which have competitive grant programs that include significant state review. These include cultural and museum programs, local parks, historic preservation, affordable housing, education, social services, public safety and community development. Projects also drift between the three line-items. Last year, Economic Development Projects was the big, wide-ranging line-item, this year it was Housing and Community Development Projects.

To make sure that these projects are funded with a coordinated, statewide vision, compete for limited funding on equal footing, and meet specified requirements to qualify for funding, Florida TaxWatch recommends the Legislature create such a competitive review and selection process in statute for each of these areas:

- Economic Development Projects
- Housing and Community Development Projects
- Workforce Projects
- Water Projects
- School and Instructional Enhancements
- Private Colleges and Universities
- Mentoring/Student Assistance Initiatives
- Special Local Law Enforcement Projects
- Fixed Capital Outlay for Local Fire Services

**Supplemental Funding Lists** – In recent years, the budget conference process ends with each chamber accepting the other chamber’s supplemental funding lists worth tens of millions of dollars. This is done without public debate or discussion, and the lists have been developed and already agreed to in private. The list includes increased funding for some projects already in the budget and can also introduce new projects, sometimes including items that had not been discussed before. It is understandable that there can be some money left over when negotiations are finished. Adding money to existing projects in this way, while certainly not the best budget practice, is not as bad as adding new projects, but these supplemental funding lists should be prohibited.

**Economic Development Transportation Projects (Road Fund)** – A few years ago, the Legislature created the Economic Development Transportation Projects program to fund transportation projects that promote economic development and growth. It became a way to simply add local transportation projects to the budget. Last year, the House attempted to repeal this program in a bill that would have eliminated Enterprise Florida. While the statute was not repealed, the budget no longer has a line-item for the Road Fund and there is now a line-item simply called Local Transportation Projects.

While this is a more truthful description, it also removes even the appearance of a selection process. Projects that are not part of the DOT Work Program take scarce transportation dollars away from the vetted and comprehensively planned projects that are in the Work Program. If Local Transportation Projects are going to stay, a formal competitive selection process, with whatever criteria the Legislature sees fit, should be established.

Most importantly, a set amount of funding should be established so DOT may include it in the Work Program, and the Legislature should not exceed that amount unless it uses general revenue to fund the additional cost. Florida TaxWatch recommends that the Legislature stop earmarking these projects to allow a process to decide which projects have the highest return on investment and to ensure they are considered within the state’s coordinated transportation planning process.

## FLORIDA TAXWATCH 2019-20 BUDGET TURKEYS

Florida TaxWatch offers its annual report to help the Governor in his deliberations. In addition to projects that qualify as Budget Turkeys, we highlight other areas in the budget that contain numerous member projects that, while they do not qualify, certainly deserve close scrutiny by the Governor.

### CRITERIA

The Florida TaxWatch Budget Turkey criteria are clearly defined. Appropriations must violate sound budgeting practices in at least one of these ways to be designated as a Budget Turkey:

- A project that circumvents established review and selection processes or has completed the established process but is funded ahead of much higher priority projects (as determined by the selection process);
- Appropriations that are inserted in the budget during conference committee meetings, meaning they did not appear in either the final Senate or House budgets; and
- Appropriations from inappropriate trust funds; duplicative appropriations; and appropriations contingent on legislation that did not pass.

### THE PROJECTS

#### College & University Fixed Capital Outlay Projects

The funding of higher education construction projects received a lot of attention this session as the House did not fund any, instead authorizing several institutions to use carry forward and reverted dollars to fund projects. Ultimately, the Legislature funded only three college construction projects with \$11.3 million, using \$3.0 million in general revenue and eight university projects at \$107.2 million (including two lab schools). The Legislature also passed a bill that strengthens the PECO selection process of the Board of Governors and the Division of Colleges to focus on finishing projects that are already in the pipeline before adding new ones with significant future year funding needs—a long-time Florida TaxWatch recommendation of this report.

