

BEFORE THE
FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of:

DOCKET NO. 20260042-TP

Commission approval of Florida
Telecommunications Relay, Inc.'s
fiscal year 2026/2027 proposed budget.

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PROCEEDINGS: COMMISSION CONFERENCE AGENDA
ITEM NO. 4

COMMISSIONERS
PARTICIPATING: CHAIRMAN GABRIELLA PASSIDOMO SMITH
COMMISSIONER GARY F. CLARK
COMMISSIONER MIKE LA ROSA
COMMISSIONER BOBBY PAYNE
COMMISSIONER ANA ORTEGA

DATE: Tuesday, July 7, 2026

PLACE: Betty Easley Conference Center
Room 148
4075 Esplanade Way
Tallahassee, Florida

REPORTED BY: DEBRA R. KRICK
Court Reporter and Notary
Public in and for the State
of Florida at Large

PREMIER REPORTING
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA
(850) 894-0828

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 CHAIRMAN SMITH: We will move to Item 4.

3 Mr. Williams, you are recognized.

4 MR. WILLIAMS: Good afternoon, Commissioners.
5 Curtis Williams with IDM.

6 Item 4 addresses Florida Telecommunications
7 Relay, Incorporated's, proposed budget and the TRS
8 surcharge for fiscal year 2026-2027.

9 In Issue 1, staff recommends the Commission
10 approve FTRI's proposed budget. Staff also
11 recommends the Commission allow FTRI to transfer up
12 to 2.4 million from the reserve account to offset a
13 projected revenue shortfall.

14 In Issue 2, staff recommends the Commission
15 order FTRI to file quarterly reports during the
16 fiscal year providing details on the distribution
17 of specialized communication technology devices.

18 In Issue 3, staff recommends the Commission
19 maintain the current TRS surcharge at eight cents
20 and order all local exchange companies to continue
21 billing the surcharge during the fiscal year.

22 In Issue 4, staff recommends the docket remain
23 open and be placed in monitoring status during the
24 fiscal year.

25 Shawn Bankston, FTRI's Executive Director, is

1 available for questions.

2 Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you.

4 Commissioners, are there any questions?

5 Okay, I pulled this item. It wasn't --
6 because I didn't have any questions or anything. I
7 just had a couple of brief comments.

8 I mean, I am really glad, we have been talking
9 about this for a while as far as updating -- having
10 the statute updated, so now there is specialized
11 communication technology, the iPhones, iPads,
12 electronic devices, I think this is going to make a
13 real difference in a lot of the participants lives,
14 and so I am really glad to see the program is
15 modernizing in that way.

16 And then I obviously understand that this sort
17 of equipment costs more, and, again, I am
18 definitely saying it is a worthwhile investment
19 that will help more participants. I just am
20 putting it out there to kind of hope that FTRI is a
21 little bit -- is mindful, I guess, about other ways
22 that their budget can kind of be trimmed, because
23 understanding that the surplus obviously in the
24 reserve account is really large. When I look at
25 the staff rec, the interest income is only about a

1 quarter of the amount needed to be drawn out of the
2 reserve account, and then -- so I just don't see
3 this as necessarily a long-term solution for -- to
4 continue just drawing out of that reserve account.
5 And I also understand the statute doesn't allow an
6 increase in the surcharge while there are all those
7 excess funds, but if there is ways that we can kind
8 of think for a more long-term way -- sustainability
9 of the program.

10 And then the last thing, I appreciate staff's
11 rec on page bottom of page six about certain
12 requirements. Obviously, we if we approve the
13 staff rec as is, that these will be included about
14 implementing client verifiable client income
15 program eligibility, I think that would just help
16 prevent fraud abuse in the program, so I appreciate
17 staff including those line items.

18 With that, I will take a motion.

19 COMMISSIONER CLARK: I have a question.

20 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Oh, yeah.

21 COMMISSIONER CLARK: I just wanted to add a
22 comment. I figured that you pulled this item in
23 honor of Commissioner Fay.

24 CHAIRMAN SMITH: I was, like, some other
25 lawyer has to do it.

1 COMMISSIONER CLARK: Commissioner Fay had
2 taken a very special interest in this program, and
3 we appreciated that. That was one individual that
4 was giving this a very special and devoted
5 attention. In his absence, it seems like the
6 Chairman taken on this role.

7 But, no, it's something that we all certainly
8 look at and can appreciate. And I just wanted to
9 echo the Chairman's comments. I appreciate the
10 work. You see the reductions in the budget in
11 light of the shortfalls that are continuing to come
12 in revenue. We know those shortfalls are going to
13 continue. This is not going to get better. It's
14 going to get worse. And if there was some way can
15 pull about 10 percent interest on that money in the
16 bank, we could cover this shortfall, but we don't
17 seem to be able to have a system in place to do
18 that either.

19 But I do want to thank you guys for the work
20 that you have done. I appreciate it. I don't
21 understand how this is going to play out over time,
22 as we see the number of landlines deteriorate,
23 continue to drop off, and the technology that
24 continues to improve and give folks resources that
25 they desperately need. We are grateful that that

1 has happened, but, again, just wanted to say thank
2 you for the work that you have done in this
3 program.

4 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Is there a motion then?

5 COMMISSIONER CLARK: Move to approve, Madam
6 Chair.

7 COMMISSIONER LA ROSA: Second.

8 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Hearing a motion and hearing
9 a second.

10 All those in favor, please say aye.

11 (Chorus of ayes.)

12 CHAIRMAN SMITH: Any opposed?

13 (No response.)

14 CHAIRMAN SMITH: All right. Seeing none. So
15 see that Item No. 4 passes. Thank you.

16 (Agenda item concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

STATE OF FLORIDA)
COUNTY OF LEON)

I, DEBRA KRICK, Court Reporter, do hereby
certify that the foregoing proceeding was heard at the
time and place herein stated.

IT IS FURTHER CERTIFIED that I
stenographically reported the said proceedings; that the
same has been transcribed under my direct supervision;
and that this transcript constitutes a true
transcription of my notes of said proceedings.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative,
employee, attorney or counsel of any of the parties, nor
am I a relative or employee of any of the parties'
attorney or counsel connected with the action, nor am I
financially interested in the action.

DATED this 20th day of July, 2026.


DEBRA R. KRICK
NOTARY PUBLIC
COMMISSION #HH575054
EXPIRES AUGUST 13, 2028