



MONROE COUNTY 2026 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Property Tax Monitoring

Challenge: Proposed state or executive actions may reduce or eliminate property taxes, Monroe County's most reliable revenue source, critical for law enforcement, emergency services, public health, and state-mandated programs. Actions:

- Monitor state/executive proposals affecting property taxes.
- Keep Board informed and request direction as appropriate.

Water Quality Protection

Challenge: Florida Keys' marine ecosystem (coral reefs, seagrass meadows) threatened by runoff, cesspits, and degraded canals. Water quality is essential to valuable tourism/fisheries economy. Actions:

- Support \$20M appropriation under Florida Keys Stewardship Act.
- Support Monroe's projects submitted for funding through the Stewardship Grant portal.
- Continued support for Monroe's Vessel Pump Out program.

Land Acquisition (Florida Forever)

Challenge: Vacant privately-owned lots exceed new residential permits, creating environmental risks and legal liability. Land acquisition retires development rights and protects sensitive areas. Actions:

- Continue \$5M Florida Forever set-aside for the Keys by extending authorization to 2036.
- Secure consistent annual land acquisition funding.
- Appropriation Request of \$2.5M for land acquisition within or outside FF boundary areas for the purposes of retiring development rights, military encroachment and affordable housing.

Affordable & Workforce Housing

Challenge: High land values, environmental protections, and ROGO limits increase housing costs. Short-term rentals worsen the shortage. Long-term workforce rentals should be incentivized. Actions:

- Exempt Habitat for Humanity from construction performance bonds on county-leased properties.
- Authorize ad valorem tax relief for long-term workforce rental properties.
- Maintain Tax Credit and SAIL funding for Monroe County.

Wind & Hurricane Insurance Affordability

Challenge: Citizens Property Insurance premiums are the highest in Florida despite strong Monroe building codes. Rising rates and flood insurance mandates threaten workforce housing and economic stability. Actions:

- Restore 10% annual rate cap.
- Increase coverage cap to \$1.5M.
- Roll back mandatory flood insurance for properties outside flood zones.

Resilience/Flooding

Challenge: Severe Road Flooding: Persistent tidal and storm-related flooding is impacting communities across the Keys, undermining public safety, commerce, property values, and quality of life.

- Support Monroe County's projects submitted for funding through the Resilient Florida Grant Program.

School Readiness Program Eligibility

Challenge: Many children of Monroe County working families currently do not qualify for the School Readiness program due to income limits, missing critical early education opportunities that support school success. Actions:

- Support legislation to increase the income eligibility threshold for Monroe County, enabling more children of working families to enroll and benefit from the program.

ACSC Comprehensive Plan and ROGO Protection

Challenge: State development preemptions may override ACSC protections, ROGO, and environmental safeguards. Actions:

- Exempt ACSC from land use and development preemptions that would otherwise override Monroe's ROGO ordinance, local comprehensive plan requirements, or state and federal environmental regulations.