The Legislature did fund the #1 college priority, but also the #7 (requested for the 3rd year) and the #23rd (requested for year 4 or beyond) at levels that will not complete them. These two projects were also added in conference, while 11 of the 12 in the Senate budget did not get funded—including the 2nd and 3rd priority. The House had recommended the Daytona project be funded with the college’s reserves. All the university projects were requested by the BOG, however it requested the UNF projects be funded with the university’s reserves. In addition, there was no maintenance money provided for either colleges or universities, which is the #1 fixed capital outlay priority.

#### PROJECTS IN THIS CATEGORY

AGENCY	LINE ITEM	PROJECT	GR	TF	H/S	COUNTY	HB	SEN FORM
DOE	20	Daytona S.C.- Classroom/Lab/Office, site imp - Deltona		\$5,062,361	C	Volusia	NA	NA
DOE	20	Indian River S.C. - Replace Fac 8 & Industrial Tech - Main		\$4,195,339	C	St. Lucie	NA	NA

AGENCY	LINE ITEM	PROJECT	GR	TF	H/S	COUNTY	HB	SEN FORM
DOE	21	UNF- Roy Lassiter Hall Renovations	\$2,000,000		S	Duval	3069	1907

## Agricultural Promotion and Education Facilities

Florida has a program (established in Section 288.1175, Florida Statutes) to allow local governments and fair associations to apply for state funding for facilities that can be used to promote agriculture in Florida, such as county fair agricultural exhibition halls. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is charged with reviewing applications, making sure projects qualify and ranking requests based on factors such as the proposed use of funds, the amount of local match, projected attendance, and history of the requester. This year, the department provided the Legislature with a ranked list of thirteen projects that met the requirements for funding. Despite this process, the department does not request money for these projects in its legislative budget request and the Governor did not recommend funding. The Legislature funded 10 projects worth \$5.0 million. Three of these projects were not part of the approved, prioritized list—thereby circumventing the process. Two projects were added during conference. The 4Roots Farm and Agricultural Center had \$0.5 million added through the sprinkle list.

### PROJECTS IN THIS CATEGORY

AGENCY	LINE ITEM	PROJECT	GR	TF	H/S	COUNTY	HB	SEN FORM
DACS	1505C	4Roots Farm and Agricultural Center	\$650,000		S	Orange	4101	1559
DACS	1505C	Putnam County Fair Association	\$750,000		H/S	Putnam	4241	1898
DACS	1505C	Washington County Agriculture Center	\$50,000		S	Washington	4889	1598
DACS	1505C	Lafayette Bd. of County Comm.-Extension/4H Classroom	\$400,000		C	Lafayette	NA	NA
DACS	1505C	Suwannee County Bd. of County Comm -new livestock barn, 4H pavillion	\$350,000		C	Suwannee	NA	NA

## Beach Projects

The Florida Beach Management Funding Assistance Program provides and manages grants to local governments for the planning and implementation of beach and inlet management projects including beach restoration and nourishment, environmental studies and monitoring, inlet sand transfer, and dune restoration. These grants are reviewed and ranked in priority order and submitted to the Legislature, which this year provided \$50 million for approved projects. These projects circumvented the grant application and ranking process.

### PROJECTS IN THIS CATEGORY

AGENCY	LINE ITEM	PROJECT	GR	TF	H/S	COUNTY	HB	SEN FORM
DEP	1695A	Fernandina Beach Dune Stabilization Project	\$146,640		H	Nassau	3635	2216
DEP	1695B	St. Johns County Ponte Vedra Beach N. Beach and Dune Rest.	\$500,000		S	St. Johns	3985	1235

## Local Parks

The Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP) is a state competitive grant program that allows local governments to apply for financial assistance grants to develop and/or acquire land for public outdoor recreational use. It is administered by the Department of Environmental Protection, which reviews the grants. This year the department submitted a ranked list of 152 eligible projects to the Legislature, requesting \$13.1 million. For the second time in three years, the Legislature did not provide any funding for FRDAP. Instead, the Legislature funded these 12 local parks that were not approved through the process for \$5.0 million.



