

For Immediate Release:

PROPERTY TAX PROPOSAL COULD JEOPARDIZE ESSENTIAL SERVICES

MARATHON, FL (June 2, 2026) – The City of Marathon has joined the chorus of state governmental agencies raising concern regarding Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis’ push to curtail property taxes, citing the costs to residents and the services they receive from local municipalities.

State legislators were scheduled to vote on the plan on Tuesday, June 2.

The bill, SJR 2-F, would provide relief to homeowners who claim a homestead exemption, which means they live in the home as their primary residence. It also threatens not only to decrease revenue but also to remove funding for non-core services.

The current bill outlines specific items counties can fund with ad valorem (property) tax revenue while omitting many mandated services, according to Monroe County officials.

Marathon City Attorney and interim City Manager Steve Williams addressed the growing concerns on Monday, June 1, on U.S. 1 Radio.

“Nearly half of the cities, 195 of them, in the state of Florida, would lose at least 20% of their total taxable value,” Williams said. “Seventeen cities would lose 40% or more of their total taxable value. Six cities in Florida would lose all of their taxable value, and 120 cities would lose at least 90% of their homestead taxable value. Two hundred fourteen cities would lose at least 75% of their homestead taxable value.”

The average homestead taxpayer savings, Williams said, would be from \$533 to \$542 a year, and the median, instead of the average, would be \$494 to \$518.

The impact on communities and residents could be severe, Williams said.

“Normally, you think nothing of pulling up, and it doesn't have to be Marathon, to any community you want to use the tennis courts. How much do you pay to use the city tennis court? Nothing. People frequently walk into City Hall and get something notarized. What do you pay for them? Nothing.

“ I think it's, sadly, looking like there's going to be a fee for everything-type situation, and it's going to be horrible.”

Late last week, Monroe County Mayor Michelle Lincoln sent a letter to members of the state Legislature expressing concerns about the proposed property tax changes and impacts on the county's ability to fund numerous mandated services and constitutional offices.

According to the county, those that could be omitted include:

- Medicaid and juvenile justice cost shares;
- Support for public health and mental health services;
- Planning and environmental regulation under the state-mandated Area of Critical State Concern framework;
- Veterans services;
- Flood resilience and disaster recovery;
- Affordable housing initiatives;
- Code compliance to ensure structural safety;
- Core government functions such as budgeting, procurement, grants administration, communications, and legal services;
- Libraries and parks;
- Information technology systems supporting 911 and emergency operations;
- Facilities and fleet maintenance;
- Guardian Ad Litem support for abused and neglected children; and
- Constitutional offices responsible for elections, court operations, property assessment, tax collection, judicial administration, and legal proceedings.

Chris Seymour, City of Marathon Public Information Officer

Email: pio@ci.marathon.fl.us Cell: 645-206-4368

For inquiries, contact City of Marathon, 305-743-0033