



# 2022 JMI Policy Priorities

*The Future IS Florida...*

Policy Team

**T**urning the page from 2020 to 2021, it wouldn't have been out of line to feel a sense of relief or optimism for the onset of a new year and to plan for a return to something resembling normalcy. Well, to borrow a phrase from the faithful, "God laughs hardest at those who make plans."

The 2021 Florida legislative session was, without question, one of the most unique and odd in recent memory. A closed capitol, committee hearings viewed on closed circuit from the Civic Center, and an overall odd sense of quiet permeated an otherwise traditional legislative calendar. And while the achievements made despite

the circumstances were extraordinary, there was a sense that much was left to be done.

Looking ahead, it is vital to affirm, both for JMI and the 22 million (and growing) Floridians, that the mission moves forward. In the 2022 cycle, we will see the legislature tackle reapportionment, add a congressional district, pass a new budget, and (hopefully) continue advancing the Sunshine State as the best place to live, work, and start a business. That doesn't happen without a commitment to fiscal integrity, low taxes, minimal regulation, and legislative leadership to preserve the principles and reason for more than 800 new residents every single day.

We often say that "the Florida story" is one that needs to be exported. We are seeing that across the country as new states expand choice and opportunity for parents of schoolchildren, as they lower or eliminate state income taxes, as they increase the supply of healthcare delivery through free market principles, as they restore trust in their election systems. These things are happening all around us – in West Virginia, in Georgia, in Texas, in Arizona – and as states advance freedom and liberty for their residents, they look at the Sunshine State for direction and leadership. For so many Americans seeking to escape the dictatorial mandates of Leftism, the future is right here in Florida.

In so many ways, we count ourselves fortunate to do what we do in Florida. We have the pleasure of hosting policymakers of all stripes at our events and engaging often with many who we disagree with on issues. This is a blessing. We do not take for granted that, with almost no exception,

our part-time legislators possess a genuine and deep commitment to their constituents and their state. Whether republican or democrat, conservative or liberal, young or old, they all hold their roles in esteem and seek to make the right policy decisions for the people they represent and the greater good of Florida. That doesn't mean that they agree on the methods or issues – in fact, that is often not the case. They campaign vigorously, and yes, politics isn't for the faint of heart. But at the end of the day, when they gather in the Capitol each session, the robust debates, substantive coalition building, and honest brokering creates a state we can all be proud of.

Our team will continue pressing for common sense, practical policy ideas that place Florida on an economic path of expanded opportunity and prosperity. Florida is, in fact, the future. And we don't say that lightly. In a state of 22 million that grows by 6,000 a week, it is vital that policy matches the needs of the people and the economy. We are a hub of technological innovation, of international commerce, of tourism, and so much more. That reality requires a deliberate and intentional commitment to advancing freedom and liberty. To that end, we have compiled a robust and visionary set of policy priorities for 2022 that reinforce our principles of limited government, economic liberty, and individual freedom. We hold firm to the belief that free market capitalism, private property rights, and the rule of law is the single biggest prosperity engine in human history.

It is our pleasure to provide our policy priorities for 2022.

## **1. Cultivate Innovation**

1. Adopt a vision statement outlining the commitment to “permissionless innovation.”
2. Continue to oppose government-owned broadband networks in favor of private market solutions to connectivity.
3. Expand use of regulatory sandboxes to promote new industry development and further diversify Florida’s economy.
4. Update money transmission regulations to create an environment where cryptocurrency innovations can flourish.
5. Foster new rules to oversee new technological governance mechanisms such as “decentralized autonomous organizations” (DAOs).
6. Identify sources and limit regulatory friction in industries that would create new economic paths for entrepreneurs and opportunity for job seekers.
7. Encourage legal certainty via defining limited liabilities for commercial drone operators.

## **2. Advance Educational Opportunity and Academic Excellence**

1. Expand the availability of all existing K-12 scholarship programs to serve greater numbers of Floridians.
2. Offer flexible, student-based funding to parents interested in microschooled, pod learning, hybrid homeschooling, and other “DIY Education” options.
3. Honor Florida’s most legendary educator by naming a K-12 scholarship program after Mary McLeod Bethune.
4. Make permanent changes to the Hope Scholarship program so that no child ever has to attend a school that his or her parents consider unsafe.
5. Strengthen civics education by elevating the role that non-governmental voluntary associations play in solving social problems and in modeling a more constructive form of civic engagement than that offered by “protest civics” activism programs.
6. Tie higher education performance funding to objective measures of healthy campus culture so that Florida universities are rewarded for distinguishing themselves as havens for free expression, intellectual diversity, and the robust exchange of ideas.

### **3. Protect Good Governance**

1. Promote the principles of the “Conservative Florida Budget” committing to hold growth to no more than population growth plus inflation.
2. Improve regulations to ensure public sector unions are truly representing workers.
3. Reform Florida’s public retirement system to both modernize it for new employees and ensure it can meet its obligations to public employees
4. Advance conservative reforms to Florida’s juvenile and adult criminal justice systems that both protect public safety and taxpayer dollars.
5. Improve Florida’s Personal Injury Protection (PIP) rules to encourage greater transparency and consistency and limit frivolous torts.
6. Protect the freedom of individuals to donate to causes they support without fear of retribution.

### **4. Expand Healthcare Solutions**

1. Continue to advance supply side reforms to Florida’s healthcare system that promote choice and opportunity for patients, lower costs, and retain a necessary safety net.
2. Advance reforms to pharmacy benefit manager policies that can address inequities in drug pricing and supplies patients.

### **5. Safeguard the values of free markets, choice, and liberty in federal policy**

1. Oppose federal attempts to further socialize health insurance and healthcare provision
2. Educate lawmakers and the public on the negative effects of proposed “5G nationalization”
3. Export the Florida model of election integrity and transparency that can serve as a national benchmark for best practices in other states

The team at The James Madison Institute affirms our commitment to working both with those who share our philosophy and those who believe differently. It will be through effective vigorous debate and productive civil discourse that we will all reap the rewards of a better Florida, and ultimately a better country. Because as Florida goes, so goes the country. The future is right here.

We invite you to join us as the mission moves forward in 2022.