**PROJECTS IN THIS CATEGORY**

AGENCY	LINE ITEM	PROJECT	GR	TF	H/S	COUNTY	HB	SEN FORM
DEP	1747A	Apopka Birding Park	\$184,175		H	Orange	4595	1308
DEP	1747A	Archer Splash Pad	\$125,000		H	Alachua	2975	1773
DEP	1747A	Cape Coral Sirenia Vista Park	\$650,000		S	Lee	4301	1328
DEP	1747A	Crystal River Hunter Springs Linear Park	\$450,000		H/S	Citrus	3429	2148
DEP	1747A	Jacksonville Freedom Park	\$521,855		H	Duval	3387	2049
DEP	1747A	Leon County Orchard Pond Greenway Trail, Phase II	\$300,000		S	Leon	2077	2119
DEP	1747A	Macclenny Youth Soccer Field	\$264,500		H/S	Baker	3277	2439
DEP	1747A	North Miami Beach Snake Creek Canal Park	\$200,000		H	Miami-Dade	2507	1139
DEP	2307A	Moccasin Slough Educational Center for Natural Resources	\$900,000		H	Clay	4127	2340
DEP	2307A	City of Deerfield Beach Memorial Park	\$200,000		S	Broward	3825	1744
DEP	2307A	Camp Matecumbe Gym Renovation	\$250,000		S	Miami-Dade	3195	1728
DEP	2307A	Centennial Park Restoration Project	\$1,000,000		H	Lee	3711	1477

**Transportation Projects Not in the Work Program**

The Legislature continues to fund an excessive (and growing) number of local member transportation projects that are not in the DOT Work Program. The Turkey Watch report always flags these programs. The Work Program is developed jointly each year with metropolitan planning organizations, local governments, and the federal government. The Work Program is funded through the State Transportation Trust Fund (STTF) and spending those limited dollars on other projects can leave approved projects unfunded, negatively impacting the Work Program and Florida’s coordinated, statewide transportation system.

The Legislature created the Economic Development Transportation Projects (Road Fund) program to give lawmakers some discretion to add projects that promote economic development and growth. DOT, with input from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and Enterprise Florida are supposed to review the projects and give final approval. The law contains requirements and criteria for evaluation; however, this fund simply became a way to get local projects in the budget. This year, there is only \$5.0 million allocated in the Work Program for these projects, but the Legislature has consistently exceeded that amount. Beginning two sessions ago, when the House attempted (unsuccessfully) to eliminate the Road Fund, the budget no longer has a line-item for the Road Fund, but instead one simply called Local Transportation Projects. While this is a more truthful description, it also removes even the appearance of a selection process. This line-item appears again this year, funding 67 projects at a cost of \$85.3 million, meaning \$80.3 million in Work Program funding will be impacted.

Florida TaxWatch recommends that the Legislature stop earmarking these projects to allow the process to decide which projects have the highest return on investment and to ensure they are considered within the state’s coordinated transportation planning process. The Legislature should stick to the amount provided in the work program, unless it provides additional general revenue. Many of these projects are worthwhile, but most are local roads, which the statutes do not authorize to fund from the STTF (except for specific programs), such as the economic development transportation program. Some projects may not qualify as transportation projects and others have other avenues to pursue funding. Florida TaxWatch did not include

six projects that relate to Hurricane Michael recovery (totaling \$5.9 million, a little over the \$5.0 million included in the Work Program.)

