

MomsRising Florida Families Delegation Meeting Takeover Talking Points

Every year, [Florida legislative delegation meetings](#) take place in local communities *before* the legislative session begins. These public meetings are a powerful opportunity for moms, dads, and community leaders like you to speak directly to your **state senators and representatives** about the issues impacting our families—like child care, education, maternal health, and more. Below are some top messages on some of the top issues we are working on in Florida that you can consider for your delegation meeting.

***NOTE: The best remarks will be anchored in your personal experiences on these issues and sharing them authentically. The messages below are meant to strengthen your thoughts and used to support if you need additional ideas for your remarks.*

Share your story! Was it tough for you to find a spot for your young child in early learning? Did you have to change your hours or quit a job because of child care? Are you having trouble finding a doctor? Is your local public school losing teachers or closing? Lead with your experiences and then build from there!

Florida's families deserve better

- **Strong public schools are fully funded.**
- **Affordable, high-quality early learning and care** for every family.
- **Safe, equitable maternal health care** for all mothers and babies.

By investing in these priorities, Florida can **build thriving communities and a stronger economy**. Florida families deserve to thrive, not just survive.

Public Schools

The Problem: Chronic Underfunding & Diverted Dollars

- Florida's **base student allocation** (how much money a school gets per student) rose **less than 1%** this year — **far below inflation**, leaving schools struggling.
- Even with an 8% increase in teacher pay, Florida ranks **50th in the nation for teacher salaries**.

- **24% of education general revenue funds** are now **diverted to private schools through the voucher program**, many with **minimal oversight**, reducing resources for public schools.
- Voucher expansion allows **wealthier families** to access funds to supplement a private education (even if they can already afford the school) with **little reporting on outcomes or accountability to tax payer dollars**.

Impact on Communities:

- Larger class sizes and underpaid educators.
- Taxpayer dollars funding private schools without accountability.
- Public schools are forced to cut essential programs like arts, special education, and extracurriculars.

Call to Action:

- **Increase state funding** to meet the needs of every public school student.
- **Strengthen accountability for vouchers** by:
 - Restore income limits to families receiving vouchers so they are not benefiting wealthy families
 - Requiring educational savings account funds be spent primarily on core academic subjects.
 - Requiring regular reporting on students receiving vouchers that include demographics, income, disability status, and costs
 - Establish a one-year residency requirement for vouchers like those required in higher education to establish in-state tuition

Early Learning & Child Care

The Problem: Families Struggle, Educators Underpaid

- **70% of all Florida children have all available parents in the workforce**

- 13% of Florida children under 5 live in families where someone quit, changed, or refused a job due to child care problems.
- 194,226 parents are making career sacrifices because they cannot access affordable, reliable care.
- **Infant child care costs exceed college tuition in Florida.**
- Florida ranks **31st nationally** for child well-being.

Economic Stakes:

- Affordable child care would generate **\$7.6 billion annually** for Florida's economy.
- Expanding the child care subsidy system could serve **1,035,393 more children** statewide.

Current Legislative Challenges:

- **Early learning investment decreased nearly 6%** this year, even as more families became eligible, worsening waiting lists.
- **Voluntary Pre-K (VPK)** funding stayed flat, threatening program quality and access.

Call to Action:

- **Increase School Readiness funding** to eliminate waiting lists and support working families.
- **Raise VPK base student allocation** to attract and retain high-quality early childhood educators.
- Make **high-quality, affordable child care** a statewide priority for families and providers.

Maternal Health

The Problem: Preventable Deaths & Worsening Disparities

- Florida's maternal mortality rate is **24 deaths per 100,000 live births**, with Black women facing **significantly higher risks**.
- Florida's **infant mortality rate** is **6.0 per 1,000 live births**, higher than the U.S. average (5.6).
- Slashing Medicaid endangers moms, babies, and families especially in Black, Brown, and low-income communities already facing significant health disparities.
- Tragically in the U.S. 80 percent of these deaths are **preventable**. Most maternal deaths occur **after discharge**, highlighting the need for extended postpartum care.
- Cuts to Medicaid will accelerate the closure of rural hospitals and maternity wards. When hospitals shut down, women must travel hours for care, or worse, go without.
- Medicaid also funds well-child visits, NICU care, newborn screenings, and immunizations. Cuts mean higher infant mortality and worse long-term health

Why Medicaid Matters:

- Medicaid covers **40% of births** in Florida, providing prenatal, delivery, postpartum, and mental health care.
- Proposed federal cuts threaten this lifeline, especially for low-income and rural families.

Call to Action:

- **Protect Medicaid funding and expand Medicaid** — no cuts to eligibility, services, or postpartum coverage. Expanding Medicaid will ensure more parents have access to health insurance.
- Ensure **12 months of postpartum Medicaid coverage** with services including:
 - Mental health and substance use treatment.
 - Doula and community health worker support.
 - Hypertension, infection, and depression screening.

- **Strengthen maternal health data systems** for transparency and accountability.
- **Kids coverage:** [Florida still has not expanded the KidCare program](#), and this was voted into law in 2023. Tens of thousands of Florida's children who would qualify for subsidized health insurance are missing out on the opportunity for health care. The state has lost out on over 2 billion dollars for this funding due to noncompliance with Federal law.