

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER  
**JIMMY PATRONIS'**

# WEEKLY RUNDOWN

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

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## Dear Fellow Floridians:

More than \$37.8 million. That's the amount of unclaimed property my office returned to Floridians in the month of February. In just 28 days, we broke the previous monthly record of \$35.9 million which was set in October 2016.

More than \$203 million in unclaimed property has been returned to their rightful owners since I took office on July 1, 2017. We have 14 million accounts valued at roughly \$2 billion that remain to be claimed. We estimate 1 in 5 Floridians have an account in their name and these accounts can be claimed at any time and at no cost to you. Visit [www.fltreasurehunt.gov](http://www.fltreasurehunt.gov) to see if you have unclaimed property in your name.

Sincerely,



*Jimmy Patronis*  
Chief Financial Officer  
State of Florida

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## News of Interest

ABC 27 WTXL: [Florida has record-breaking month of unclaimed property returns](#)

Orlando Sentinel: [Commentary: Bravo to champions for first responders suffering from PTSD](#)

Florida Politics: [Logan McFaddin: Stop distracted driving & AOB abuse](#)

Insurance Journal: [Private flood insurance market is getting bigger, more competitive](#)

Sarasota Herald-Tribune: [Florida is back in the land conservation business](#)

Sun Sentinel : [South Florida tech industry hiring highest in 16 years, survey says](#)

Tampa Bay Times: [Florida added 20,200 private sector jobs in February](#)

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## On Gov. Scott Signing the Credit Report Freeze Fee Bill

Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Jimmy Patronis issued the following statement regarding Gov. Rick Scott on Wednesday signing one of his top priorities, House Bill 953, eliminating the fee imposed on Floridians to freeze their credit.

"Thank you to Gov. Rick Scott for signing one of my top legislative priorities that helps Floridians protect themselves against criminals who aim to steal their identity and compromise their credit. With data breaches like the one at Equifax continuing to happen, 16.7 million consumers impacted by identity fraud in the United States and more than \$16 billion stolen from accounts last year, Floridians need to be empowered to easily protect themselves from fraud. With Gov. Scott's signature, Floridians will no longer have to jump through hoops just to freeze their credit.

"Thank you to Rep. Shawn Harrison, Sen. Jeffrey Brandes, and Commissioner Adam Putnam for their support of this good bill."

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## CFO Announces Record-Breaking Unclaimed Property Returns - \$37.8 Million Returned in February

Chief Financial Officer Jimmy Patronis on Tuesday announced that his Division of Unclaimed Property has set a new monthly record of unclaimed property returns in the program's 57-year history. During the month of February, the Division's total returns were valued at \$37,885,255, exceeding the previous monthly record of \$35,956,507 which was set in October 2016.

"I'm proud to announce that in February, our proactive efforts resulted in a record-breaking month of unclaimed property returns," said CFO Jimmy Patronis. "More than \$37 million are back in the hands of their rightful owners and we'll continue to turn up our outreach efforts to return even more."

CFO Patronis' Division of Unclaimed Property (Division) is one of few unclaimed property programs in the country that proactively works to return funds back to businesses, local governments and other unclaimed property account holders. In addition to various outreach events and activities, the Division sends thousands of letters on a weekly basis to notify account holders and expedite the return of their unclaimed funds or assets.

**More than \$203 million in unclaimed property has been returned to their rightful owners since CFO Patronis took office July 1, 2017.** More than 14 million accounts valued at roughly \$2 billion remain to be claimed and are available to claim at any time and at no cost.

Currently, CFO Patronis' Division holds unclaimed property from dormant accounts in financial institutions, insurance and utility companies, securities and trust holdings. In addition to money and securities, unclaimed property includes tangible property such as watches, jewelry, coins, currency, stamps, historical items and other miscellaneous articles from abandoned safe deposit boxes.

Visit [www.fltreasurehunt.gov](http://www.fltreasurehunt.gov) to check for accounts that the unclaimed property program may be holding onto for you or your business. **As outlined in Florida law, the account holder must submit a claim form in order to claim an account.**

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## CFO Patronis Praises Gov. Rick Scott for Signing House Bill 29 for Florida's Military Community

Florida Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and State Fire Marshal Jimmy Patronis last week praised Gov. Rick Scott for signing one of his 2018 Legislative Session priorities, House Bill 29, into law. The bill waives licensing and training fees for military personnel, their spouses, and veterans for the Division of Funeral, Cemetery and Consumer Services, the Division of Insurance Agent and Agency Services, and the Division of State Fire Marshal.

"Thank you to Gov. Scott for signing this legislation that helps Florida's military community take charge of their economic futures more easily. Florida is known as a top military-friendly state and I want to keep it that way. Waiving fees and duplicative requirements for our military personnel and veterans are important ways we can remove barriers and make it easier for them to prosper here in Florida.

"We could not have done this without the lift from the bill sponsors. Thank you to Reps. Mel Ponder and Paul Renner, and Sen. Doug Broxson for leading the charge on this measure that supports our military community."

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## Florida Economic Briefs

### **Housing Starts Down in February**

The U.S. Census Bureau reported February's seasonally adjusted housing starts annual rate (1,298,000

homes) dropped 7 percent from January's rate of 1,377,000. Single unit housing starts increased 2.9 percent, while five or more unit housing starts decreased 28 percent dragging down February's overall performance.

Source: **U.S. Census Bureau**

### **Retail Sales Slightly Down in February**

The U.S. Census Bureau reported February's retail sales were \$492 billion, which was down 0.1 percent from January but up 4 percent from February 2017. Areas of weakness included department stores (down 0.9 percent), furniture stores (down 0.8 percent), and vehicle dealers (down 0.9 percent).

Source: **U.S. Census Bureau**