#### PROJECTS IN THIS CATEGORY

AGENCY	LINE ITEM	PROJECT	GR	TF	H/S	COUNTY	HB	SEN FORM
DOT	1989A	CR 466A Phase III from Timber Top Lane		\$450,000	S	Lake	2067	1305
DOT	1989A	Amelia Island, An Environmental Branding Initiative		\$817,702	S	Nassua	3247	2325
DOT	1989A	Pembroke Pines Senior Transportation Program		\$288,000	S	Broward	2921	1631
DOT	1989A	Southwest Ranches Safety Guardrail		\$375,000	S	Broward	2927	1632
DOT	1989A	SR 23 Frontage/Access Roads		\$3,000,000	S	Clay	4207	2402
DOT	1989A	Aircraft Service Center-Opa Locka Airport		\$1,000,000	S	Miami-Dade	9177	1220
DOT	1989A	AVE Banyan Project at Opa Locka Executive Airport		\$1,500,000	S	Miami-Dade	3515	2297
DOT	1989A	Woodbine Road 4 Lane Expansion		\$250,000	S	Santa Rosa	4391	2208
DOT	1989A	The Industrial Park Connector		\$1,000,000	S	Santa Rosa	4395	2209
DOT	1989A	HART Intelligent Transportation System		\$500,000	S	Hillsborough	9203	1807
DOT	1989A	Miami Lakes Business Park SE Resilient Transportation System Infrastructure Project		\$853,000	S	Miami-Dade	3735	1185
DOT	1989A	Medley NW South River Drive - Drainage & Mobility Improvements		\$500,000	S	Miami-Dade	4463	1216
DOT	1989A	City of Miami Springs: South Royal Poinciana Median		\$750,000	S	Miami-Dade	3905	1448
DOT	1989A	Pedestrian Safety/Roadway Improvements 112th Ave		\$447,500	S	Miami-Dade	4483	2196
DOT	1989A	Eastern Bay County Dredging		\$500,000	S	Bay	4319	2383
DOT	1989A	Hegener Drive Extension		\$893,750	S	St. Lucie	3885	2318
DOT	1989A	44th Avenue East Extension		\$10,000,000	S	Manatee		2433
DOT	1989A	Historic Pier Enhancement Project		\$285,000	S	Manatee	3959	1761
DOT	1989A	Ponte Vedra SR A1A Corridor Intersection Improvements		\$500,000	S	St. Johns	3983	2269
DOT	1989A	Improvements to SR 313 at US-1		\$3,700,000	S	St. Johns	4025	2271
DOT	1989A	Bradenton Beach SR 789 Multi-Modal Capacity Project		\$2,000,000	S	Manatee	4969	2427
DOT	1989A	Downtown Miami Pedestrian Bridge - Phase 1		\$300,000	S	Miami-Dade	4019	1134
DOT	1989A	North Bay Village-Sidewalk and ADA Improvements		\$229,950	S	Miami-Dade	2779	1964
DOT	1989A	Town of Lake Park -- Road Striping Improvements		\$29,000	S	Palm Beach	4443	1023
DOT	1989A	Town of Loxahatchee Groves North Rd Equestrian Trails		\$47,500	S	Palm Beach	4543	2309
DOT	1989A	Crandon Blvd Pedestian/Bicycle Safety		\$100,000	S	Miami-Dade	4247	1729
DOT	1989A	Reaching Beyond the Sunrail Station		\$200,000	S	Seminole	2111	2174
DOT	1989A	Morningside Drive Extension		\$5,000,000	S	Pasco	2065	1258
DOT	1989A	Citrus County - CR 491 Road Widening		\$13,300,000	S	Citrus	3445	1498
DOT	1989A	Ormond Beach Municipal Airport Access Roads		\$472,500	S	Volusia	4149	1198
DOT	1989A	Keep Florida Beautiful, Inc		\$800,000	S	statewide	2967	1522
DOT	1989A	City of St Cloud Downtown Revitalization		\$300,000	S	Osceola	3313	2217
DOT	1989A	Sport Aviation Village		\$500,000	S	Volusia	4153	1689
DOT	1989A	Crosswalk Lighting		\$750,000	S	Volusia	2643	1697
DOT	1989A	Pensacola Airport MRO Campus Expansion		\$1,500,000	S	Esambia	2593	2140
DOT	1989A	Miami Shores Village-Wide Traffic Calming		\$410,500	S	Miami-Dade	2333	1243
DOT	1989A	Palmetto Roadway and Drainage Improvements		\$481,000	S	Pinellas	4045	1811

