

2026 Florida Legislative Session Summary

Victory in the fight against cancer requires bold new public policies that promote cancer prevention, early detection of cancer, and expand access to quality, affordable health care. Lawmakers make many decisions that impact the lives of Floridians impacted by cancer and their leadership is vital to defeating this disease. In 2026, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) worked with the Florida Legislature in support of the following priorities:

Cancer Prevention and Early Detection

- **Breast and Cervical Cancer:** ACS CAN worked to secure \$6 million in recurring funding for the Mary Brogan Breast & Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program, a record high, and a substantial increase from the \$1.83 million recurring funding that has been in place since 2018.

Ensuring Access to Quality Care

- **Coverage for Supplemental and Diagnostic Breast Exams:** ACS CAN supported SB 1494, which would have eliminated out-of-pocket costs for supplemental and diagnostic breast exams in some health insurance plans. While SB 1494 did pass favorably out of one committee, a similar House bill (HB 137) did not receive a hearing.
- **Medicaid Defense:** SB 1758 (Public Assistance) would have imposed “work or community engagement” requirements on a small percentage of Florida Medicaid enrollees, including some very low-income parents of children aged 14-18, and some qualifying 19- and 20-year-olds. The bill likely would have forced thousands into the coverage gap, as complying with the work requirements would cause individuals to earn too much to qualify for Medicaid, but too little to afford private insurance. The bill passed the full Senate but died in House messages as the House bill did not receive a committee hearing.
- **School-Entry Immunization Requirements:** SB 1756 (Medical Freedom) would have allowed for “conscience-based” exemptions to the Florida school-entry immunization requirement. Current law provides for medical and religious exemptions. ACS CAN opposed this bill on the grounds that it would lead to lower vaccination rates, decreasing community immunity and putting immunocompromised persons at risk. SB 1756 passed the full Senate, but the issue was not considered by the House and ultimately died.

Cancer Research Funding

- **Casey DeSantis Cancer Research Program:** The Casey DeSantis Cancer Research Program received \$127.5 million. These funds are distributed on a tiered basis to the state’s eligible NCI-designated cancer centers, which include H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute, Mayo Clinic Comprehensive Cancer, the University of Miami Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, and the University of Florida Health Shands Cancer Hospital.
- **Florida Cancer Innovation Fund:** The Florida Cancer Innovation Fund, which awards research grants to support innovative cancer research, including emerging research trends and promising practices, received \$80 million, an increase of \$20 million over FY 25-26 funding.
- **Other State Cancer Research Programs:** The Bankhead-Coley Cancer Research Program was funded at \$10 million, and the King Biomedical Research program received \$7.85 million. Additionally, \$3 million was provided for pediatric cancer research through the statutory Live Like Bella Initiative. The Cancer Connect Collaborative Incubator program, which supports pediatric cancer research at specialty children’s hospitals, was funded at \$30 million.

Reducing the Toll of Tobacco

- **Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Funding:** The Legislature approved \$92,041,352 million in funding for the Comprehensive Statewide Tobacco Prevention and Education Program. This represents an increase of \$2.4 million over the current year’s funding. The dollars distributed within the larger program are generally consistent with the CDC’s *Best Practices*.
- **Heated Tobacco Products:** For the third year in a row, bills (HB 377 and SB 754) were filed that would completely exempt heated tobacco products from taxation as either “cigarettes” or “tobacco products,” as defined in state law. Both bills received committee hearings but ultimately stalled before final passage.

Appropriations

- The \$114.5 billion budget for FY 2026-27 adopted during the 2026E Special Legislative Session includes approximately \$381.6 million for the fight against cancer. In total, cancer-related funding from the legislature includes:

Casey DeSantis Research Program	\$127,500,000
Biomedical Research	
Florida Cancer Innovation Fund	\$80,000,000
William G. "Bill" Bankhead, Jr., and David Coley Cancer Research Program	\$10,000,000
James and Esther King Biomedical Research Program	\$7,850,000
Pediatric Cancer Research (Live Like Bella Initiative)	\$3,000,000
Statewide Brain Tumor Registry Program - McKnight Brain Institute	\$500,000 (earmarked from the Bankhead Coley program)
Cancer Connect Collaborative Incubator	\$30,000,000
Mary Brogan Breast & Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program	\$6,000,000
Comprehensive Statewide Tobacco Prevention and Education	\$92,041,352
La Liga - League Against Cancer	\$1,150,000
Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center - Firefighters Cancer Research	\$3,500,000
Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute – Education	\$20,576,930
TOTAL CANCER-RELATED ISSUES AND ACS CAN PRIORITIES	\$381,618,282

For more information, contact: Susan Harbin, Florida Senior Government Relations Director ACS CAN

Susan.Harbin@cancer.org; 770.546.8845

ACS CAN is making cancer a top priority for public officials and candidates at the federal, state, and local levels. ACS CAN empowers advocates across the country to make their voices heard and influence evidence-based public policy change as well as legislative and regulatory solutions that will reduce the cancer burden. As the American Cancer Society's nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy affiliate, ACS CAN is critical to the fight for a world without cancer. For more information, please visit www.fightcancer.org.

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network | 655 15th Street, NW, Suite 503 | Washington, DC

2005



@ACSCAN | @ACSCAN | fightcancer.org