DOT	1989A	Jacob Bus Shelter		\$67,459	S	Jackson		1576
DOT	1989A	Altamonte Springs P3 AV Smart Corridor Project		\$1,000,000	S	Seminole	4043	2178
DOT	1989A	W. Cervantes Street Pedestrian Safety Improvement		\$600,000	S	Esambia	2611	2201
DOT	1989A	Land O' Lakes US 41 Landscape Rehabilitation		\$1,000,000	S	Pasco	2033	1450
DOT	1989A	Mount Sinai Medical Center Road Improvements		\$1,000,000	S	Miami-Dade	3523	2263
DOT	1989A	Millers Bayou Working Waterfront Enhancements		\$1,000,000	H	Pasco	2025	1618
DOT	1989A	William Burgess Boulevard Extension		\$1,000,000	H	Nassua	2367	2214
DOT	1989A	North Florida Mega Industrial Park Rail Extension		\$750,000	H	Columbia	2525	2460
DOT	1989A	I-395 Underdeck Open-Space and Heritage Trail		\$800,000	H	Miami-Dade	2715	2368
DOT	1989A	City of Clewiston C-21 Bridge Canal Crossing		\$2,000,000	H	Hendry	2765	1496
DOT	1989A	Widening CR 4009 - Volusia County		\$2,000,000	H	Vousia	3509	1649
DOT	1989A	Sunny Isles Beach Pedestrian Park Bridge		\$425,000	H	Miami-Dade	3899	
DOT	1989A	St. John's Ave. Pedestrian & Cyclist Safety Imprvmts. - Palatka		\$1,302,816	H	Putam	3969	1087
DOT	1989A	Underline Multi-Use Trail/Mobility Corridor		\$1,500,000	H	Miami-Dade	4089	1069
DOT	1989A	Runway 27 Extension - Hernando County		\$1,000,000	H	Hernando	4169	1520
DOT	1989A	Douglas Road Improvement Project - Oldsmar		\$1,000,000	H	Pinellas	4173	1619
DOT	1989A	Panama City Watson Bayou Dredging		\$2,000,000	H	Bay	4331	2387
DOT	1989A	Panama City Watson Bayou Turning Basin Bulkhead		\$500,000	H	Bay	4341	2382
DOT	1989A	Northwest Florida I-10 Industrial Park Improvements		\$500,000	H	Santa Rosa	4393	2389
DOT	1989A	CR 437 Realignment from Central Avenue to SR 46		\$750,000	H	Lake	4591	1048
DOT	1989A	Bear Creek Bridge Improvements - Freeport		\$850,000	H	Walton	4835	2351
DOT	1989A	US 331/CR 30A Improvements - Walton County		\$1,000,000	H	Walton	4861	
DOT	1989A	Pedestrian Crossing Installation		\$750,000	H	Duval	9165	2212
DOT	1989A	Tampa Bay Regional Transit Auth - Agency ops and dev. of innovative transit		\$2,500,000	S	Multiple: Tampa Bay	2211	2438

### Acquisition, Restoration of Historic Properties

The Department of State has grant programs to fund historic preservation—Small Matching (up to \$50,000) and Special Category (up to \$500,000) grants. The Legislature funded the Small Matching list in its entirety, without earmarking other projects. The Legislature provided enough to fund the first 19 (of 53) approved projects on the Special Category list but earmarked some projects that bypassed the evaluation process. The Clay courthouse project did go through the grant process and was awarded \$50,000, but received an additional \$250,000 through a member request. One project was removed from the budget during conference negotiations, only to be added back through a sprinkle list.

#### PROJECTS IN THIS CATEGORY

AGENCY	LINE ITEM	PROJECT	GR	TF	H/S	COUNTY	HB	SEN FORM
DOS	3174	Lafayette County Courthouse Clock Tower	\$650,000		H/S	Lafayette	2371	1382
DOS	3174	Truman Little White House Preservation Project	\$339,000		H/S	Monroe	3671	1607
DOS	3174	Schooner Western Union State Flagship Restoration	\$100,000		H	Monroe	3675	1436
DOS	3174	Clay County Historic Courthouse Restoration	\$250,000		H	Clay	4217	2229

## Cultural and Museum Grants

The Legislature provided \$5.97 million for the Department of State 2019-2020 Cultural Facilities Grants ranked list. This will fund 37 projects whose approved requests totaled \$12.5 million. These approved recipients will receive less than half of their requested amount. The Legislature also funded five facilities that bypassed the competitive evaluation and prioritization process, all of which will receive more than the biggest award for those that applied for grants. The same is true for the projects that bypassed the process for the Cultural and Museum General Program Support Grants. It's not surprising when an organization avoids the grant process and instead approaches a legislator to submit a request for funding.

### PROJECTS IN THIS CATEGORY

AGENCY	LINE ITEM	PROJECT	GR	TF	H/S	COUNTY	HB	SEN FORM
DOS	3201	African American History Museum and Library	\$150,000		S	Palm Beach	4421	1315
DOS	3207A	Florida Holocaust Museum Security Enhancements	\$500,000		H	Pinellas	2207	1830
DOS	3207A	Ruth Eckerd Hall Expanding the Experience Campaign	\$500,000		H	Pinellas	2567	2265
DOS	3207A	Camp Blanding Museum Expansion Project	\$750,000		H	Clay	4141	2228
DOS	3207A	Carter G. Woodson African American Museum	\$250,000		S	Pinellas	4599	2411

## Appropriations Added in Conference

The appropriations below were all added in the conference committee, meaning they were not in either the House and or Senate budget as passed by the respective chamber. Conference additions used to make up a large portion of the Budget Turkey list, but the appropriations (member) project reforms have limited such additions. That is a very good improvement to the budgeting process. Unfortunately, it seems this old practice is starting to resurface. House and Senate rules provide that the inclusion of a member project that was not included in a previous budget makes a budget out of order. Further, most of these items were added through the sprinkle list, meaning they did not appear until truly the last minute. The Gentry Regional Training Center was in the budget in another line-item (1281), but only for \$100,000 which was part of its \$400,000 request for equipment. The \$4.57 million listed below is for construction of the center and was added through the Senate sprinkle list. The full funding for the equipment (\$400,000) is also in the budget but not included as a Budget Turkey. The \$500,000 that was added though the sprinkle lists for library cooperatives is in addition to \$2 million also in the budget and is in excess of the statutory limit for funding.

### PROJECTS IN THIS CATEGORY

AGENCY	LINE ITEM	PROJECT	GR	TF	H/S	COUNTY	HB	SEN FORM
DOE	32	ARC Broward Skills Training	\$300,00		C	Broward	3889	1685
DOE	147	University of West Florida-Cybersecurity Support	\$1,500,000		C	Esambia	3147	1550
DOH	466A	Young Men's Christian Assoc. (YMCA) of Florida's First Coast	\$500,000		C	Duval	3305	1872
DJJ	1222	Nassau County Youth Alternative to Secured Detention (S.W.E.A.T. Program)	\$85,000		C	Nassau	2945	2243
FDLE	1286a	D/S Gentry Regional Public Safety Training Center	\$4,570,000		C	Highlands	3603	1297
DOT	1939	update the Tri-Rail Coastal Link Study		\$750,000	C		NA	NA
State	3188	Library Cooperatives	\$500,000		C		NA	NA

### Other Projects

This year, the sprinkle lists added several items back after the chambers had agreed to take them out, and many member projects also received more money. The Flagler project—fixed capital outlay for a private university—was vetoed last year and grew from \$50,000 to \$1.025 million. The Little Econ was increased by \$2.75 million through the sprinkle list and will purchase the land to be owned by Orange County. This project did not have a House bill and has other potential avenues for funding: park grants, historic preservation, and the Land Acquisition Trust Fund. The stated purpose of the Orlando Citrus (Bowl) Parade request is to promote sports tourism, but it is funded by the Citrus Advertising Trust Fund in the Department of Citrus. This is self-funded by citrus growers and is used to promote Florida citrus, an iconic Florida industry that is experiencing struggles.

The three projects in line-item 2307A were funded in Housing and Community Development, a member project funding mechanism in need of a more formal selection process (see “Other Projects of Note” on next page). Two of the projects benefit private businesses and the sports complex is an effort to promote tourism (and provide recreation opportunities) by building a facility to be owned by a local government. The \$3.5 million is only the first part of the project; the request states it will ask the state for up to \$10 million more in future funding and shows no local or private match. This tourism promotion funding comes at a time when the state’s proven tourism promotion agency—VISIT FLORIDA—had its funding cut and faces repeal next year.

The Jacksonville housing project would bypass the Florida Housing Finance Corporation’s process for selection and oversight of projects funded by scarce Sadowski Fund housing dollars in the face of an affordable housing crisis. This may be the first time a member project would be funded through the housing trust funds and would set a bad precedent.

#### PROJECTS IN THIS CATEGORY

AGENCY	LINE ITEM	PROJECT	GR	TF	H/S	COUNTY	HB	SEN FORM
DOE	67B	Flagler College Hotel Ponce de Leon Resiliency	\$1,025,000		S	St. Johns	1197	4023
DEP	1608A	Orange County - Historic Little Econ	\$3,000,000		S	Orange		2339
Citrus	2238	Orlando Citrus Parade		\$100,000	S	Orange	4889	2025
DEO	2307A	Northeast Florida Multi-Purpose Youth Sports Complex	\$3,500,000		H	Clay	4175	
DEO	2307A	SRQ A&P Mechanical School and Airline Maintenance Hangers	\$3,000,000		S	Manatee	3867	1947
DEO	2307A	Golden Ocala Golf and Equestrian Club LPGA Tournament	\$250,000		S	Marion	3393	1851
DEO	2315	Jacksonville Urban Core Workforce Housing Project		\$8,000,000	S	Duval	4303	2071

## OTHER PROJECTS OF NOTE

These member projects do not qualify as Budget Turkeys, because they followed the appropriations project rules, were not added in conference, and there is no established selection process for these projects (see Recommendations). However, they are areas that have historically contained numerous member projects that deserve special scrutiny.

**DEP 1657A Water Projects** - The state has two programs—Water Policy and Ecosystem Restoration and Water Restoration Assistance—for which the Legislature appropriated almost \$1 billion. This includes \$181.7 million for wastewater treatment facility construction, \$125.5 for drinking water facility construction loans and \$13.0 million for small county wastewater treatment grants. Every year, the Legislature also spends tens of millions of dollars on earmarked local member water projects. This year, there are 51 projects worth \$49.1 million, \$19.0 million more than last year. There is also a new \$25 million Water Quality Improvement grant program (line-item 1662) that was recommended by the Governor and funded by the Legislature, which does not earmark projects. There is a Water Projects Grant Program in statute, but over the years that process has been stripped of most of its criteria, requirements, and oversight. It should be noted that the appropriations project rules require additional information in project request forms for water projects.

**Three Department of Economic Opportunity Line-Items** — These three budget lines have become gathering places for member projects. They can be a hodge-podge of all types of projects. Last year, it was the Economic Development Projects that had the most, and the most wide-ranging, projects. This year, it is Housing and Community Development:

- **DEO 2307A Housing and Community Development Projects** — 25 projects worth \$20.7 million, up from eight projects for \$5.4 million last year. Many of these could have been funded in other places in the budget. Projects include parks, sports and recreations projects, government and public safety digital upgrades, bus transportation for seniors, food desert support, a botanical garden, and a golf tournament.
- **DEO 2322B Economic Development Projects** — Five projects worth \$9.2 million. This year's list was tighter than last year's, with the projects seeming to have more of a clear economic development focus.
- **DEO 2269A Work Force Projects** — Three projects worth \$1.3 million—this list has been getting smaller. These projects are in addition to \$262 million in the budget for local workforce development boards.

**DOE 113 School and Instructional Enhancements** — 59 projects worth \$27.5 million, \$4.7 million more than last year. This includes 12 projects that are recurring programs in the base budget.

**Various Non-State Fixed Capital Outlay** — Tens of millions of dollars are going to private organizations and local governments to construct, renovate, repair, or even purchase buildings/facilities the state does not/will not own. Governor Scott, and governors before him, have vetoed some of this fixed capital outlay spending because local government facilities are a local responsibility and there is no clear statewide return on investment for constructing, maintaining or renovating privately-owned facilities.

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As an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit taxpayer research institute and government watchdog, it is the mission of Florida TaxWatch to provide the citizens 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. Florida TaxWatch works to improve the productivity and accountability of Florida government. Its research recommends productivity enhancements and explains the statewide impact of fiscal and economic policies and practices on citizens and businesses.

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